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Japan System Techniques Co., Ltd.

COPD Program of the City of Takamatsu Wins Excellence Award at the 14th Live a Longer Healthy Life Awards

- Data analysis assistance helps raise use of checkups and treatments while lowering healthcare expenses -

A chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) education program conducted by Japan System Techniques Co., Ltd. (Head office: Kita-ku, Osaka; President and CEO: Taku Hirabayashi; JAST), the City of Takamatsu and AstraZeneca K.K. (Head office: Kita-ku, Osaka; President & Representative Director: Takafumi Horii) received an award at the 14th Live a Longer Healthy Life Awards given by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare and the Japan Sports Agency. The program was selected for an Excellence Award from the director of the ministry's Health Service Bureau.

The COPD education program uses medical data to identify individuals covered by Japan's national health insurance or the health care system for people in the later stages of old age who have a significant risk of developing COPD. The program in the City of Takamatsu was selected for an award as an advanced model to increase examinations, tests, diagnoses and treatments for COPD using public and private sector cooperation.



■ Background and issues

It is estimated that about 5.3 million people in Japan have COPD, which is called a lung lifestyle disease. Many of these people have not been diagnosed and are not receiving any treatment. COPD mortality and healthcare expenses in the City of Takamatsu are higher than the average for all of Japan. As a result, there is an urgent need to identify people with COPD at an early stage and prevent this disease from becoming serious. Since March 2024, the City of Takamatsu, AstraZeneca and JAST have been conducting a patient education program with each partner responsible for different roles in this undertaking that combines public and private sector resources.

More information about this program is in a press release by JAST dated May 14, 2024 titled "[Start of COPD Patient Education Joint Program with the City of Takamatsu and AstraZeneca K.K.](#)"

■ Overview

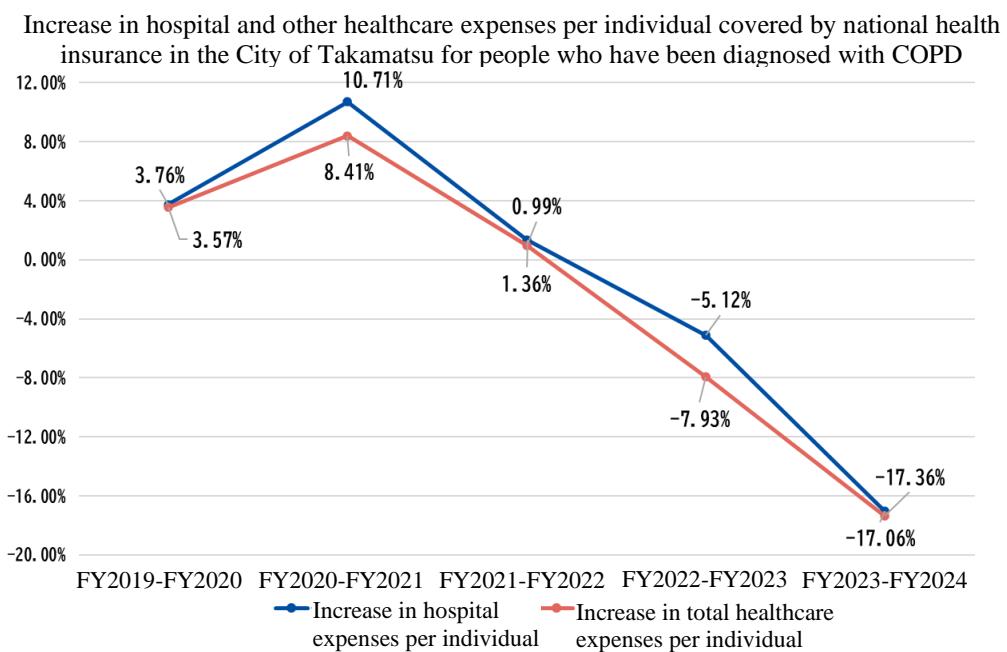
The COPD education program uses information about individuals, such as medical examinations, smoking, use of drugs and other characteristics, to identify people with a high risk of developing COPD or people who have stopped receiving treatment for COPD. In the past, the process relied on people covered by national health insurance or the late-stage old age system to notice symptoms of COPD on their own and take the initiative to seek medical care. This program differs by using activities with medical associations and pulmonary specialists to create a unified framework encompassing examinations, tests, diagnoses and treatments.

