

vol.5 Top Interview

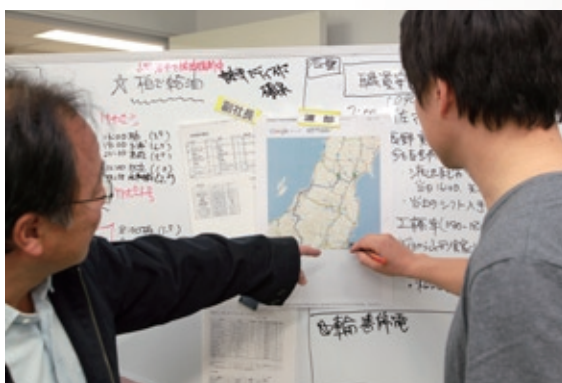
One Month After the Disaster

Setsuo Takekawa, Chairman of Medical Corporate Body KEN-IKU KAI



I would first like to offer a prayer for those who lost their lives in the Great East Japan Earthquake, and express my heartfelt sympathies to those who suffered loss in this disaster, as well as to the families of these victims.

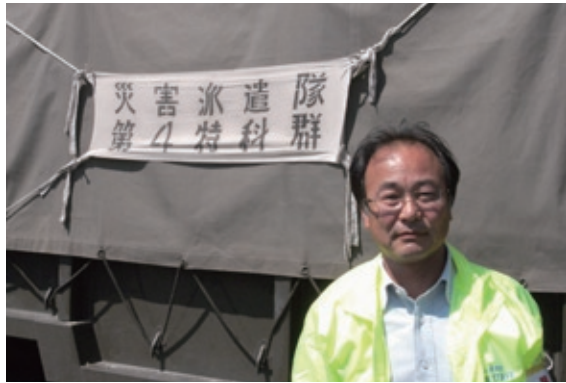
The Ken-Iku Kai Group was also affected by this catastrophe, as Ishinomaki Hospital and Himawari Home Nursing Station, located in the city of Ishinomaki in Miyagi Prefecture, and Iwaki Yumoto Hospital, located in the city of Iwaki in Fukushima Prefecture, are in the disaster-stricken areas and suffered devastating damage. Through continuous efforts to ascertain the whereabouts and safety of our staff, we have confirmed that three of our members at Ishinomaki Hospital and Himawari Home Nursing Station lost their lives in the tsunami. As we had hoped that all of our staff would be found safe, we are deeply saddened by this loss, and I would like to respectfully offer a prayer for these three members and my heartfelt condolences to their families.



Immediately after the earthquake struck, the Ken-Iku Kai Group set up the Disaster Task Force in order to carry out around-the-clock efforts to transport essential supplies to the two hospitals and facilities that were trying to continue providing hospitalization and medical treatment to patients amidst disaster-related conditions (deliveries have been made to Ishinomaki Hospital 11 times; to Iwaki Yumoto Hospital 10 times); dispatch medical teams to the disaster-stricken areas (a cumulative total of 23 members); as well as collect and disseminate information (providing updates on its website at least once a day regarding the damage situation, a total of 16 times). On March 24, the Disaster Task Force was renamed the Restoration Support Office, and is currently continuing its efforts to provide support.



Through Supplementary Issues of our Online Newsletter on our Group's website, we have been reporting on disaster-related developments to date. At Iwaki Yumoto Hospital, outpatient treatment has resumed, with functions recovering to almost the same level as what was offered before the disaster. The infrastructure of Ishinomaki Hospital and Himawari Home Nursing Station, both of which sustained substantial damage from the tsunami, has not yet been restored completely. Although conditions at Ishinomaki Hospital and Himawari Home Nursing Station are still unstable, and last night's (April 7) earthquake, which was the largest aftershock since March 11, caused a power blackout, both are scheduled to resume outpatient treatment from April 11. As we have received tremendous support from many concerned parties during the period following the disaster, I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincerest appreciation. I am deeply grateful.



After the disaster struck, I myself visited both hospitals and the other facilities, where I had a chance to speak with some patients and their families. Feeling the will and strength of the people as they worked among the wreckage in their efforts to rebuild, it was I who felt encouraged and heartened. The more I came to understand the situation of the disaster-stricken areas and the emotions of the people there, the more I realized the importance of “making contributions through providing medical care” at these two hospitals in the disaster-stricken areas.





The staff of the hospitals and the facilities are working under very harsh conditions, as they, too, have lost their homes in the disaster; yet they are carrying out their duties, putting top priority on providing medical care to the hospitalized patients. Their devotion to their work has been taken up by the media (*), and the patients and their families have expressed their appreciation for these efforts. Such staff members, who are selflessly and tirelessly working with a strong sense of duty, regardless of the harshness of the conditions they face, are the pride of the Ken-Iku Kai Group. In order to provide some stability in their living environment so they can carry out their work with a sense of reassurance, we are currently supporting the staff by assisting them with such matters as the commute to their workplace and finding housing for them, and we will continue to provide them with the support they need.



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Opening article entitled “Mutually extending a helping hand” appeared in the April 1 issue of Shukan Asahi weekly news magazine, which is published by Asahi Shimbun, one of the leading Japanese newspapers

Broadcast on News Watch 9 on NHK, a Japanese public broadcaster, from 9:00 p.m. on March 19

Broadcast on NHK Sendai, which is one of the local broadcasting stations of NHK, on April 11 from 12:35, on the News from Miyagi Prefecture corner

First and foremost, we at the Ken-Iku Kai Group are committed to coming together as one to carry out efforts to fully restore the hospitals that were devastated by the disaster. Furthermore, with the two hospitals and the other facilities taking a leading role, we continue to provide long-term support to realize the restoration of the disaster-stricken areas.

