



CERTIFIED NPO ORGANISATION

Japan Therapeutic Care Association

About Japan Therapeutic Care Association – An Approved Specified Non-profit Organisation

This association is an approved specified non-profit organisation in Japan, aiming to deliver happiness and dignity to all people through therapeutic care entrusted by the British Red Cross.

The Beginnings of this Association

In 1999, the chairman of this association, Akiyoshi Michiyo, who acted as the head of the service committee of beauty care for the Japanese Red Cross Fukuoka branch, arranged a self-funded visit to the British Red Cross branch in Kent in order to learn about 'beauty care'. There she came across an unfamiliar type of care called 'therapeutic care,' which had only started there three years before her arrival.



During her stay, Akiyoshi received a series of lectures and skills coaching from Miss Maxine Wells, and became the first Japanese to learn about therapeutic care. Akiyoshi also met with one of therapeutic care's developers, Miss Sian Scott. Two weeks later, on her return to Japan, Miss Scott presented Akiyoshi with modules and videos, in hope to popularize therapeutic care in Japan. This became the start of Akiyoshi's determination to spread therapeutic care within Japan.

On her return, Akiyoshi single-handedly started volunteering in therapeutic care in hospitals and care institutions across Fukuoka. In order to spread the knowledge of therapeutic care, she also developed the first Japanese text material in therapeutic care, and encouraged development of staff who would join her in her volunteering work.

The number of people recognising the importance of this type of care gradually increased, and in a year the organisation reached over a hundred members. In order to maintain the quality of volunteers, in 2005, the voluntary organisation gained corporate status and became a 'specified non-profit organisation'.



*Teaching Materials from Miss Scott.

Following achievement of its corporate status, the association continued to engage actively in therapeutic care projects; including visits to care institutions, education in elementary and secondary schools, working with new parents, and providing support to disaster affected areas. The association's effective administration and management and the benefit in public interest it brings, was well received by Fukuoka Prefecture, which certified the association as an 'approved specified non-profit organisation' in 2014.

An 'approved specified non-profit organisation' undergoes strict reviews, such as audits of accounts dating back several years, and is one that is felt by administrative bodies to have good organisational management and particularly high benefits in public interests above all other non-profit organisations. As of September 2019, of all 51,415 non-profit organisations

in Japan, only 1,116 organisations have either been accredited as ‘approved specified’ or ‘provisionally accredited’ (2.2% of all non-profit organisations). Bodies that have been accredited as an approved specified non-profit organisations are publically recognised as those that act exemplars to other non-profit organisations, and held in high social credibility.

Overview of the Association

Headquarters: #202, 2-6-1, Gojo, Dazaifu, Fukuoka 818-0125 JAPAN

Number of members: Full member: 223 Associate member: 815

Corporate membership: 15 organisations

Total number of students in correspondence course: 1,358

Branches: Sapporo Branch, Tomakomai Branch, Tokyo Branch, Kanagawa Branch, Saitama Branch, Tochigi Branch, Shizuoka Branch, Kochi Branch, Kitakyushu Branch, Saga Branch, Nagasaki Branch, Kumamoto Branch

Association Advisors:

Kubo Chiharu (Kyushyu University President, Doctor of Medicine)

Yamaguchi Hajime (J.F. Oberlin University Professor, Speciality: Psychology and Education)

Iwashita Hitomi (Midwife)

Koichi Hosaka (Lawyer)

Description of Operation

1) Care Activities (Volunteer visits to institutions)

This is an important project that occupies the largest part of our operations. Our volunteers visit over 100 places a year in Japan to practice therapeutic care – these places includes day services, day care centres, private residential homes, nursing homes, palliative care wards in hospitals, and hospices.

We provide care in dementia, care for care providers, palliative and hospice care, long-term illness care, end of life care, and deliver input for patients with breast cancer post operatively. There has been many reported benefits of therapeutic care, including improvements in behavioural problems in dementia, and reduction of leg oedema.

There has recently been a demand for volunteers to support home nursing and carer visits, and this has been something we want to consider tackling in the future.

2019 Performance Record

Institutions visited: 18 prefectures, 96 places in Japan

Total number of volunteers involved: 3,155

Total persons receiving therapy: 14,779



2) Parenting support activities

In Japan, there has been a surge in child abuse cases where the perpetrators have been the child’s own parents, and is an area of increasing public concern.

In 2008, using the skill and theory from therapeutic care, we devised a parent-child massage therapy alongside practicing midwives. Utilising free workshops for child-rearing families, we aim to assist in child abuse prevention and postnatal care (preventing postnatal depression).



Our 'infant therapy' workshop provides emotional support for child-rearing mothers and gives lessons in simple massages for couples and family, encourages emotional connections between families and between parent and child. It can include our association's volunteer practicing therapeutic care to the child-rearing mother. We also carry out education for young fathers (including care for the wife), and develop volunteers that can provide parenting support.



2019 Performance Record

Number of workshops held: 25

Total number of volunteers involved: 93

Number of people attending workshops: 487

Number of volunteers trained to provide parenting support: 81

3) Educations in schools (classroom support)

As the number of nuclear families increases in Japan, the opportunities for a child to interact with the community and different generations have reduced. There has been an increased interest in problems relating to lack of communication skills amongst the young, which is believed to lead to bullying and social withdrawal.

This association has dispatched lecturers to elementary, junior high and high school classrooms. Through therapeutic care, we delivered lessons in communication skills to aid children to interact with family members and people from different generations, as well as teaching the spirit of volunteerism and the importance of life, to over 10,000 children to date.