People at risk receive notices with explanations that are easy to understand for the purpose of enabling people to become aware of their health issues. Furthermore, the program works with healthcare facilities in the City of Takamatsu to provide a clear succession of steps to take. People covered by national health insurance or the late-stage old age system who receive these notices will easily know where to go for tests and a diagnosis.

Unifying the identification of data, establishment of steps for a diagnosis and links with healthcare facilities allows people to receive examinations and other care efficiently with no uncertainty about what to do.

■ Benefits in FY2024

Due to this COPD education program, the percentage of people with COPD who visited a healthcare facility increased from 5% in FY2023 to 13% in FY2024, the percentage receiving a pulmonary test at a participating healthcare facility increased from 62% to 72%, and the percentage receiving treatment based on treatment guidelines increased from 32% to 56%. In addition, hospital and other healthcare expenses for COPD patients are declining for people who have national health insurance. This indicates that the program may help prevent COPD from becoming more serious while bringing down healthcare expenses. These figures for FY2024 are for only the nine-month period from April to December.



■ JAST's roles and reasons for this award

For the COPD education program in the City of Takamatsu, JAST provided assistance involving data analysis, the design of logic for identifying high-risk people, and the creation of an examination and treatment sequence linking healthcare facilities, local governments and people covered by national health insurance or the late-stage old age system. The key point is that JAST's activities go beyond simply packaged services by customizing the program to reflect the input of patients, healthcare professionals and others directly involved with COPD.

The program is overseen by the City of Takamatsu and is closely linked with local medical associations and pulmonary specialists. JAST assisted committees and other groups in the COPD framework and collected and processed opinions of pulmonary specialists to perform data analysis.

Notices sent to high-risk people are structured to make these individuals aware on their own of the need to seek medical care. Furthermore, these notices include a message to be given to healthcare professionals at the location where the individual is seeking care. Paying attention to details like this ensures that these people who are covered by national health insurance or the late-stage old age system will receive examinations and tests at healthcare facilities they need.

By using clearly defined parameters for the assessment of benefits concerning tests, diagnoses and treatments, JAST succeeded at providing quantitative information about the benefits of the program.

■ Upcoming activities

The City of Takamatsu is continuing the COPD education program in FY2025. Goals are to firmly establish the benefits of the program and build a framework for the medium to long-term evaluation of changes in the behavior of people who are covered by national health insurance or the late-stage old age system. JAST will continue to play a role in creating sustainable regional healthcare by using data and assisting local governments.

■ Remark by Ryo Aoki, JAST executive officer and general manager of the Healthcare Innovation Business Division:

“This award is the result of joint activities with the City of Takamatsu, local healthcare facilities and AstraZeneca. Not smoking is the best way to prevent COPD because cigarette smoking is the primary cause of this disease. Discovering COPD at an early stage is important too. JAST is committed to playing a role in the creation of a wellbeing society by using medical data and assisting with making changes in how people lead their lives.”

■ Inquiries

Japan System Techniques Co., Ltd.
Contact: Miyamura
Healthcare Innovation Business Division
TEL: +81-3-6718-2785 (Tokyo), +81-6-4560-1050 (Osaka)
Mail: jmics-sales@jast.co.jp
URL: <https://jmics.jp>

■ Press Inquiries

Japan System Techniques Co., Ltd.
Contact: Yamashita/Ishida
General Affairs Department
TEL: +81-6-4560-1000
Mail: press@jast.co.jp
URL: <https://www.jast.jp/en/>