

Agreement with JAXA regarding disaster medical support activities using super high-speed Internet satellite

In preparation for anticipated large-scale disasters in future, the Japan Medical Association (JMA) and the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) entered into an agreement concerning demonstration experiments to enable smooth operation of disaster medical support activities using the super high-speed Internet satellite *Kizuna*. The signing ceremony was held at the JMA's office on January 30, 2013.

The purpose of the agreement is to investigate how to use *Kizuna* in disaster countermeasures when a large-scale disaster has occurred and to jointly conduct experiments relating to the application of the satellite in disaster medical support activities.

Details of the events leading up to the agreement are given on pages 67–69 in this issue and so are omitted here. Briefly, the agreement was concluded in order to carry out further demonstration experiments with the aim of establishing means of sharing information during a disaster in light of the results of a demonstration conducted in July 2012.

Tasks shall be shared as follows: the JMA will be in charge of investigating how to use such means of sharing information during a disaster as TV conference systems, databases, and cloud-based digital medical records; JAXA will be in charge of experiments and assessments based on the JMA's proposed plans, operating *Kizuna*, and lending equipment. JAXA will also immediately put in place a system for information sharing using *Kizuna* during a real disaster.

While it is expected that the Internet will be



JMA President Yoshitake Yokokura (left) and JAXA President Keiji Tachikawa shaking hands after signing the agreement

utilized during disasters such as the anticipated giant earthquake in the Nankai Trough and an earthquake directly beneath the Tokyo metropolitan area, there are also concerns that the communication environment could break down.

The JMA hopes to help maintain the lives and health of disaster survivors by validating what can be done with satellite-based Internet communication and verifying any problems through these demonstration experiments in preparation for large-scale disasters. Moreover, since *Kizuna* covers the entire Asia and Oceania region, it hopes to consider the satellite's utilization in the sharing of disaster medical information in this region through organizations such as the Confederation of Medical Associations in Asia and Oceania (CMAAO).

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