

Stem Center Community Support Division Activity Report

Support in FY2020 by the Stem Center Community Support Division (hereinafter, “Division”) for areas affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake included Shiogama City, Tagajo City, Matsushima Town, and Shichigahama Town under the jurisdiction of the Shiogama Health Center; and Natori City, Watari Town, and Yamamoto Town under the jurisdiction of the Shiogama Health Center Iwanuma Branch.

Furthermore, we have provided support since February 2020 to Marumori Town, which was affected by Typhoon Hagibis in 2019, upon the prefecture’s request. However, we received continued requests in FY2020 as well, and the activity areas of the Division included three cities and five towns. We report on the main activities along with the respective projects.

[Resident support project]

1. Consultation support project

(1) Continued visits to high-risk individuals in health surveys

Cases that required continuous support were handed over from FY2019 while gradually conducting accompanying visits with municipal managers. Visits conducted solely by the Division in FY2020 were for those with suicidal ideations, PTSD, and mental illness, with a few individuals each in Natori City, Watari Town, and Yamamoto Town.

(2) Visits to high-risk individuals in health survey of affected residents in Marumori Town

In FY2020, a health survey was conducted for all households who received a disaster certification (1,085 total), and we cooperated with non-submitted individual and high-risk individual home visits.

2. Community resident exchange project (salons)

Table 1 shows salon activities.

Table 1 Community resident exchange project (salons)

Implementation date	Host municipality	Project name	Host form	Participants	Content	Frequency	Total number of participants
2020/6/19– 2020/11/20	Iwanuma City	Utsukushi ma salon	Host	Individuals who moved from Fukushima Prefecture to the area around Iwanuma City	The salon was held during COVID-19, so the exchange duration was under 1 hour. We focused on light gymnastics and recent status reports. Members wanted to host a salon, but this was suspended during the period when a state of emergency was declared in the country.	Once a month	43
2020/6/25– 2021/3/25	Natori City	Town nurse’s office	Cooperation with city	City residents	Canceled for April and May due to COVID-19. Venue was Yuriage Public Hall, which is an area with particularly extensive earthquake damage within the city and where reconstruction housing is located. Contents included weight / blood pressure measurements, mini-health lectures, and health consultations. A picture-story show	Once a month	70

					created by the Center was also performed in the lecture. The project was concluded in FY2020, but this was an opportunity for each of the participating residents to consider their own health.		
2020/7/3 2020/9/18	Natori City	Natori City health salon	Co-sponsor with city	Men trying to abstain from alcohol	On a monthly basis, in the last six years, the mornings involved salons. Afternoons involved studying alcohol abstinence and individual consultations based on drinking diaries. Most of the members have improved to regular drinking levels, and the health salon was concluded in FY2019. Held as an alumni association in FY2020. Participants reflected on six years of salon activities, and individual consultations were conducted on individual goals for the future. Members made suggestions for voluntary activities. It was said that supporters would contact each other while keeping an eye on the status of COVID-19.	Twice a year	18



Natori City health salon



Utsukushima salon

[Support for supporters project]

1. Professional staff dispatch

Division staff members were assigned to municipalities to support the work of municipal public health nurses.

(1) Professional staff placement (seconded staff)

A professional staff member was assigned to Natori City. The staff member provided work support involving disaster victim support projects and mental health and welfare projects.

(2) Staff dispatch to municipalities (dispatch team)

Regular support was provided by dispatching staff members to Natori City / Watari Town approximately once a week, and 1–2 times a month to Shiogama City / Yamamoto Town. Staff members were dispatched to Tagajo City, Matsushima Town, and Shichigahama Town upon request from the municipality or health center. Dispatches to Marumori Town were primarily for cooperation with health surveys, and staff members attended meetings with the town and Sennan Health Center 1–2 times a month beginning in July. Dispatches were sent at all hours, 1–2 times a week, during the visit period from November to February.

2. Main support contents

(1) Meetings on health surveys for disaster victims and case study meetings for high-risk people

FY2020 was the final year of the health survey in the cities and towns affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake.

(Number of implemented days)

Natori City, 3 times; Shiogama City, 2 times; Shichigahama Town, 2 times.

(2) Participation as advisor in case study meetings and case reviews

Study cases from health surveys decreased, and study meetings regarding mental health cases and difficulties pertaining to cases of child-rearing generations have become the primary focus.

(Number of participating sessions)

Yamamoto Town, 15 times; Watari Town, 14 times; Natori City, 7 times; Shiogama City, 7 times; Tagajo City, 2 times; Matsushima Town, 2 times; Shichigahama Town, 1 time.

(3) Accompanying visits / interviews

For FY2020, we primarily conducted accompanying visits with municipal managers while being conscious of transferring cases to them.

We also conducted accompanying visits for cases where support for new cases was requested.

(Number of cooperating days)

Natori City, 39 days; Shiogama City, 25 days; Yamamoto Town, 7 days; Watari Town, 4 days; Shichigahama Town, 1 day.

