PMDA Updates

January 2024

News

1. New year’s greetings from Chief Executive Fujiwara

Chief Executive Fujiwara

Happy New Year.

We would like to express our heartfelt condolences to all those who were affected by the 2024 Noto Peninsula Earthquake on January 1, 2024.

In May of last year, the status of the COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus) under the Infectious Disease Control Law was shifted to Class 5 and it was the year we became aware that daily activities could finally return to a somewhat normal status in the latter half. Looking back over the last year, the PMDA’s review divisions worked on expedited reviews, including the addition of indications for COVID-19 vaccines, and the safety divisions received and analyzed numerous reports of adverse reactions and malfunctions on a daily basis and worked to provide the best medical care that the public can be assured of. We are also very honored to have received an "S" evaluation for relief operations for the first time based on last year's performance in an evaluation performed for the independent administrative institution. In addition, the Center for Regulatory Science was reorganized to strengthen the PMDA's regulatory science (RS) capabilities, the Epidemiology Section was reformed as the Pharmacoepidemiology Section, and we expect that this will play a big role in future safety measures.

The PMDA will celebrate its 20th year of establishment in 2024, and the 5th Mid-Term Plan will newly start in April. In the 5th Mid-Term Plan, we will work to strengthen the organization, promote international activities, and secure and develop specialists to further improve the quality of review, safety, and relief operations. We believe, however, that the essential foundation for this is the PMDA's own RS research capabilities. In order for the PMDA to become an organization that can truly lead the world, we will publish scientific articles and develop and release guidelines, disseminate scientific information and our approach internally and externally, and lead international discussions on various aspects. In addition, as we approach our 20th year anniversary, we are moving ahead with discussions with the aim of creating the "vision of the PMDA" to further grow and create a better organization. We at the PMDA will aim to achieve further breakthroughs while looking back over what we have achieved to date and will aim to move toward a new vision together with everyone.

This year will also be the first year of internationalization for the PMDA. As its first overseas office, the PMDA will establish an office in Asia (Bangkok, Thailand) and work to strengthen ties with ASEAN countries. In addition, we will welcome long-term trainees in the area of medical device regulations from the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia for a period of 1 year from April 2024 under the framework of the Asia Training Center for Pharmaceuticals

and Medical Devices Regulatory Affairs (PMDA-ATC). Furthermore, we will work toward setting up an office in the United States with the aim of increasing access to innovative medical products, and will send a staff to the PIC/S Secretariat (Geneva, Switzerland) to strengthen collaborations with overseas regulatory authorities in GMP inspections and to promote the international harmonization of GMP standards.

