

Clinical Research Services

Work to promote high-quality clinical research and trials

It is important to continue pursuing safe and effective treatment methods to improve the quality of medical care in Japan. To achieve this, detailed clinical data from a large number of medical institutions need to be collected and studied, preferably without regional bias.

The NHO has hospitals in all prefectures in Japan and is building Japan's largest hospital network, comprising 143 hospitals. The NHO also has several medical achievements, including in fields that are difficult for private medical care. The characteristics of the NHO allow studies to be conducted to improve the quality of medical care.

Promoting clinical research

NHO characteristics, such as economies of scale and the ability to guarantee a wealth of cases and a specific level of quality, enable large-scale clinical studies to promote evidence-based medicine (EBM), to establish medical evidence for high-quality, and standardized medical care. Another initiative is NHO network joint research, focused on developing high-quality evidence useful in general clinical practice. This joint work uses NHO research network groups established for each field of disease. In general, these studies are promptly conducted following collective review by a central ethics committee at the NHO headquarters.

In 2015, 4 EBM studies and 25 network joint studies were approved, bringing the total number of studies currently underway to 82.

Clinical research centers and clinical research departments

Through the NHO network, 10 clinical research centers have been established nationwide to act as bases for conducting multicenter clinical research. We are also establishing 76 clinical research departments nationwide to conduct interdisciplinary clinical research, either independently or jointly with other facilities.

- NHO clinical research centers
- Tokyo Medical Center
 - Nagoya Medical Center
 - Osaka National Hospital
 - Shikoku Cancer Center
 - Kyushu Medical Center

- Sagamihara National Hospital
 - Kyoto Medical Center
 - Kinki-Chuo Chest Medical Center
 - Kyushu Cancer Center
 - Nagasaki Medical Center

Initiatives for advanced medical care

Clinical research projects for natural killer T-cell therapy in lung cancer based on a basic agreement to promote comprehensive cooperation and collaboration with RIKEN (the Institute of Physical and Chemical Research) have been approved as advanced medical care B. Patient registration is now underway.

The NHO is also collaborating in a personalized medicine realization program (BioBank Japan Project) and induced pluripotent stem (iPS) cell research at Kyoto University (Center for iPS Cell Research and Application; CiRA). This aims to promote clinical research into genomic and regenerative medicine.



Promoting clinical trials

Through the NHO network, we are promoting fast and high-quality clinical trials, including physician-initiated clinical trials. We are establishing a clinical trial network to liaise and coordinate clinical trials and other projects through a Clinical Trial Promotion Office in the Clinical Research Department. This provides a clinical trial contact point at NHO headquarters and clinical trial administrators and administrative officers as points of contact for clinical trials in hospitals.

■Clinical trial management offices

We have installed clinical trial management offices in hospitals nationwide. Clinical trial administrators and administrative officers provide support to patients, companies involved in clinical trials, and other entities to allow clinical trials to be conducted appropriately and safely in 101 hospitals from 2015.

■Clinical research coordinators (CRCs)

Nationwide, we have instated 223 CRCs to facilitate the clinical trial process. The CRCs have taken on roles such as informed consent procedures and mental health care for study participants, supporting principal investigators in clinical trials, and coordinating people within teams.



Training for personnel engaged in clinical trials and research

Annual workshops are held to train personnel such as CRCs and doctors who perform clinical research. These workshops promote high-quality clinical trials and research. Participants from outside the NHO are able to take part in some of this training. In this way, the NHO contributes to clinical trials and research activity throughout Japan.

In addition to training researchers engaged in clinical trials and research, the NHO offers research ethics training to members of ethics committees and other relevant staff. The use of e-learning allows the NHO to promote initiatives that contribute to preventing research fraud and other forms of malpractice.

