

Section 3. Efforts for Independent Administrative Institutions and Public Interest Organizations

1. Efforts for Independent Administrative Institutions

An independent administrative institution system was introduced to provide better administrative services. The number of independent administrative institutions within the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare totalled 16 (including 2 with joint jurisdictions) as of April 1, 2008.

(1) Review at the End of the Period of Mid-Term Goals

With the independent administrative institution system, institutions are evaluated on their organizational structure and business as a whole at the end of a certain period of between 3 years to 5 years (period for mid-term goals). In FY 2007, in addition to evaluations of institutions whose period of mid-term goals ended in FY 2007 which includes the Organization for Workers' Retirement Allowance Mutual Aid, the Japan Organization for Employment of the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities, and the National Center for Persons with Severe Intellectual Disabilities of Nozominosono, front-loaded evaluations were conducted for those whose period of mid-term goals ends in FY 2008, and including the Japan Labour Health and Welfare Organization, National Hospital Organization, and Pharmaceuticals and Medical Devices Agency.

(2) Formulation of an “Independent Administrative Institution Consolidation and Rationalization Plan”

All independent administrative institutions including those in (1) that were subjected to evaluation at the end of the period of mid-term goals have been reviewed again from the beginning on their work/business and how their organization should be. The “Independent Administrative Institution Consolidation and Rationalization Plan” was decided upon by Cabinet on December 24, 2007.

In this plan,

- ① Integration of the National Institute of Health and Nutrition and the National Institute of Biomedical Innovation
- ② Integration of the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, Japan and the Japan Labour Health and Welfare Organization
- ③ Entrusting the management of the Vocational Museum “Watashi No Shigotokan” of the Employment and Human Resources Development Organization of Japan to the private sector and discussion on the form of the institution

- ④ Conducting required verifications for making the executives of the National Hospital Organization non-public in making a decision within FY 2008

were the major points of reviewing independent administrative institutions within the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare.

(3) Transfer of National Center for Advanced and Specialized Medical Care to become Independent Administrative Institution

The National Center for Advanced and Specialized Medical Care (National Center) provides advanced leading medical care in specialized medical fields and conducts research and training on innovative treatment methods at a total of 6 centers. According to the Administrative Reform Promotion Law and “Reduction in the Fixed Number of Personnel in National Government Administrative Organizations” (decided upon by the Cabinet on June 30, 2006), it was decided to change each national center into independent administrative institutions. Further improvement/enhancement of National Center functions will be made so that each national center can continue to fully fulfil its functions after becoming Independent Administrative Institutions.

2. Efforts on Public Interest Organizations

The number of public interest organizations within the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare was 1,091 as of October 2007. With regard to public interest organizations reformation, the “General Incorporated Associations/Foundations Act” and the “Act on Authorization of Public Interest Incorporated Associations and Public Interest Incorporated Foundation” were promulgated on June 2008 and will be enforced on December 1, 2008. After enforcement of these acts, existing public interest organizations may apply for transfer to become public interest incorporated associations/foundations or general incorporated associations/foundations within the 5-year transfer period (those that do not transfer will be regarded as dissolved). The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare is making the effort to ensure that public interest organizations within the jurisdiction of the Ministry will make the decision on transfer within the given period.

The government completely reviewed the guidance and supervision of public interest organizations in February 2001. The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare has been making the efforts to further tighten the guidance and supervision through establishing a responsibility system of guidance/supervision and conducting on-site investigations at least once every 3 years (the rate of conducting on-site investigations was 97.8% during the period of 2004 to 2006). In addition, guidance/supervision standards for public interest organizations were reviewed in August 2006 and the definition of people from administrative ministries/agencies with jurisdiction revised. The

Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare has been and will continue to make efforts to ensure appropriate management of public interest organizations within its jurisdiction by providing strong guidance to public interest organizations that do not conform to the standards and have not make corrections within the 2-year interim period.