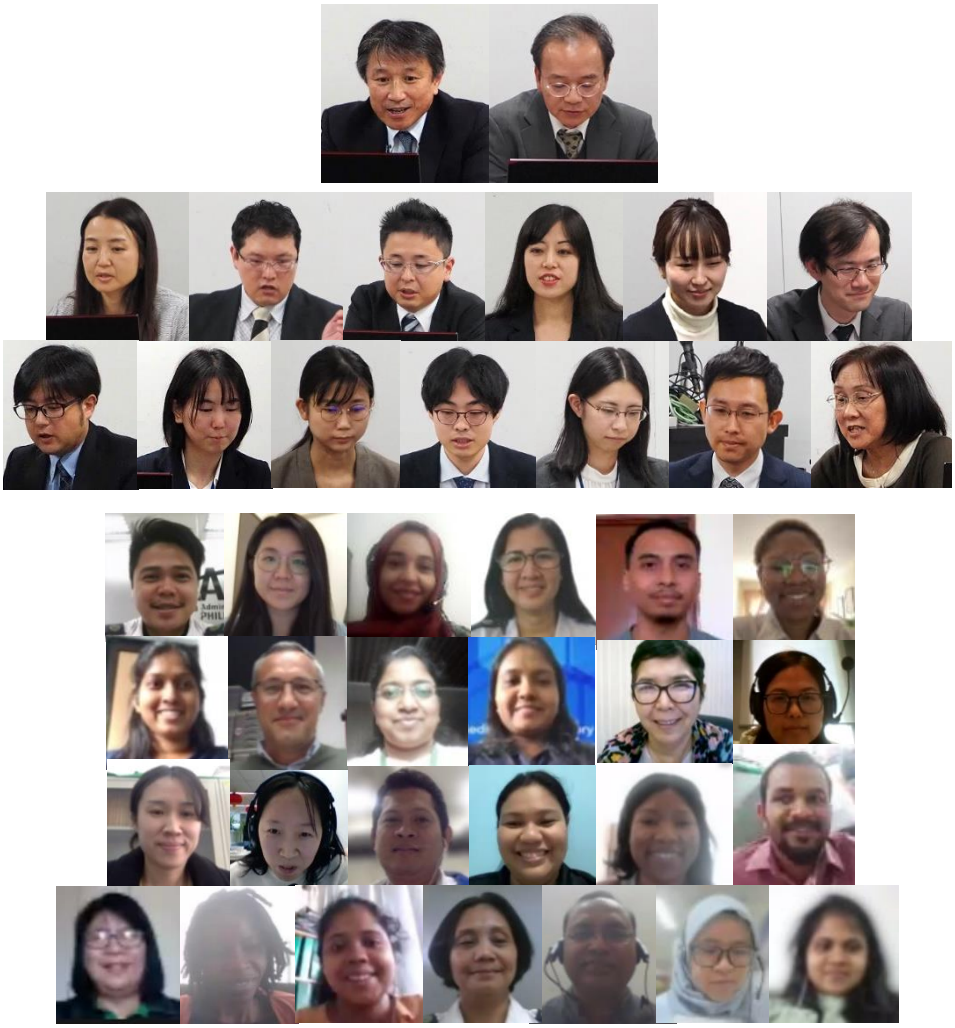
Finally, in order for the PMDA to continue as an organization that can lead the world, we continue to maintain high-quality communications with all stakeholders and further strengthen relationships of trust with them. In order to ensure that innovative medical products can be accessed by everyone in Japan and around the world as quickly as possible, the PMDA will strive to conduct our daily activities based on the RS concept.

I would like to conclude this New Year's greetings by sending our sincere wish that this year will be a good year for everyone.

2. APEC Center of Excellence Workshop: PMDA-ATC Medical Devices Workshop 2023

The PMDA held the “APEC Center of Excellence Workshop: PMDA-ATC Medical Devices Workshop 2023,” in an online workshop from November 14 to 16, 2023. This workshop served as the Center of Excellence (CoE) workshop for medical devices, designated by the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation, Regulatory Harmonization Steering Committee (APEC-RHSC). It catered to officials from overseas regulatory agencies involved in the review of medical devices and in vitro diagnostics (IVDs). The workshop saw participation from thirty regulators representing China, Chinese Taipei, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Slovenia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zimbabwe.

The first day featured lectures covering various aspects, including the international harmonization of medical device regulations, review of medical devices, quality management system (QMS) inspection for medical devices, and postmarketing safety measures for medical devices. On the subsequent days, case studies were provided on clinical evaluation and post-market safety measures for medical devices. Participants were divided into groups for discussions following each presentation. Engaging Q&A sessions followed every lecture. The workshop featured contributions from PMDA staff members and a professor from Tohoku University Hospital who served as lecturers and facilitators.



From the top left: Dr. UZU Shinobu (Director of the Asia Training Center for Pharmaceuticals and Medical Devices Regulatory Affairs, PMDA), Dr. KUSAKABE Tetsuya (Senior Coordinator for International Training, PMDA),
In the middle: webinar lecturers
At the bottom: participants of the webinar

Please refer to the following website for details of the APEC Center of Excellence Workshop: PMDA-ATC Medical Devices Workshop 2023.
https://www.pmda.go.jp/english/symposia/0276.html

3. The 27th Global Harmonization Working Party (GHWP) Annual Meeting

The 27th GHWP annual meeting was held in Shanghai, China, from November 27 to 30, 2023. The meeting saw participation from Dr. KUSAKABE Tetsuya, the International Coordination Officer, along with two staff members from the PMDA; one representative from the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW); and three industry representatives.