(4) Participation in meetings on maternal and child health

There were many mental health issues among mothers, and we participated as advisors.

(Number of participating sessions)

Natori City, 12 times; Watari Town, 12 times; Yamamoto Town, 5 times.

(5) Workshops for supporters (Table 2)

We implemented workshops with the cooperation of Center doctors and psychologists, as well as Division staff.

Table 2 Workshops for supporters

Implementation date	Host municipality	Training content and theme	Subject	Number of participants	Support method
2020/6/25	Shiogama City	What to know when engaging with mental health	Novice counseling staff members	12	Instructor dispatch
2020/8/24		Support for the subject's family	Administrative officials	18	Instructor dispatch
2020/11/18	Watari Town	Gatekeeper course: "Workplace mental health"	Administrative officials	30	Instructor dispatch
2020/12/11		Handling people with visual or auditory hallucinations	Home care support professionals	40	Instructor dispatch
2021/1/14	Tagajo City	Support for people with personality disorders	Administrative officials	8	Instructor dispatch

2020/5/11– 2021/1/18	Natori City	New public health nurse / registered dietitian workshop: “Determining mental aspects of mothers,” 8 sessions	Administrative officials	105 in total	Instructor
2020/10/26		Intra-agency public health nurse general meeting lecture: “How to hold case study meetings”	Administrative officials	16	Instructor

※Instructor: Community Support Division staff member

※Instructor dispatch: Miyagi Disaster Mental Health Care Center staff members, other than those from the Community Support Division

(6) Marumori Town support

The Division has been involved with Marumori Town while remaining cognizant of the experience to date in handling the earthquake disaster. We introduced assessment tables and pamphlets when visiting high-risk individuals, and we conducted training for visits upon request of town public health nurses. We also responded to accompanying visits with town public health nurses.

In March 2021, health surveys were reviewed between the town, health center, and Division. Furthermore, at the beginning of FY2020, the Center doctor gave a lecture on “Protecting mental health after a disaster” to staff of the Marumori Town Council of Social Welfare upon request of the Miyagi Mental Health and Welfare Center. There were 21 participants.

In March 2021, the Center doctor gave a lecture on mental health after the earthquake to 50 social workers and health promotion staff of the town at the request of the town.

[Raising public awareness project]

We have conducted raising public awareness projects for community residents upon request of cooperation by municipalities, and the contents are shown in Table 3. There were requests for the “Health festival” and “District health education” at the beginning of FY2020; however, these were canceled due to concerns over COVID-19.

Table 3 Raising public awareness training for residents

Implementation date	Host municipality	Training content and theme	Number of participants	Support method
2020/9/4	Shiogama City	Mental health supporter course ①: “Mental health and suicide prevention”	27	Cooperation with management
2020/9/16		Mental health supporter course ②: “How to communicate effectively”	18	Instructor
2020/10/29	Tagajo City	Shooting video with different content for “Mental and physical health promotion course: ① youth generation, ② working and child-rearing generation, ③ elderly generation	Video distribution with city	Instructor dispatch
2020/10/15	Natori City	Health picture-story show: “How to set your mind to be forward-thinking: Reframing”	7	Instructor
2021/1/15		Radio (Natoraji) lecture: “Sleep / stress and mental health”		Instructor

[Summary / prospects and issues]

FY2020 was set as the end for the first phase of support for affected municipalities, and we have been organizing resident support, support for supporters, and public awareness projects while contemplating the ideal form of support after FY2021.

For resident support projects, we are planning to shift from support from only the Division to accompanying visits from FY2022 onwards.

For salon activities, we plan to continue providing a venue for people who have relocated from Fukushima to gather and enhance the content while listening to the participants' opinions.

Due to the extension of activities of the Center, meetings were held between the municipalities, health centers, mental health and welfare centers, and the Center for each health center area, which involved discussing the basic concept of the direction of mental health and welfare activities after FY2021. In these meetings, we shared how we will “conduct seamless health activities and create networks with other organizations to promote mental health and a connected community through collaboration with residents;” and, “provide support via accompanying visits (assessments and relationship building), case study meetings (ensuring places for learning from each other), and outreach as a way to raise the level of community mental health and welfare activities (human resource development that can be conducted in the field) to build the competence of health activity workers.”

In the Iwanuma Branch area, meetings were held as before between municipalities, the Iwanuma Branch, and the Division. Furthermore, in the Shiogama Health Center area, we participated in case study meetings and case reviews for each municipality (with a focus on health centers) since FY2020, without waiting for FY2021.

Case study meetings involved the participation not only of the municipal manager, but also of public health nurses from other Divisions, as well as other organizations. These became places of learning from each other, and we felt that this led to network-building. In FY2021, further cooperation with health centers, as well as mental health and welfare centers, will likely be necessary to develop activities according to the actual conditions of the community.

Support for Marumori Town, which was affected by the typhoon, was conducted as a model example of large-scale natural disasters in the future while remaining aware of the tradition of past activities. We would like to provide an ideal method of support that can be utilized even in the event of future disasters.