

## INTERVIEW WITH THE NEW PRESIDENT Yasuyuki Yoshizawa

# Aiming to Establish a Consistent Tradition I Want to Work with the University as a Whole

**IT WAS 45** years ago that I graduated from the Tokyo Medical and Dental University Faculty of Medicine. As a specialist in pulmonary medicine, I have worked in clinical medicine, research and education, and now I have been appointed the new president of TMDU. My principle task as president is to complete the second medium term plan undertaken by the previous president, Takashi Ohyama. Then, I will be formulating the third medium term targets and plan.

TMDU has the wonderful mission of “Cultivating Professionals with Knowledge and Humanity,” established during President Ohyama’s time. Here, knowledge includes learning, technology, and identity, while humanity means culture, sensitivity, and communication ability that accepts diversity. We will aim to deploy these professionals domestically and globally, to become a world-leading integrated

medical university.

I hope that the faculty and staff who share this mission will feel a strong sense of affiliation with TMDU, which will motivate everyone to realize our ideal. To achieve this, the university executive will provide overall management of our human and material resources, and ensure that we have the best hardware. In addition, we will establish a project planning office and a joint strategy council under the president, and we will strengthen governance so that each organization will be able to make proactive planning proposals for the development of TMDU.

The Faculty of Medicine was founded 69 years ago, and I believe it is necessary for us to establish consistent traditions for clinical medicine, basic research, education, regional healthcare, and international contribution. The Faculty of Dentistry has a tradition going back to its founding 85 years ago. In order to break out of the deadlock that dentistry faces, I want to expand the field of activity of dentists by establishing dental departments in affiliated hospitals, among other initiatives.

I will address individual issues including establishing personnel development and strategic research systems, internationalization and so on in accordance with this basic approach. In terms of personnel development, I want to foster medical professionals who can give advice as specialists while understanding distress of their patients. Consequently, education at the university will shift from giving students problems to solve, to fostering the ability to discover problems and find the means to solve them.



I intend to start discussions towards a more flexible educational system that will permit switching courses between the faculties of Medicine and Dentistry, as well as exchanges and transfers between the Four-University Alliance of TMDU, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, Tokyo Institute of Technology, and Hitotsubashi University. There may be regulatory issues and so on that make this difficult to achieve in fact, but I want to pursue this actively to expand the opportunities for study and to improve personnel mobility.

To improve the strategic research system, it will be necessary to strengthen cooperation between the medical, dental and engineering departments, and to work towards implementation of the Research University Development Office with the future merger of the TMDU Research Organization and the URA Office established under MEXT’s program for promoting the enhancement of research universities.

In pursuit of safe and reliable healthcare, we will further enhance the ongoing coordination between the Medical and Dental Hospitals. In order to achieve comprehensive healthcare, we will establish Clinics for General Medicine and strengthen cooperation between the clinics.

From the time of President Ohyama, TMDU has actively sought to make international contributions. In addition to the joint degree offered in Chile, we are pursuing a range of activities at our overseas offices in Thailand and Ghana. Currently the Faculty of Dentistry is taking the lead, but the Faculty of Medicine must also pursue international contribu-

tions through more active personnel development overseas. Besides our overseas offices, TMDU also plans to export its medical and dental educational curriculum to Southeast Asia and South America.

However, I am also aware of the importance of contributing to regional healthcare. We are now conducting personnel exchanges with affiliated hospitals and enhancing hospital-clinic cooperation while preparing the cooperative organization utilizing ICT by networking with clinics in the Ochanomizu area. The unfortunate reality is that private clinicians around TMDU still see it as a university that specializes in research and education.

We will also establish a working group for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics. From care of top athletes with our unique Hyperbaric Medical Center and Sports Medicine and Dentistry and expanded ER in response to terrorist threats, to our foreign language support for care of foreign tourists and IOC members in cooperation with other universities, we will consider how we can play an active role based on TMDU’s strengths.

Besides these plans, there are many issues that must be addressed with greater urgency including improvement of incentives and working conditions for faculty and staff, and professional development for medical staff other than doctors. We will meet each of these requirements in accordance with the mission of TMDU.

Since I became president, I have decided to work in the spirit of my mottoes, “Do your best to be a positive thinker,” and “If you know yourself, you can not be wicked.”