

Preface



National Institute of Radiological Sciences (NIRS) has continued to facilitate an efficient, transparent, and competitive research atmosphere, which forms the essential principle for the Independent Administrative Institute (IAI). Our eventual aim is achievement of outstanding outcomes through research activities.

The fiscal year 2003 (FY2003) was the 3rd year after NIRS was reborn as an IAI in 2001. NIRS has been implementing its activities basically according to a mid-term (5-year) plan and annual plans.

We submitted our business report (including the financial report) and the achievement report of FY 2002 to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) in June 2003, which was evaluated by the Evaluation Committee of MEXT. This evaluation process was the 2nd that we have experienced. We still need to get accustomed to this annual important event in order not to consume too much energy in this process.

In October 2003 "Heavy Ion Radiotherapy of Solid Cancer" was approved by the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Labour as a highly advanced medical procedure (HAMP). We treated 56 cancer patients as HAMP during the period from November 2003 to March 2004, in which each patient pays 3.14 million yen for heavy ion radiotherapy. Clinical research continues for the evaluation of safety and effectiveness of new irradiation techniques as well as new target tumors.

Research buildings for low dose radiation effects experiments and translational research were completed. The latter is to be used mainly for neuroscience study at present. A center for cutting edge gene expression research was newly established in order to facilitate application of the high coverage expression profile (HiCEP) technique.

NIRS continued research activities according to the mid-term plan, including 5 project studies, 1 frontier type study, 20 basic studies, and 1 brain function study. Almost all projects progressed as was planned. Additionally, I as president of NIRS, took initiative in granting 22 new research proposals after in house competition in order to cultivate research seeds. In FY2003, we produced 237 original papers, which is 1.2 papers per researcher on the average.

In order to support and promote the above mentioned research activities, the department of research promotion and division of information management were established. Division of planning strengthened its function by increasing the number of personnel from outside NIRS as well as collaborating researchers in NIRS.

Activities for public relationships, and international cooperation have been continuously enhanced.

It is our great pleasure to publish this annual report. In the rapidly changing society worldwide, we will continue our efforts as a center of excellence (COE) for radiological sciences utilizing advantages of IAI. We would like to ask for continuing support and constructive criticism from outside NIRS.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Yasuhito Sasaki". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Yasuhito Sasaki, M.D., Ph.D.
President