

Editorial

As Chief editor, I am very happy to send you the first English issue of Japanese Journal of Health Economics and Policy.

Since *Japanese Journal of Health Economics and Policy* assumed the role of the official journal of Japan Health Economic Association, or JHEA, in 2006, the journal has helped the association to become one of the most active research associations in the field of social sciences here in Japan. Supported by strong submissions by its members, dedicated associate editors, and a very supportive publisher, we have managed to publish at least two issues every year. In a near future, we may be adding a third one. The success of the journal and JHEA are the two sides of the same coin; both reflect the active and increasing research outputs of the JHEA members and their rapidly improving quality.

Our success, so far, has been mostly domestic. Language barrier and the unique features of our health care system have generally limited the submission of our members to this journal. We have had almost no submission from abroad even though we have been accepting papers written in English. In order to support research activities that meet global standards, and develop research agenda that are particularly important for Japan and for our neighbors, it is clear that JHEA should offer an English journal some time in future. At this moment, given the relative paucity of member's outputs in English, it is still too early.

We have thus decided to start dedicating at least one issue of this journal for papers written in English each year. The English issues will carry the same volume number as other Japanese issues published in the same fiscal year, but they will have a different numbering system, starting with E1. It is only fitting that two of the papers in this issue, one by Professor Fumiaki Yasukawa and the other by Professor Byongho Tchoe, are contributed papers originally presented in the first joint session with Korean Health Economics Association in year 2008. The other two are submitted papers; one is written by Mr. Yoshihiko Kadoya with Dr. Takuma Sugahara providing a counter argument for the editorial committee, and the other by myself.

Lastly, I would like to express my mourning for the loss of Professor Tadashi Yamada of Tsukuba University, a very dear friend of mine, in March 2009. He was an associate editor, who had long contributed to the growth of health economics since its infancy through his numerous works that often reminded us of his teacher, Professor Michael Grossman. We all remember him as a serious scholar, and a very generous teacher, who happily shared his deep insight with his students. He would have been very happy to see this issue, and I am sure he would have submitted one of his own papers. For him, I submitted one of mine to this issue, a paper I had worked on in our last project, and hope he would like the new version.

Seiritsu Ogura
Chief editor
Japanese Journal of Health Economics and Policy