The GHWP is one of the frameworks for the international harmonization of medical device regulations, and it was the first attendance after Japan joined the GHWP as an official member in February 2023.

At the meeting, Dr. KUSAKABE delivered a presentation on post-market vigilance and adverse event monitoring for medical devices and participated in a panel discussion. Moreover, the sessions or panel discussions featured updates on regulations for innovative medical devices, capacity building, and the package strategy for accelerating the commercialization of SaMD 2 (DASH for SaMD 2). These updates were presented by staff members from the MHLW and PMDA.

The next GHWP annual meeting will be held in Malaysia.

Photo from the session

4. PMDA-ATC & MHLW Webinar 2023 for SFDA, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

On November 28, 2023, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW) and PMDA jointly conducted a webinar titled “PMDA-ATC & MHLW Webinar 2023 for Saudi Food and Drug Authority (SFDA), Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.” This webinar marked the second Asia Training Center for Pharmaceuticals and Medical Devices Regulatory Affairs (PMDA-ATC) seminar for the SFDA. The event was organized in accordance with the Memorandum of Cooperation between the SFDA and MHLW, as well as areas of cooperation under the Saudi–Japan VISION 2030.

The themes of the webinar were “Approval and registration system including expedited approval system” and “Orphan drug.” The MHLW and PMDA share insights into the regulatory system and experiences in Japan with seven regulators from the SFDA.

The PMDA continuously endeavors to strengthen not only the capacity of the SFDA’s technical staff through the PMDA-ATC training but also the collaborative relationship between the two countries.

5. Participation at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, Regulatory Harmonization Steering Committee (APEC-RHSC) Meeting

The APEC-RHSC meeting convened in Oakland, US, from December 1 to 3, 2023, drawing participants from various sectors. Representing the PMDA were Mr. YASUDA Naoyuki (Associate Executive Director for International Programs), and another staff member. Attendees included experts from other regulatory agencies across APEC economies; representatives from industry associations in the area of pharmaceuticals, medical devices, and biopharmaceuticals, including Japanese pharmaceutical and medical device industries; and experts from academia.

The RHSC started its activity within APEC in June 2009 to promote “a strategic approach to regulatory harmonization by undertaking activities of the greatest value to regulatory authorities and regulated industries.” The meeting was co-chaired by Mr. YASUDA, along with Dr. Michelle Limoli from the US FDA. Seven Priority Work Areas (PWAs) were identified by the RHSC as key areas for achieving regulatory convergence in pharmaceutical and medical device regulations. Each PWA includes accredited Training Centers of Excellence for Regulatory Science (CoEs) for Regulatory Science, responsible for meeting the training needs of member economies within their respective PWAs. The PMDA is endorsed as a CoE on MRCT/GCP Inspection PWA, Pharmacovigilance PWA, and Medical Device PWA.

At the meeting, the PMDA, representing the champion economy of the MRCT/GCP Inspection PWA, reported on its activities. The PMDA also presented updates on the activities of the PMDA-ATC, highlighting seminars conducted since April 2023 and outlining plans for CoE workshops in 2024, which received endorsement. The meeting also deliberated on the future direction of RHSC activities.

Group photo of the participants

6. PMDA-ATC/AMDC Medical Devices Webinar 2023

On December 4, 2023, the PMDA, in collaboration with the ASEAN Medical Device Committee (AMDC), held the "PMDA-ATC/AMDC Medical Devices Webinar 2023." The webinar aimed at providing a platform for medical device regulators in ASEAN Member States to deepen their knowledge of the medical device regulatory system by sharing experiences between ASEAN Member States and Japan. Eighteen regulators engaged in reviews and postmarket safety measures for medical devices participated in the webinar.

Dr. UZU Shinobu, Director of the Asia Training Center for Pharmaceuticals and Medical Devices Regulatory Affairs of the PMDA, inaugurated the webinar with opening remarks. Subsequently, PMDA staff members shared information on the regulatory framework and the PMDA's experiences in safety measures and quality management sysytem based on international standards and documents from the Global Harmonization Task Force (GHTF)/International Medical Device Regulators Forum (IMDRF).

