Overview of Measures against Intractable Diseases

Various programs have been implemented based on the "Outline of the Measures against Intractable Diseases" compiled in 1972.

Definitions of intractable diseases to be addressed:

1. A disease whose cause has not yet been detected and for which there is no established therapy, and which may likely leave an aftereffect
   Example: Behcet's disease, myasthenia gravis, aplastic anemia, and malignant rheumatoid arthritis

2. A disease which is chronic and poses not only financial problems, but a heavy burden on the patients' family due to the great deal of effort required in caring for the patients, including potential psychological burdens
   Example: Pediatric cancer, pediatric chronic nephritis, pediatric asthma, progressive muscular dystrophy and renal insufficiency (of dialysis patients)

Methods of implementation:

1. Promotion of survey/research
   - Health and labour sciences research
   - Research on overcoming intractable diseases
   - Research on regenerative medicine, etc.
   - Comprehensive research on children and family
   - Research on psychiatric and neurological diseases

2. Establishment of medical institutions
   - Expenses of National Center of Neurology and Psychiatry
   - Facilities of care hospitals and cooperative hospitals for severely intractable disease patients
   - Improvement of medical devices for National Hospital Organization
   - Establishment of facilities for children (or adults) with severe mental/physical disabilities
   - Establishment of facilities for children (or adults) with progressive muscular atrophy

3. Reduction of co-payment of medical fees
   - Research on the treatment of specific diseases
   - Medical aid for children with potential disability
   - Rehabilitative medical care
   - Placement measure for children (or adults) with severe mental/physical disabilities
   - Placement measure for children (or adults) with

4. Improvement and cooperation in community-based health care, medical care
   - Promotion programs of special measures against intractable diseases
   - Intractable disease consultation/support center programs
   - Training programs for medical professionals engaged in specific disease medical care
   - Intractable disease information center programs

5. Promotion of welfare measures aimed at improving quality of life (QOL)
   - Housing assistance programs for intractable disease patients

Types of programs:

- Health Service Bureau
- Health Policy Bureau
- Dept. of Health and Welfare for Persons with Disabilities
- Equal Employment, Children and Families Bureau
- National Hospital Organization
- same as above