

Patient- and Family-Led Research Funding: Impact of the Mesothelioma Treatment Promotion Foundation (MTF) in Japan

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Seoul

Introduction

Mesothelioma is a rare cancer with a small patient population, and treatment options remain limited. Because the patient population is small, securing sufficient funding for new drugs and treatments is difficult. In 2022, patients, families, healthcare professionals, and legal professionals established MTF. Its goal is to help make mesothelioma curable in the future.

Methods

The foundation operates mainly through donations from patients, families, and bereaved families, together with support from legal professionals involved in asbestos-victim relief. Its research-support program has three pillars:

 1. Clinical Research Support

 2. Basic Research Support

 3. International Conference Travel Grants

Results

 Clinical Research
2

 Basic Research
8

 Conference Travel
2

Achievements Across Two Funding Cycles (2025-2026)

FY2025 (1st Cycle)

 Clinical Research Support (10 million JPY)
Kozo Kuribayashi (Hyogo Medical University)
Phase II trial of a new drug regimen for advanced pleural mesothelioma

 Basic Research Support (4 projects)
Novel therapies based on immune-microenvironment analysis using patient samples, etc.

 Conference Travel Grant
iMig 2025

FY2026 (2nd Cycle)

 Clinical Research Support (10 million JPY)
Masaki Hashimoto (Hyogo Medical University)
Phase II trial for clinical stage I pleural mesothelioma

 Basic Research Support (4 projects)
Liquid-biopsy study using GLUT1-positive EVs for early detection and differential diagnosis, etc.

 Conference Travel Grant
ESTS 2026

Discussion and Conclusion

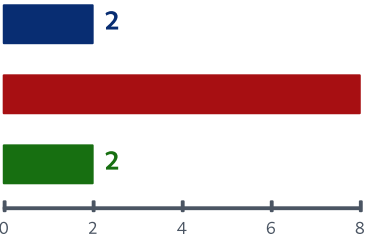
- Patients and families actively support research themselves.
- Rare-cancer research needs support for researchers and professional networks.
- Clinical translation requires collaboration across research, healthcare, academic societies, law, and patient organizations.
- This patient- and family-led model can advance rare-cancer research beyond Japan.

Breakdown of Supported Projects

Clinical Research

Basic Research

Conference Travel



Progress to Date

2022



Foundation Established

2025



1st Funding Cycle

2026



2nd Funding Cycle

Patients, families, healthcare professionals, and legal professionals established MTF in 2022. Two funding cycles now support clinical and basic research and expand international connections.

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For patients, a new treatment is not merely a research outcome. It is hope.

References / Acknowledgements

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