

## 6. India's Report

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This report delves into the accomplishments and impact of the Asian Young Dietitian Network, an initiative led by Professor Shigeru Yamamoto, Chief Editor of the Asian Journal of Dietetics. Established to foster collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and friendship among dietitians across Asian nations, the initiative has proven to be a valuable platform for academic, scientific, and cultural growth. This article provides a comprehensive overview of the forum's objectives, execution, and the significant contributions it can make to dietetics.

### *Introduction:*

The Asian Young Dietitian Network is an exemplary concept, conceived by Professor Shigeru Yamamoto from Jumonji University, seeking to establish a collaborative network for dietitians across Asian countries. The forum's inception gained momentum through online meetings, creating a foundation for camaraderie among participants.

### *Objectives:*

The primary objectives of the forum include:

- a. **Networking and Collaboration:** Facilitating collaborative efforts among member nations to enhance the growth and support of dietitians.
- b. **Knowledge Exchange:** Providing a platform for young researchers to publish work, participate in conferences, and share insights.
- c. **Cultural Understanding:** Utilizing country presentations to explore both similarities and diversities of food culture, dietary habits, and health challenges, fostering a comprehensive understanding of each member nation.

### *Initiative Execution:*

The meticulously planned visit to Japan, supported by Ajinomoto, included a stay in Tokyo. The pre-kickoff experience showcased Japan's technological advancements and the locals' helpfulness. Academic endeavors during the initiative involved country presentations, delving into food culture, dietary habits, and common health problems. In-depth discussions on dietetic systems, ethics, and legalities were evident in well-crafted presentations and collaborative learning experiences.

### **Welcomed by the President of Jumonji University**

The meeting was very engaging as the President genuinely took time to understand the program. He encouraged the Network and was proud of Professor Yamamoto's initiative of fostering the Asian Young Dietitian Network.

The visit to the university was beautiful as it had Mount Fuji in the background. The university grounds were beautifully covered with trees full of autumn orange and red trees. The vibe at the university was very positive and interaction with all dietetic students of Masters and Post Graduate programs and Ph.D. Programs were interesting.



**Fig 1. The picture was taken on the rooftop of Jumonji University**

### **Visit to Japanese Hospital (Nerima Hikarigaoka Hospital)**

A hospital visit, graciously facilitated by Ms. Trang and Professor Yamamoto, allowed an immersive experience in understanding feeding practices, meal distributions enteral and parental feedings, nutritional assessments, and patient care. The chief dietitian, a very empowered and central to the dietetic department introduced the activities they do throughout the day. The president also walked us through detailed presentations on the presence of Malnutrition in three out of 4 patients in the hospital and rehabilitation centers. This was due to high numbers of the aging population. Other concepts of Iatrogenic Sarcopenia, Aspirational Pneumonia, Nutrition Care Process (NCP), and nutrition management process were deeply discussed. The president also spoke on the new Rehabilitation Nutrition care process. It was very insightful to see extreme detailing on proper positions - bed whilst feeding

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Pneumonia patients. Any occupation can evaluate swallowing and eating without equipment was a very interesting learning in early detection. The cooking and plating of these meals a previous day for breakfast so that the staff doesn't have to rush from home at 2 am was a great learning curve. State-of-the-art equipment at the hospital including cooking utensils, gas ranges, ovens, and the unique rice suction machine which reduces manual labor -an innovation of the chief dietitian was well worthy of praise. The dietetic department stood robust, bringing in steady income for the hospital, and played a pivotal role in hospital administration and leadership.



**Fig 2. Proper positioning to feed patients with dysphasia.**

### Visit to elementary school for school lunch (Funabori Elementary School)

A highlight of the initiative was the school lunch program, emphasizing the role of dietitians in planning and executing menus. Students actively participated, incorporating sustainability, and achieving UN Sustainable Development Goals. explores the unique and innovative aspects of the Japanese school lunch program, focusing on a practical learning experience hosted by the Dietitian of Funabori Elementary School. The central role of the dietitian is planning and executing menus, addressing allergy and cultural dietary requirements, and fostering a holistic learning environment. Students actively participate in food-related activities, including kitchen gardening and vegetable peeling sessions, promoting sustainability and nutritional awareness. The article underscores the achievement of UN Sustainable Development Goals, specifically in reducing food wastage and ensuring nutrition security for children. The school lunch costs

290 yen to be paid by parents. Rest all infrastructure cost, Salaries of Food and beverage staff and Dietitian was paid by Government. Some schools even provided lunch at no extra cost to parents. Insights into the program's cost structure and government subsidies provide valuable information for educators and policymakers.

### Kick-off meeting of AYDN

The Kick-off meeting was attended by Global Communication (Ajinomoto Co., Inc.), Professor Yamamoto, and Press and media persons. The meeting began with a welcome by the President of Ajinomoto. That was followed by Professor Yamamoto's Vision and purpose of the Network. Ms. Trang gave a detailed presentation of the Vision, Mission, and Next steps for the Network.

This was followed by the country presentation by each member country elucidating their cultural cuisines, and ingredients which were mainly used as a part of their cuisine. The health challenges faced by every country, the dietetic systems, and the Legalities of dietetic practice were covered.

The meeting was concluded by a vote of thanks by Ms. Andrea -Dietitian of Ajinomoto.

### Conclusion

Under the guidance of Professor Yamamoto, the Asian Young Dietitian Network has successfully achieved its objectives, fostering international collaboration, cultural exchange, and academic growth. It emphasizes the forum's contributions to the field of dietetics and its role in strengthening bonds among dietitians across Asia.

a. Continued Collaboration: Sustain and expand the network for ongoing collaboration and knowledge exchange.

b. Regular Conferences: Host periodic conferences to facilitate academic discussions and updates.

c. Dietitian network Programs: Encourage practicing dietitians and dietetic students to share clinical practices, case studies, and research for scientific academic growth.

#### *Future Prospects:*

The Asian Young Dietitian Network has laid a robust foundation for continued collaboration and growth. The lessons learned and relationships formed will undoubtedly contribute to the advancement of dietetics in the Asian region. This explores the forum's relevance, particularly in the context of India hosting the ACD 2026 conference.