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Lecture Title: Medical exchanges between Japanese and Russian universities: from Niigata University's perspective

Abstract:

The Medical Exchange Program between Niigata University and Russian universities has a long history and dates back to 1992. At that time, a member of the House of Representatives Taro Nakayama established the Japan-Russia Medical Exchange Foundation and provided humanitarian aid to victims of the Chernobyl accident. Then a group of doctors from Niigata University led by Dr. Rintaro Narisawa began an exchange program with the group of Russian health care professionals and provided endoscopy training to Russian doctors. In 1993, the first Japan-Russia Medical Symposium was held in Niigata. At the same time, Professor Emeritus of Niigata University Dr. Hideaki Takahashi and vice-rector of the Krasnoyarsk Medical University Dr. Valeriy Ivanov reached a mutual understanding on the issue of student exchanges. From that moment the history of medical student exchanges has begun.

Having such a long history of cooperation with Russia and a lot of achievements, Niigata University School of Medicine applied for an educational grant from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology in 2014. It aimed to implement the "inter-university exchange project/re-inventing Japan project". It was named Globalization

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and Medical Exchange Project (G-MedEx Project). It gave a strong boost to exchange programs that have been organized so far. As a result of this project, more than 170 undergraduate and graduate students actively participated in this project.

2017 was the fruitful year for Japan-Russian exchanges. "Niigata Consortium for Japan-Russia Medical Sciences and Educational exchanges" was established. Within the consortium, Niigata University cooperates with companies, financial institutions, local governments, and other related organizations of Niigata prefecture. Together with "Niigata Consortium for Japan-Russia Medical Sciences and Educational exchanges" we held the symposium, where medical and health-related equipment and products of companies working in the prefecture have been exhibited. A new project was organized in 2017 together with Hokkaido University. It aims to build a platform for collecting and optimizing information about exchange experiences between Japanese and Russian universities. We hope that this road ahead will be long.

Unfortunately, since last year, COVID-19 has affected university education greatly. The whole world is in a difficult situation that is why this time training medical professionals who can play an active role on the international stage becomes a top priority. Keeping this in mind, we are actively organizing programs that can be carried out online, such as online schools, student forums, and online lectures.

From now on we will do our best to improve online education system. We believe that a combination of highly online learning and practical training in the medical field is the most effective.