

Initiative 3 Construction of Iwate's unique medical and welfare network

[Outline of Approach]

- Iwate Prefecture set up the Iwate Disaster Medical Support Network by using Iwate Medical University's unique medical and welfare provisioning; Iwate Prefecture also cooperated with related institutions that had human resources, and continuously worked towards building a support system.
- In addition, thanks to the cooperation of the government, citizens, and schools, the prefecture also set up a Disaster Welfare Widespread Support Institution in Iwate Prefecture, promoted the understanding of welfare and nursing needs of people needing care such as the elderly and those with disabilities, and developed the dispatch system of the Disaster Relief Welfare Team of Iwate for emergency and other support.
- The Iwate Infection Control Assistance Team (ICAT) was set up to prevent any large-scale outbreaks of influenza, norovirus, and hand-foot-and-mouth disease, etc., in the shelters of the coastal disaster-affected areas after the Great East Japan Earthquake Tsunami, and it became a permanent organization of the prefecture from June 2012.

Approach 1: Establishment of "Iwate disaster medical support network"

This network consisted of 6 institutions: Iwate Medical University, Prefectural Medical Association, Red Cross of Japan, National Hospital Organization, Prefectural Medical Station, and Iwate Prefecture government. It gathered at the disaster response headquarters and performed medical team delivery and medical institution support according to the requests of local areas.

In addition, as external people could access the shelters of the disaster affected areas freely, it was possible to pretend to be medical staff and make damage, in order to eliminate this worry; all the medical teams at the local areas of this network were equipped with licenses.



The network during one of their regular meetings



Licenses issued to the medical team

Regarding activities in the disaster-affected areas, the dispatched medical teams, the local government and health centers of each area, etc. gathered together every morning and evening to hold meetings, to coordinate patrolling of the shelters, and to share patient information.



Dispatched medical teams holding meetings

Approach 2: Establishment of "Iwate Prefecture Disaster Welfare Widespread Support Promotion Organization"

As the main dispatch body for disaster relief welfare teams, the prefecture created the "Iwate Prefecture Disaster Welfare Widespread Support Promotion Organization" as a united organization of the government, citizens, and schools in September 2013.

This organization has integrated welfare, medical care, and health management, and is working to enhance the support system for people who need help in the time of a disaster.

There are 4 to 6 people in welfare positions on the disaster relief welfare team, and they will support the welfare of the people in need of shelter in the early stage of a disaster (about 5 days).

The team members consist of social workers, care workers, psychiatric social workers and others with certain years of experience. They have to attend team member training courses before registering as members. During the team member training courses, they can acquire the necessary knowledge and skills required in the activities through lectures and drills.



Establishment of the promotion organization



Team members training course



Team members practicing their training

Approach 3: Establishment of Iwate Infection Control Assistance Team (ICAT)

This team consists of Iwate Medical University Hospital, Iwate Prefectural Hospital, Morioka Red Cross Hospital, and the infection control expert staff of the Independent Administrative Institution, National Hospital Organization, and Iwate Hospital.

Besides ensuring the safety of affiliated hospitals, the team members also perform training and exercises dealing with infectious diseases and preparing for new types of influenza and disasters.

Activities of Iwate Infection Control Assistant Team (ICAT)