

Top Interview

Report from the Disaster Task Force Vol. 1

Setsuo Takekawa, Chairman of Medical Corporate Body KEN-IKU KAI



March 13, 2011

I would first like to offer my prayers for those who lost their lives in the Great East Japan Earthquake, which struck on Friday, March 11. I would also like to express my heartfelt sympathies to those who suffered loss in this disaster, as well as to the families of these victims. From immediately after the earthquake struck, the Ken-Iku Kai Group initiated efforts to collect information. In addition, at 4 o'clock in the afternoon on March 11, 2011, we set up the Great East Japan Earthquake Disaster Task Force at the Head Office of the Ken-Iku Kai Group (located at Kanda Nishikicho, Chiyoda-ward, Tokyo), to undertake around-the-clock efforts to verify the whereabouts and safety of, as well as provide support for, all of the patients, users, and staff of the hospitals and facilities of the Ken-Iku Kai Group. Of the facilities in the Ken-Iku Kai Group, Ishinomaki Hospital and its Himawari home healthcare service division in the city of Ishinomaki in Miyagi Prefecture and Iwaki Yumoto Hospital in the city of Iwaki in Fukushima Prefecture, have suffered particularly serious damage. In this issue, I would like to report to you what the Disaster Task Force knows at present.



[Ishinomaki Hospital & Himawari Home Healthcare Service Division]

- Immediately after the earthquake struck, we received confirmation that all of the patients and staff at both facilities were safe. We were informed that there has been no significant damage to the building.

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- After that, at 8 o'clock on the evening of March 11, we received a report that the tsunami had arrived in the area and that the staff and patients had evacuated to the 4th floor of the building and were safe. This is the last we heard from them and we are currently unable to communicate with the hospital or staff.
 - We are currently making every possible effort to collect information, including trying to arrange for a helicopter.

[Iwaki Yumoto Hospital]

- Immediately after the earthquake struck, we received confirmation that all of the patients and staff at both facilities were safe. We were informed that there has been no significant damage to the building.
- We received word that there were shortages of supplies, such as drinking water. So, relief supplies were loaded into cars and the first convoy, which left Tokyo at 11 o'clock in the morning on March 12, arrived on site at 10 o'clock at night of the same day. At 6 o'clock in the morning on March 13, the second convoy set off, arriving on site at 2 o'clock in the afternoon. We are steadily replenishing relief supplies.
- We are taking in the families of our patients whose homes were destroyed in the disaster. They are being given shelter at our facilities.
- Iwaki Yumoto Hospital is located 40 kilometers from Fukushima Daini Nuclear Power Plant. Just in case something should happen to this nuclear power plant, we are constantly collecting information.

[Our other hospitals and facilities]

- We have confirmed that all of the patients, users, and staff are safe.
- Damage to the buildings, equipment, and facilities is minor.
- Medical services will be provided as usual from Monday (tomorrow).
- There have been reports of the possibility of rolling blackouts occurring due to the shortage of electric power. To prepare for this possibility, we have instructed all of our hospitals and facilities to carry out test runs of emergency electric generators and to secure a supply of fuel.

Hereafter, we will continuously updates on our website of the latest information received by the Disaster Task Force regarding our hospitals and facilities. This catastrophic disaster was unprecedented in scale, but with all of us in the Ken-Iku Kai Group uniting as one and bringing together our strengths, we will overcome these difficulties.

Setsuo Takekawa

Head of the Disaster Task Force

