

Lecture by Sir Michael Marmot, President of the World Medical Association—Asking for the engagement of doctors in “Social Determinations of Health”^{*1}

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Japan Medical Association

A lecture by Sir Michael Marmot,¹ President of the World Medical Association (WMA), was held in the Auditorium of the Japan Medical Association (JMA) on September 5, 2016. The approximately 300 attendees included medical association members, medical students, medical-related organizations, and members of the general public. Sir Michael, whose lecture was delivered with the theme of “Social Determinants of Health (SDH),” postulated that the health gap is potentially avoidable, and advocated the engagement of doctors in tackling the factors contributing to this gap.

A series of SDH activities by Sir Michael have thus far been provided mainly in countries in Europe, North America, and Africa. This lecture was held with the aim of fulfilling Sir Michael’s desire to talk to discuss SDH in Asia.

Dr. Yoshitake Yokokura, President of JMA, stated in his opening remarks, “It is a great honor for us to invite the world-renowned Sir Michael Marmot, President of WMA, to our Auditorium to give his lecture.” He also expressed his views on the topic of SDH, saying, “In the context of the recent situation that relative poverty has been discussed in Japan, I greatly appreciate this lecture highlighting social determinants of health, an issue to which we have not as yet paid sufficient attention. I hope that the occasion of Sir Michael’s lecture will inspire activities to reduce the health gap and alleviate health inequalities in Japan.”



Sir Michael Marmot, WMA President

Following Dr. Yokokura’s remarks, Sir Michael presented a lecture entitled “Health inequalities. Healthy women’s lives.” Regarding the health gap due to income disparities, Sir Michael noted that once income reaches a certain level, a further increase in income will not lead to additional promotion of health. He also pointed out that factors other than income, such as the level of education, experience in childhood, etc., are involved.

In regard to women’s health, Sir Michael noted the distinct difference in infant mortality rates between mothers who had secondary or higher education and those with less education, and also referred to the relationship between

^{*1} This article is an English translation of a JMA News article (extracted) issued on October 5, 2016.

¹ Immediate Past President, World Medical Association. Professor of Epidemiology at University College London.

Sir Michael Marmot served as WMA President from October, 2015 to October, 2016. In 2000, he was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II, for enduring services to epidemiological research on social disparity and health inequalities.

domestic violence and adverse childhood experiences. He emphasized the importance of education for women.

He underscored that the health inequities are

avoidable, and emphasized that while the function of doctors is to treat the sick, it is also desirable for doctors to tackle the conditions that make people sick.



Lecture in the Auditorium of the Japan Medical Association