7. The 4th Vietnam-Japan Symposium and Bilateral Meeting

On December 5, 2023, the 4th Vietnam–Japan Symposium was held in Hanoi, Vietnam, co-hosted by the PMDA and Drug Administration of Vietnam, Ministry of Health (DAV). This face-to-face meeting marked the first in four years, attracting over 380 participants, including representatives from the PMDA, Japan's Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW), DAV, and industry stakeholders from both countries. Of the attendees, approximately 90 joined on-site, while 290 participated online.

Dr. ARAI Hiroyuki (Executive Director, PMDA) expressed his expectations for enhanced cooperation between the two countries during the symposium. The event utilized insights gained during Ms. Dao Hong Lan's (the Minister of Health, Vietnam) visit to the PMDA in July 2023. Keynote speeches by Dr. TANAKA Daisuke (Office Director, Office of International Programs, PMDA) and Dr. Le Viet Dung (Vice Director, DAV) presented a review of the cooperation in pharmaceutical regulations between the two countries and outlined prospects for future collaboration. Subsequent presentations covered updates in pharmaceutical regulations, timely access to innovative drugs, and the proper use of pharmaceuticals, featuring representatives from both countries. A lively discussion ensued, with questions from participants from both Japan and Vietnam.

The following day, a bilateral meeting between the MHLW/PMDA and DAV was held to exchange views on future cooperation between Vietnam–Japan regulatory authorities.

The program and related information of the 4th Vietnam–Japan Symposium are available on the following website:

https://www.pmda.go.jp/english/symposia/0284.html

Group photo of regulators of Vietnam and Japan

8. PMDA-ATC Medical Devices Seminar 2023

The PMDA held the "PMDA-ATC Medical Devices Seminar 2023" from December 5 to 7, 2023. This seminar was intended for officials of overseas regulatory agencies involved in the review of medical devices and in vitro diagnostics (IVDs) and was attended by 25 regulators from Bhutan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Thailand.

The first day featured lectures on the regulations of IVDs and IVD medical devices, expedited review pathways, development, and practical applications. At the roundtable discussion, representatives from each country gave presentations about the regulation for medical devices in their respective countries, and participants actively asked questions. On the second day, lectures on the regulation of AI-based medical devices, a regulatory approach for device software function, and a case study on the review of high-risk medical devices were provided. The third day included a case study on the review of software as a medical device, with participants divided into groups for intensive discussions. PMDA staff members served as both lecturers and facilitators, receiving additional support from lecturers representing the National Cancer Center Japan, Tohoku University Hospital, and Hiroshima University Hospital.

Group photo of the participants

Please refer to the following website for details of the PMDA-ATC Medical Devices Seminar 2023.
https://www.pmda.go.jp/english/symposia/0275.html

9. The 5th ICH Forum: ICH Quality Guideline Update

"The 5th ICH Forum: ICH Quality Guideline Update" was held at the Tokyo Conference Center Shinagawa (Minato-ku, Tokyo) on December 13, 2023, in a hybrid style, with over 1,000 attendees, predominantly from the pharmaceutical industry.

The forum aimed to enhance understanding of the Quality Guidelines with financial support from the ICH. The program and presentation materials can be found at the following link:

https://www.pmda.go.jp/int-activities/symposia/0140.html

The first half of the program featured a panel discussion on the latest work of the ICH, including panelists from regulatory authorities and industries. The ICH Award ceremony recognized awardees decided at the ICH meeting in November 2023. Dr. HIROSE Akihiko (formerly the National Institute of Health Science, now the Chemicals Evaluation and Research Institute, Japan) and Mr. HISADA Shigeru (Japan Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association) received commendation from Japan.

In the second half, five presentations (Q2(R2)/Q1, Q5A(R2), Q9(R1), Q13 etc.) were conducted by experts who worked on the Guidelines as Expert Working Group members. A panel discussion on pharmaceutical development based on the latest science and risks from the perspective of Quality Guidelines was held at the end of the forum. The panelists included regulators, industries, and academia.

