

Activity Report, Business Management Division, Stem Center

【Resident support project】

We conducted this project for residents who had various concerns, such as psychological burdens after the disaster or feelings of isolation owing to changes in the community.

1. Individual support

We responded to telephone counseling along with the Community Support Division of the Stem Center.

【Support for supporters project】

We provided support to local government officials and supporters who were burdened both physically and mentally. We provided opportunities for training to further improve the skills of the supporters and reduce their psychological burden.

1. Mental health support for supporters

We planned a training session on mental health for supporters by an external instructor, but this was not implemented because there was no request from the local government.

2. Supporters' club members management project

We had specialists in mental health care and people who were well versed in various fields register and receive professional support in conducting various projects. In FY 2021, we received cooperation in lectures for general residents and research projects.

3. Support for supporters of children's mental care

“Psychological emergency treatment training for children” (“children's PFA training”), where the basic methods of psychological support in the event of a disaster were shown, was implemented as follows.

To prevent the spread of COVID-19, the number of face-to-face “one-day training” sessions was reduced from four to two, and “online training” was held twice to cover basic concepts.

Table 1. Psychological emergency treatment training for children (children's PFA training)

Date	Venue	Training content	Targets	Number of participants
June 2, 2021	Sendai City	Deepen teaching skills and knowledge for workshop instructors Lecture, exercises (roleplay, group work)	Instructor development training participants	3
July 29, 2021	Sendai City	Online training (first): Learn reactions that children generally show in crisis situations, and learn the basics of PFA for children, such as the behavioral principles of PFA and how to communicate with stressed children Lecture: “What is PFA for children? Children's reactions in crisis situations”	Educators (school nurses, nursery teachers, kindergarten teachers)	42
August 11, 2021	Higashimatsushima City	Online training (first): Learn reactions that children generally show in crisis situations, and learn the behavioral principles of PFA and how to communicate with stressed children through roleplay Lecture: “What is PFA for children? Children's reactions in crisis situations” Exercises (roleplay, group work)	Public health nurses Child guidance center staff	20
January 20, 2022	Sendai City	Online training (second): same as first		32
February 9, 2022	Sendai City	One-day training (second): canceled		—

*One-day training (second session) was canceled owing to the COVID-19 pandemic.



One-day training lecture



One-day training exercise (group work)

4. Longitudinal support research for children born after the Great East Japan Earthquake and their families (“Michinoku Children’s Cohort”)

In FY 2021, we conducted the “Michinoku Children’s Cohort,” which has been implemented since FY 2016, with the purposes of helping children who were born after the earthquake disaster, evaluating changes in children and families, clarifying effective support, and assisting in supporter activities in the event of future disasters.

【Public awareness project】

We conducted public awareness projects that deepened the understanding of mental health among citizens and supporters as well as led to improvements in their mental health.

To pass on the activities of the MDMHCC as lessons for the next generation, we created and distributed a report that gathered knowledge and recorded the results, and then presented and publicized the results to academic societies.

1. Annual Activity Report creation project

The Bulletin was published up to the eighth issue every fiscal year until FY 2020. After a review of the report content, the Division decided that the content would be edited and published as an Annual Activity Report from FY 2021. The FY 2020 Annual Activity Report (Bulletin No. 9) was created and distributed to related organizations (1,000 copies created, distributed to 920 locations). An English version will be created and posted on the website in FY 2022.

2. Dissemination of mental health information

(1) Information dissemination through websites and blogs

We updated the introduction to the MDMHCC’s activities, published back issues of our public relations magazine, browsed various pamphlets, provided training programs, updated them as needed, and disseminated information.

To ease access to activity records and research products for international researchers and practitioners, we posted the English version of previous bulletins and the FY 2020 Annual Activity Report (Bulletin No. 9) on our website.

(2) Creation and distribution of leaflets

Various educational materials on mental health (including those related to COVID-19) were distributed during training sessions, health consultations, health surveys, and home visits, and also provided to municipalities upon request.

We also planned to distribute educational goods, such as clear files, at the children’s PFA training. However, opportunities for face-to-face training decreased owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, and we mailed the materials to the participants instead (including online training).

(3) Response to various interviews

We responded to coverage and research related to the Great East Japan Earthquake by news organizations and universities.

