

## Message from the President Start of the First Issue of the Niigata Journal of Health and Welfare

Hideaki E. Takahashi, M.D.

In April 2001 the Niigata University of Health and Welfare was founded in Niigata City, Honshu Island, Japan. For a long time, an establishment of the four-year university for education of experts of medicare and welfare, that is physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech therapists, registered dietitians and social workers, has been required and expected in Niigata Prefecture. The Niigata Society of Health and Welfare consists not only faculty members of the Niigata University of Health and Welfare, and staff members of Niigata Rehabilitation Hospital, but also any participants of other hospitals, welfare facilities, and the related organizations. The society launched publication of its transactions in Japanese language as well as the Niigata Journal of Health and Welfare in English language. This is a journal to express opinions and exchange information such as original articles, reviews, case reports, instructional course lectures, and special papers for a symposium, by members, participants and any scholars wish to join. Letters to the editor are always welcome.

Entering the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Japan has been experiencing an aging society with fewer children and has been still more in the process of rapid transition to a super-aging society that any other country has never experienced before. We must harmonize these three areas of medical, welfare and health care and consider these as a large borderless field. Each expert of each field should not stay in his/her work front, but rather share information and cooperate with each other closely with other fields, which enable one to promote national health into a higher level. At the economical standpoint, medical expenditure needs thirty trillion yen in yearly national budgets in Japan in the year 2000 and is expected to be medical economics would be a large subject in the future. While recording results and achievements of medicare, welfare and health promotion I definitely wish that this journal would provide an opportunity for members and scholars from Niigata and any parts of Japan and all over the world to express their opinions. With sharing information and experience, we, medical, welfare and health care experts would endeavor to keep a quality of life of the Japan's super-aging society higher.

December 2001

