



# Implementing primary care policy in Japan and recovering from the disaster in Fukushima: a mission impossible?

Professor Ryuki Kassai

## Introduction

Despite having universal health insurance coverage since 1961, Japan is an example of a society that is underserved by an ill-defined primary care system with fragmentation, hospital centralism, and commercialism. Japanese medical education has lacked national systems to accredit postgraduate training programs and to certify specialist doctors in all medical and surgical disciplines including general practice. Therefore, quality of care is not standardised and varies substantially from doctor to doctor, depending mainly on their experience levels.

Under these circumstances the strongest earthquakes of magnitude 9.0 hit northeast region of Japan on 11th March 2011. Immediately after the earthquakes, 10 metres of tsunami fiercely attacked the Pacific coast of the region and destroyed everything. The earthquakes and tsunami hit the nuclear power plant as well, which is located in a coast town in Fukushima prefecture. The electric regulation systems of the plant were deadly damaged, which resulted in meltdown and hydrogen explosion the next day. Radioactive iodine and cesium were emitted into the air. This is how the nuclear disaster began.

Several plans for reconstruction following the disaster have been proposed in vain, due to poorly collaborating stakeholders in Japanese society. Their priorities seem to be undertaking highly visible projects no matter how little they met people's needs in the affected communities.

## This presentation will

- Identify and share current health issues in Fukushima and in Japan.
- Consider ways to raise the profile of primary care in Japanese health care despite all the counter-current.
- Call for collaboration to promote international learning and professional development among younger GPs and trainees.

Wed 8 Feb 2017  
4:00pm - 5:00pm

Centre for Remote Health  
Cnr Simpson & Skinner St,  
Alice Springs Northern Territory  
Lecture Rooms 1 & 2

To register email:  
[crh.seminars@flinders.edu.au](mailto:crh.seminars@flinders.edu.au)

## BIOGRAPHY



### Professor Ryuki Kassai

Professor Ryuki Kassai is Chair of the Department of Community and Family Medicine at Fukushima Medical University, Fukushima, Japan. He is a member of the Board of Directors of the Japan Primary Care Association. He has been trying to construct nation-wide sound systems of primary care in Japan since 1996. He was awarded the Fellowship of the Royal College of General Practitioners (FRCGP) of the UK, and invited to the University of Edinburgh to deliver the Richard Scott Lecture 2015. He has recently been appointed Asia Pacific representative & Regional meeting coordinator of WONCA (World Organization of Family Doctors) Working Party on Research, and a Vice Chair of the organising committee of WONCA Asia Pacific Regional Conference 2019 to be held in Kyoto, Japan.

Please note there is no charge for this workshop but places are limited  
RSVP is necessary

*The views, opinions, methodologies, practices or information expressed by guest speakers and those providing comments are theirs alone, and do not necessarily reflect those of the Centre for Remote Health.*