10. PMDA-ATC Biosimilar Webinar for FDA Philippines, PMDA-ATC Pharmacovigilance Webinar for FDA Philippines

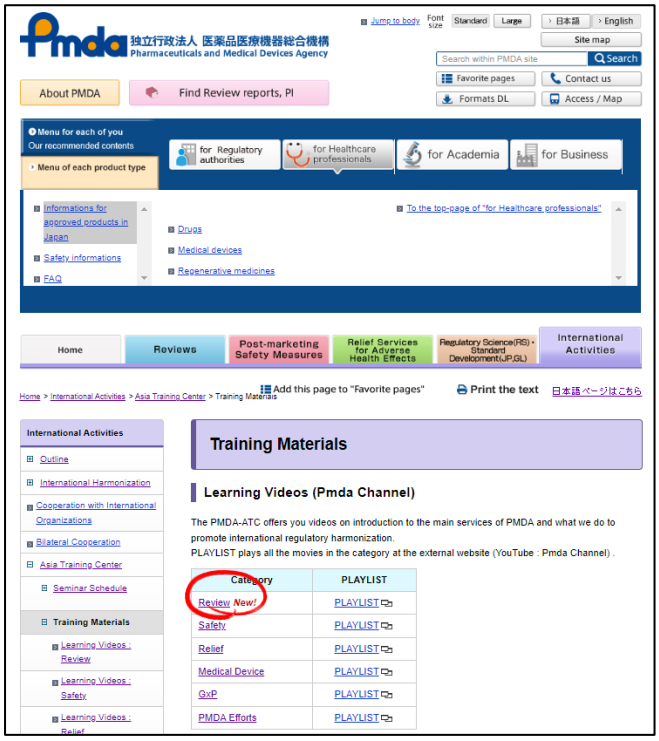
On December 14, 2023, the PMDA held the Biosimilar webinar for the Food and Drug Administration, Republic of the Philippines (FDA Philippines). During the webinar, PMDA staff members from the Office of Cellular and Tissue-based Products delivered lectures and case studies on biosimilars to 52 participants. Q&A sessions were also held to enhance the understanding of the topic.

The PMDA also held a pharmacovigilance webinar for the FDA Philippines on December 15, 2023. During the webinar, PMDA staff members from the Office of Pharmacovigilance I, Office of Pharmacovigilance II, and Office of International Programs delivered lectures on pharmacovigilance to 50 participants. Q&A sessions were also held to enhance the understanding of the topic.

The PMDA continuously makes efforts to strengthen collaboration with the FDA Philippines through training offered by the Asia Training Center for Pharmaceuticals and Medical Devices Regulatory Affairs (PMDA-ATC).

11. PMDA-ATC: Release of New Learning Video Content

The PMDA-ATC provides online learning videos that offer an overview of pharmaceutical and medical device regulations in Japan and PMDA's services. This month, we are pleased to announce the release of a new content video, entitled "Bioequivalence Studies" in the "Review" category of the PMDA-ATC Learning Videos. Bioequivalence studies are conducted to demonstrate therapeutic equivalence between innovator and generic drugs. This video explains how to conduct and evaluate the bioequivalence study.



Please follow this link to access the learning video content:

https://www.pmda.go.jp/english/int-activities/training-center/0003.html

English Translations of Review Reports

The following links provide the latest information on the English versions of the review reports on the PMDA website.

Pharmaceuticals

https://www.pmda.go.jp/english/review-services/reviews/approved-information/drugs/0001.html

Brand Name	Non-proprietary Name	Posting Date
Omvoh [Initial Approval]	Mirikizumab (genetical recombination)	December 7, 2023
Libtayo [Initial Approval]	Cemiplimab (genetical recombination)	December 15, 2023
Precedex [Partial Change Approval]	Dexmedetomidine hydrochloride	December 15, 2023

Safety Information

Pharmaceuticals and Medical Devices Safety Information No. 406 (December 19, 2023)

1. Revisions of PRECAUTIONS for Oral Anticoagulants (Acute Kidney Injury)
2. Proper Use of GLP-1 Receptor Agonists and GIP/GLP-1 Receptor Agonists
3. Important Safety Information
    1. Metyrapone

