

## Section 4. Promotion of Preventive Measures against Suicide

As the number of people who have committed suicide remains high at around 30,000 annually since 1998, measures against suicide have become an urgent issue. Considering this, and in response to the Basic Act on Suicide Prevention approved in 2006, the “General Policies of Comprehensive Measures against Suicide” (hereinafter referred to as the “General Policies”) was formulated in June 2007 as guidelines for measures to be promoted by the government. The General Policies provided for measures against suicide to be strongly promoted in close cooperation between the government, local governments, medical institutions, and public organizations, and the goal set of reducing the death rates from suicide by 20% or more from that of 2005 by 2016.

The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare has been making efforts, including providing information at the Suicide Prevention Comprehensive Measure Center established in the National Institute of Mental Health of the National Center of Neurology and Psychiatry, promoting effective measures against suicide and supporting measures of business operators in communities, improving the consultation system and human resource development for preventing suicide, and promoting/disseminating/enlightening the results of comprehensive investigations and research of suicide issues.

In addition, discussions on another important point with suicide measures, that of caring for families of people who have attempted/committed suicide, have been held since December 2006 and a report was compiled in March 2008.