

<Preface>

Recent topics in public health in Japan 2026

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The *Journal of the National Institute of Public Health* is published bimonthly to provide timely coverage of emerging priorities and evolving challenges across the broad field of public health, including health promotion, medical and social care, and environmental health. The Journal seeks to disseminate accurate, evidence-based knowledge and practical insights to public health practitioners, policymakers, and researchers. Although its primary readership is in Japan, the Journal also aims to contribute to international knowledge exchange by presenting Japan's experiences and policy developments to a global audience. Since 2019, this objective has been pursued through an annual special feature issue highlighting contemporary topics in Japanese public health.

The present feature issue, *Recent Topics in Public Health in Japan 2026*, adopts a multi-topic format rather than focusing on a single theme. This approach reflects the limited availability of consolidated, accessible information on Japan's public health system and practices in the international literature, despite increasing global interest in Japan's policy experience and service delivery. Accordingly, this issue brings together eight review articles that collectively describe policy initiatives, professional practices, and system developments to which the National Institute of Public Health (NIPH) has contributed.

Tomio et al. provide an overview of Japan's public health disaster preparedness and response system, with particular attention to the Disaster Health Emergency Assistance Team (DHEAT), a coordination-support mechanism designed to assist affected local health authorities during major disasters. Seino et al. examine the historical development of physical activity and exercise policies in Japan, highlighting key policy characteristics, achievements, and ongoing challenges. Kuramoto and Fukuda review the dental hygienist workforce, outlining its historical evolution, education and training systems, employment patterns, professional roles, and future directions. Takahashi et al. describe Japan's pathway toward adoption of the International Classification of Diseases, 11th Revision (ICD-11) and discuss how this transition may serve as a foundation for advancing data-driven healthcare. Inaba et al. analyze progress and remaining challenges in tobacco control over the two decades following implementation of the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC). Marutani and Takezawa introduce Japan's employment choice support system for persons with disabilities, implemented in 2025, along with newly developed assessment sheets and a supplementary work-support tool. Kodama et al. report on the current state of comprehensive sexuality education in Japan, examining institutional frameworks and emerging practices. Takemura explores the relationship between health policy and economic and industrial policy, contrasting health-related initiatives promoted by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry with the economic and industrial impacts of health policies implemented by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.

It is hoped that this collection will provide international readers with a concise overview of selected developments in Japanese public health and serve as a reference for further research and practice. This issue is part of the Recent Topics in Public Health in Japan series initiated in 2019 that aims to share selected experiences from Japan with the global public health community.