2. [1] Apixaban, [2] Edoxaban tosilate hydrate, [3] Dabigatran etexilate methanesulfonate, [4] Rivaroxaban, [5] Warfarin potassium
3. Technetium (^{99m}Tc) galactosyl human serum albumin diethylenetriamine pentaacetic acid

4. Revision of Precautions (No. 346)
   Metyrapone (and 4 others)
5. List of Products Subject to Early Post-marketing Phase Vigilance

https://www.pmda.go.jp/english/safety/info-services/drugs/medical-safety-information/0021.html

Pharmaceuticals Revisions of PRECAUTIONS (January 10, 2024)

- Sertraline hydrochloride
- Acetazolamide
- Acetazolamide sodium
- Cortisone acetate
- Dexamethasone (oral dosage form) (preparations indicated for multiple myeloma)
- Dexamethasone (oral dosage form) (preparations indicated for lymphoid tumours)
- Dexamethasone sodium phosphate (injections)
- Hydrocortisone
- Hydrocortisone sodium succinate (preparations indicated for lymphoid tumours)
- Prednisolone (oral dosage form)
- Prednisolone sodium succinate
- Methylprednisolone
- Methylprednisolone sodium succinate
- Methylprednisolone acetate
- Dexamethasone palmitate
- Hydrocortisone sodium succinate (preparations not indicated for lymphoid tumours)
- Hydrocortisone sodium phosphate
- Prednisolone sodium phosphate
- Atezolizumab (genetical recombination)
- Encorafenib
- Binimetinib
- Pembrolizumab (genetical recombination)

https://www.pmda.go.jp/english/safety/info-services/drugs/revision-of-precautions/0011.html

PMDA Medical Safety Information No.67 (January 2024)

Precautions for Route of Administration of Total Parenteral Nutrition

https://www.pmda.go.jp/english/safety/info-services/safety-information/0001.html

Events

Conferences/Meetings that the PMDA will participate in or host

Date	Title	Location

February 6–7	PMDA-ATC GMP Inspection Webinar 2024	Virtual
February 26–29	PMDA-ATC Pharmacovigilance Webinar 2024	Virtual
March 12–14	36th DIA Euro Meeting	Brussels
March 25–26	ICH Management Committee Interim Meeting	Lisbon

Reports from Overseas

Our officers deliver lively reports of their activities at their stationed overseas authorities.

Artificial intelligence workplan

On 18th December 2023, EMA and the Heads of Medicines Agencies (HMAs) have published an artificial intelligence (AI) workplan to 2028[1)2)]. This AI workplan, prepared under the joint HMA-EMA Big Data Steering Group (BDSG), the European medicines regulatory network (EMRN) remains at the forefront in benefiting from AI in medicines regulation.

This AI workplan aims to deliver the EMRN's vision on AI such as to embrace the opportunities of AI for personal productivity, automating processes and systems, increasing insights into data and supporting more robust decision-making to benefit public and animal health. Recent years, pharmaceutical companies increasingly use AI-powered tools in research, development and monitoring of medicines. National competent authorities are responding to the new opportunities and challenges by starting to use and develop AI tools.

To facilitate the development and use of responsible and beneficial AI, the AI workplan focuses on four key dimensions: guidance, policy and product support; AI tools and technology; collaboration and training; experimentation.

As AI technology is fast evolving, including the ethical and policy aspects related to it, the BDSG will regularly update the workplan. Regulators, medicine developers, academics, patient organisations and other interested parties will be informed and engaged throughout the implementation of the plan.

I will continue to monitor this topic closely as it is highly interested item and change is likely to be significant and rapid.

1) Artificial intelligence workplan to guide use of AI in medicines regulation https://www.ema.europa.eu/en/news/artificial-intelligence-workplan-guide-use-ai-medicines-regulation
2) Multi-annual AI workplan 2023-2028 https://www.ema.europa.eu/en/documents/work-programme/multi-annual-artificial-intelligence-workplan-2023-2028-hma-ema-joint-big-data-steering-group_en.pdf

Ms. UEDA Mami
PMDA's International Liaison Officer stationed at EMA in the Netherlands