3. Research projects associated with center activities (reprint, see “Activity Report by project item”)

Table 2. Research

Implementation date	Activity month	Principal researcher	Research name	Details
2021	July	Miyoko Kubota	Looking back on the 10 years since the Great East Japan Earthquake: Issues revealed from health survey results	31st Tohoku Occupational Therapy Congress & Expo (held online, based in Morioka City, Iwate Prefecture, from July 1–31, 2021), remote presentation at Great East Japan Earthquake Symposium.
2021	July	Yuichi Watanabe	Reconsidering gathering places and connections for people through the resumption of salon activities through the COVID-19 pandemic	20th Japanese Society for Traumatic Stress Studies Meeting (held online, in Koriyama City, Fukushima Prefecture, on July 17–18, 2021), remote presentation at Symposium "What was the impact of COVID-19 on disaster recovery support?".
2021	July	Mitsuaki Katayanagi	From the experience of continuous support in the disaster-affected area	20th Japanese Society for Traumatic Stress Studies Meeting (held online, in Koriyama City, Fukushima Prefecture, on July 17–18, 2021), remote presentation at Symposium "Great East Japan Earthquake and recovery of regions and communities: What should be communicated to the next generation?".
2021	July	Naru Fukuchi	Longitudinal support research for children born after the Great East Japan Earthquake and their families (1): How does the mental health of caregivers affect children born after the Earthquake?	20th Japanese Society for Traumatic Stress Studies Meeting (held online, in Koriyama City, Fukushima Prefecture, on July 17–18, 2021), presented in poster session (poster sessions distributed on July 17–30).
2021	July	Shusaku Chiba	Longitudinal support research for children born after the Great East Japan Earthquake and their families (2): Examination of individual differences in parents' mental health and children's problematic behavior—Using a latent growth curve model	20th Japanese Society for Traumatic Stress Studies Meeting (held online, in Koriyama City, Fukushima Prefecture, on July 17–18, 2021), presented in poster session (poster sessions distributed on July 17–30).
2021	October	Shigeru Okazaki	Tohoku today, 10 years after the Great East Japan Earthquake	National <Tohoku> Alcohol Abstinence Meeting 2021 (held online, based in Tokyo, meeting on October 10, 2021), presentation.
2021	October	Takao Tanno	Creation of the FY2020 Annual Activity Report (Bulletin No. 9)	FY2020 Annual Activity Report (Bulletin No. 9) created and distributed to 920 locations.
2021	November	Yuichi Watanabe	Our “thinking on reconstruction”: 10 years after the Great East Japan Earthquake	Ami National Community Life Support Council for People with Mental Disabilities “Ami 24th National Meeting@online” (held online, based in Tokyo, meeting on November 26–27, 2021), remote presentation in panel discussion "'10 years of businesses and support' – What is 'recovery'?".
2021	December	Akemi Ozaki	Support for reducing alcohol consumption in disaster-affected areas: Salon initiatives and development of support for reducing alcohol consumption	FY2021 Japanese Alcohol, Nicotine & Drug Addiction Conference (joint meeting by the 56th Japanese Medical Society of Alcohol and Addiction Studies Meeting and 43rd Japanese Society of Alcohol-Related Problems Meeting, event held at Mie Prefectural General Cultural Center as hybrid venue, administrative office was Nagoya City, Aichi Prefecture, session held December 17–19, 2021), oral presentation in online session.

4. Ethics committee management project

In FY 2021, the planned ethics committee for the scheduled academic conference, for which registration was postponed owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, could not be held.

【Other】

1. Business statistics data management

We continued the operation of the business statistics system and individual support system. We reported at national, prefectural, and various other meetings, and analyzed activities, such as changes over time.

2. Staff training

General meetings were held twice a year, in which all staff participated as a general rule. These meetings served as a venue for confirming the direction of management and details of project plans, and for sharing information. Owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, the meetings were held online. We also urged the staff to attend external training as recommended training for them to acquire suitable skills and knowledge.

【Summary】

FY 2020 marked the end of 10 years of activities for the MDMHCC, and the year when the first phase of activities came to an end. From FY 2021, activities will be conducted based on the Second Operation Plan (FY 2021–2025), toward the end of activities in FY 2025. In the Second Operation Plan, some of the projects in the first phase have either been concluded or transferred to other organizations, and the projects have been concentrated to the three pillars of “resident support,” “support for supporters,” and “public awareness campaigns.”

The Business Management Division (“Division”) has also concluded and transferred the “human resource development project (disaster-related specialized training and alcohol-related problem on-the-job training)” that had been implemented until FY 2020. Additionally, although the Children’s Mental Health Care Community-Based Project, which was commissioned by Miyagi Prefecture, has ended, the “Michinoku Children’s Cohort” and “Children’s PFA Training” have been continued as projects that have been subsidized by the prefecture.

In the implementation of each project, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has lasted longer than initially thought. In the case of the Division, face-to-face meetings are considered natural or effective in training and public awareness campaigns. There were issues with shifting to non-face-to-face meetings. Meanwhile, the online method has the feature of facilitating the participation of many people at once, and we also had to consider how to utilize this advantage.

The MDMHCC will be closed in FY 2025. The issues of psychological care for victims have not been resolved, but rather seem to have become multi-layered and complicated. Given these circumstances, the focus of the Division has shifted to summarizing the knowledge of the MDMHCC’s activities and determining how to leave it to future generations.

We wish to continue to work while cooperating with municipalities, prefectures (public health centers, the Mental Health and Welfare Center), and local stakeholders to promote the transition of the role of the MDMHCC and contribute to the “improvement of community mental health welfare in disaster-affected areas.” At the same time, we would like to review the role that the MDMHCC has played and endeavor to pass on our knowledge to future generations.