2019 Performance Record

Total number of volunteer involved: 133

Schools involved: High schools/specialist schools: 10

Elementary/Junior High: 10

Total number of students: 1,874



4) Developing Personnel

In order to spread therapeutic care in Japan, our association does not depend on subsidies and grants-in-aid, and instead is pioneering a business-type non-profit organisation which manages the association by income generated from developing human resources.

We provide lectures in therapeutic care for those practicing home care, visiting volunteers from local institutions, culture schools, and provide qualifications through lectures and correspondence courses for care and nursing personnel who wish to provide therapeutic care to patients or care home residents.

In recent years, there has been a serious lack of people working in care in Japan. One factor that is thought to be exacerbating this is the difficulty of communication between younger care workers and dementia patients. Our association provides therapeutic care lectures to students in specialist schools and colleges as a care support skill.



2019 Performance Record

Total number of volunteers involved: 289

Number of students: 1,528

5) Support to Disaster Affected Areas

Honouring the spirit of the British Red Cross, we provide therapeutic care to victims of natural disasters by sending our volunteers to shelters and temporary housing in disaster affected areas. We provide care to anybody; including the elderly, disabled, children and their parents, and patients suffering from dementia. Our activities include relaxation techniques for anxiety and tension, prevention of economy class syndrome for those using vehicle evacuation, support and care of those bereaved, and emotional care for children. A large disaster affects the emotional wellbeing not only at the time of the event, so continual care and support is provided three years after the event and five yearly.

We deliver logistical support by offering care to local officials, medical staff and others that provide support in the area. We give courses to volunteers in disaster affected areas, so that care can be given continuously.

We also arrange charity events and donate funds raised to support disaster affected areas.



Performance Record

Fukuoka West coast earthquake (2005 March): Visited shelters several times, starting ten days after earthquake

Great East Japan Earthquake (2011 September): Visited Fukushima prefecture (South Aiba City, Fukushima City) temporary housing three times, and Miyagi prefecture (South Sanriku City) temporary housing once, from six months following the event up to April 2016

Kumamoto Earthquake (2016 April): Visited Kumamoto prefecture (Mashiki City, Aso City) shelters and day-care nurseries six times from ten days following event to November 2016. Through two charity events and fund raising from members, donated 247,902 yen to disaster affected areas.

Torrential Rain in Northern Kyushu (2017 July) : Visited Oita prefecture (Hita City) and Fukuoka prefecture (Asakura City, Toho Village) shelters and day-care nurseries several times.

Hokkaido Eastern Iburi earthquake(2018 September): Visited Hokkaido prefecture (Yufutsu County) shelters and day-care nurseries several times.

As we have outlined above, in Japan, therapeutic care is widely used in varying areas including parenting support, emotional education for children, nursing support, home care in dementia, care facilities, palliative care, spiritual care, end of life care, bereavement care, and care during disasters.

Exchange between British Red Cross and the Association

From our first visit to Britain in 1999, our association has visited the UK every three years for exchange and education for our members. We visited the UK in 2002, 2006, 2008, 2012, and 2016 and plan to regularly continue our visits. In 2008 and 2012, our visit was mentioned in the British Red Cross Kent and Sussex branch newsletter.



Evidence in Therapeutic Care

We are involved in projects with university researchers to scientifically prove the benefits of therapeutic care.

An investigation of change in fingertip blood flow during implementation of therapeutic care (August 2010)

Collaborative researcher: Nagano Yuichiro (Bunkyo University Anthropology Associate Professor)

Content and result: Using a laser doppler blood flow meter, the change in the skin's blood flow was studied amongst 32 adults. When analysing the result using physiological and psychological indices, the relaxation levels were shown to be raised in those receiving care.



Change in blood flow and skin temperature during therapeutic care (2014 March)

Collaborative researcher: Taira Rina (Bunkyo University Anthropology research)

Content and result: A study looking at the change in skin temperature during therapy using the palmar aspect of the left index finger in 25 adults. When looking at this alongside their GACL (General arousal checklist), the DS (deactivation sleep) which correlates with relaxation showed a significant increase, and HA (high activation) which is related to a state of tension was decreased.

Conference presentation: 42nd Japanese Society of Biofeedback Research Annual Symposium (2014) "The use and development of low cost blood flow meters using physical computing and digital fabrication"



Oxytocin levels and psychological benefits of touching in care (2014 June)

Collaborative researcher: Yamaguchi Hajime (J.F. Oberlin University Professor)

Content and result: A study looking at the blood levels of oxytocin, serotonin, cortisol, and immunoglobulin A before and after therapy in both those giving and receiving therapy. Results showed that there is a correlation in the increase of blood oxytocin levels between those giving and receiving therapy, and suggests the importance of the therapists' approach and psychological wellbeing.

Conference presentation: 28th Japanese Association of Health Psychology Conference (2015 September)

Media Listing Information

2015 – Nissoken Bimonthly Magazine 'Elderly Safety and Care Practice and Records' (Four times), Tomakomai Commercial Morning Newspaper, Solalist PR Magazine No 12

2016 – Nishinippon Newspaper, Yomiuri Newspaper, NHK General Television 'Gatten!', NHK General Television 'Rokuichi! Fukuoka' 'Ohayo Kyushu Okinawa', Book by Professor Yamaguchi Hajime 'People are healed through Skin'

2017 – Yomiuri Newspaper, Kumamoto-nichinichi Newspaper, Book by Professor Yamaguchi Hajime 'Skin have "HEART"'

2018 – Hokkaido Newspaper, Tomakomai-Minpo Newspaper

2019 – Asahi Newspaper, Nishinippon Newspaper, RKB Television 'Kyokan-TV', and others

