

History of Japan Society for Neuro-Oncology

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The Japan Society for Neuro-Oncology (JSNO) was inaugurated in 1980 by the advocacy of Dr. Takao Hoshino, who was a staff member in the Department of Neurological Surgery, University of California San Francisco (UCSF) at that time. In the United States, the 'U.S. Conference on Brain Tumor Research and Therapy' had been held since 1975, under the leadership of Dr. Charles Wilson and Dr. Victor Levin of UCSF, at the famous resort Asilomar in California. This so-called 'Asilomar Conference' was organized as a semi-closed system in which relatively few participants (about 50) stayed overnight at the same lodging for two to three days. Dr. Hoshino and the author planned the Japanese Conference in a similar style as the Asilomar conference.

The first Meeting of Conference in Japan was held in 1980 with chairperson Dr. Masakatsu Nagai, at Nikko, one of the most famous sight-seeing places in Japan, so that, Conference was named as the 'Nikko Conference on Brain Tumor Research and Therapy'. 37 papers were presented and 68 participants attended the two-day meeting. It was not certain whether such a meeting could continue in the future at this point in time. The Conference was held every two years until the third Meeting, but due to a stronger voices calling for yearly meetings, it came to be held, after the fourth Meeting, every year. Resorts throughout the whole country were chosen as Conference sites. As for the participants at the Conference, the number was initially limited, but with the increasing numbers of young brain tumor researchers and the increasing numbers of applications for participation, an open system was initiated from the 10th Meeting. The name of the Conference was also changed to the 'Japanese Conference on Brain Tumor Research and Therapy'. Because the number of papers and participants continued to increase, the Conference gradually reached the scale of a Society. The Society structure was fixed in 2002, and it was named the 'Japan Society of Neuro-Oncology' which continues up to now.

Consistently from the start, the main subject matter of JSNO has been basic research on malignant brain tumors, especially malignant gliomas and the development of therapeutic measures against them. Many research results have been presented by JSNO participants, and superior achievements have been brought forth regarding molecular genetics of glioma pathogenesis, tumor biology focused on cell-kinetics, chemotherapy, radiotherapy, immunotherapy, gene therapy and combination therapies of these on malignant glioma.

The Annual Meeting of JSNO (25 in total) was held with chairperson Dr. Soichiro Shibui in Tokyo in December 2007. There were 188 written applications, and the participant number was a record-high of 280 people. Compared to the First Meeting in 1980, the number of subjects covered has increased five fold and the number of participants is four times as many. There is an immeasurable deep emotion for such a surprising development as the Meeting. The characteristic style of Meeting, however, has not changed compared to the time of the 'Conference' even after having now become a 'Society'. Namely, all the participants still stay at the same lodging, continue heated discussions till midnight in front of poster presentations, holding a wine-glass in one hand (Poster & Wine session!).

The founder of JSNO Dr. Takao Hoshino died in 1993, but he left a legacy of encouragement to the

foundation in the form of an award for the most excellent article on brain tumor research. The prize was named the 'Hoshino Award', and there are a lot of nominations for it every year. 15 young researchers have won it since 1993. JSNO linked into the 'International Conference on Brain Tumor Research and Therapy' (ICBTRT) which developed from the 'U.S.Conference'. The 4th ICBTRT (1981), with Dr. Keiji Sano as chairperson, the 7th (1987), with Dr.Masakatsu Nagai as chairperson, and the 13th (1999), with Dr. Hiroshi Abe as chairperson were held in Japan and the 17th ICBTRT will be held in this year (2008) at Hakodate, Hokkaido, with chairperson Dr. Masao Matsutani. Moreover, the Asian Society for Neuro-Oncology was inaugurated in 2002, at Kumamoto, Japan with chairperson Dr. Yuktaka Ushio, which afterwards has been organized every year in each country in Asia.

The activity of JSNO is expected to be aimed at further development of cooperation with these international societies and to help bring about remarkable results on brain tumor research throughout the world.