

Rehabilitation Activities for Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami July11-Sep 15

During and after the emergency period, the local hospitals managed to maintain the services to respond to people's needs, despite the limited facilities and resources. AMDA continued to send volunteers to the affected hospitals with the objective to reduce the daily workload of hospital staffs, and enable them to take some time off work.

■ Rehabilitation support at 2 hospitals

Area	Partner Hospitals
Otsuchicho (Iwate Prefecture)	Otsuchi Hospital
Minamisanrikucho (Miyagi Prefecture)	Shizugawa Hospital

■ Total number of dispatched personnel to 2 main sites (11 July to 15 September 2011)

Doctors: 4	Nurses: 13	Pharmacists: 1	Psychotherapists : 1	Coordinators: 6
Assistant Nurses: 11	Care Workers: 1	Assistance Doctor: 9	Acupuncture therapists: 1	

■ Daily operations at activity sites

~Minamisanrikucho, Motoyoshigun, Miyagi Prefecture~

Whilst the scar left out by the earthquake are still visible, many people gather at monthly held 'cheer-up market' which sells local products such as 'Shizugawa octopuses'.

As July and August being summer holiday, many children visited the clinic for dental checkup, and also receive vaccination for cervical cancer at pediatric department. There were many patients of heat stroke due to the extreme heat. At an outpatient ward, there were also many cases unique to the disaster affected area such as insect bites and injuries whilst working outside. On busy days and in the cases of emergency, the medical team and hospital staffs treated patients after clinic hours.

Hospital staffs commented 'more nurses can take leave now, thanks to the program'. However, on the other hand, many of our volunteers reported that the hospital staffs devote themselves for caring patients saying 'we are busy with preparation of funerals and cleaning but we don't want to leave work now'. In order for those staffs to have time-off to recover physically and mentally, AMDA decided to continue this 'nurse dispatch program' until



Hospital Staffs and AMDA volunteers at temporarily built facility of Shizugawa Hospital (outpatient ward).



Not all patients can be accommodated inside the waiting room.



People waiting for bus by the road side to visit clinic in Otsuchicho

~Otsuchicho, Kamiheigun, Iwate Prefecture~

Otsuchi Hospital welcomed 2 volunteer doctors of AMDA on one-week alternating rotation from 7th August to 20th August. Five months have passed since the disaster and the debris in Otsuchicho are cleared. Doctors from AMDA treated an average of 14 patients a day. Some of the major symptoms amongst the patients were hypertension, hyperlipemia and diabetes. There were patients who experienced the deterioration of chronic diseases such as neurogenic symptoms and blood pressure instability in coping with the traumatic loss of the loved ones. Some started drinking alcohol trying to get decent sleep, and have developed alcohol cirrhosis.

The temporary housing of Otsuchicho are located in between mountains, it is not easy to access the hospital. People who are living off the route of cyclic bus, they would have to get a taxi to the main street, or walk. At the temporary housing, people hesitate to ask others to get a lift to the hospital, as they do not know each other very well. Dr. Suzuki of AMDA says 'we need activity in which people feel closer to each other at the temporary housing'.



A Meeting to check the construction design of 'Otsuchi Health Support Center'

■ Acupuncture Therapy

Patients Treated from May - August 2011

Month	Number of Patients
May	56
June	118
July	144
August	52
Total	370



Acupuncture therapy took place in cars, evacuation centers, people's home and school before the establishment of a new clinic.

'Acupuncture Outreach' started soon after the disaster in Otsuchicho, Kamiheigun in Iwate has been still on-going by the local acupuncturist Ms. Sasaki. Around 370 patients have been treated since May to August. Other than the major cases such as backaches, shoulder aches and knee aches, there are many people who suffer from insomnia, fatigue and ear ringing, which are often caused by stress.

From 8th to 23rd of August, AMDA sent Dr. Takahashi and acupuncturist Mr. Imai and conducted medical outreach. On 5th September, the local acupuncturist Ms. Sasaki and the people launched 'temporary acupuncture clinic' in Masanai Assembly House in Otsuchicho. Opening of this clinic enabled the medical practice on fixed place and time. As a result, patients at the evacuation center on Otsuchi High school as well as the regular patients before the disaster have better access to the services.



Putting up an advertisement to announce the new opening of Acupuncture Clinic (left).

■ For the Future

AMDA is currently preparing for the construction of 'AMDA health support center' with acupuncture clinic in Otsuchicho. The construction will start in October 2011, and is plan to be inaugurated before the end of this year. Upon a request from the partner hospitals, AMDA decided to extend the program for another three years until we see that the local medical institutions recover the capacity to fully respond to the specific needs of people in the areas.