

# Kobe Adventist Hospital

---

## TADASHI INO

Tadashi Ino, Ph.D., was born in Tokyo, Japan. After working for a company as an engineer, he became a pastor and also served as a teacher and a chaplain. Currently, he works as a translator in the office of the Japan Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. The title of his doctoral dissertation is "Paul's Use of Canonical and Noncanonical Wisdom Literature in Romans and the Corinthian Letters."

---

Kobe Adventist Hospital (Kobe Adobenchisuto Byoin) is a 116-bed medical institution on a four-acre (1.6-hectare) plot of land in the northern suburbs of Kobe, a thriving port city of central Japan.

## Early Days of Medical Work in Kobe

Medical work began in Kobe on June 1, 1903, when Kobe Sanitarium was opened by the General Conference as the first Adventist medical institution in the Far East. The first medical doctors were Drs. S. A. Lockwood, Kiku Kumashiro, and Mokutarou Kawasaki. The sanitarium became famous among American ministers, missionaries of other denominations, and rich businessmen. After six months, Drs. Kumashiro and Kawasaki opened another sanitarium by themselves for poor citizens. This sanitarium was gradually trusted by Japanese citizens, and it became the beginning of evangelism in Kobe. The Kobe SDA Church was established as the second Adventist church in Japan. The two sanitariums worked together for a while; but, in 1907, Kobe Sanitarium was absorbed by another private sanitarium and it closed in March 1941 because of lack of medical doctors.

## Soaikai Clinic

On September 1, 1923, Tokyo, Yokohama, and surrounding cities were visited by the Great Kanto Earthquake. The Kobe church assisted in supporting the afflicted people. Mrs. Jun Sumitomo and other church members put together a welfare group, *Soaikai*, which later became known as the Soaikai Clinic. In 1931 Soaikai Clinic was donated to the Japan Mission, and the name was changed to Nunobiki Clinic. However, the Kobe aerial attack closed the medical work there in 1945.

## Kobe Adventist Clinic

Following a 20-year absence, the Japan Mission decided to send Dr. E. H. Krick from the Tokyo Sanitarium and Hospital to Kobe, to restart the medical work there. The location where the clinic was built was down the street from where the private clinic had stood which was established by Dr. Kumashiro 60 years before. The older citizens in Kobe remembered the good reputation of the sanitarium, and they gladly made accommodations for

the new clinic in various ways. The address of the clinic was Fukiai-ku Kamiwaka-dori. The new clinic also earned a good reputation, and it laid the foundation for Kobe Adventist Hospital.

## Kobe Adventist Hospital

On November 18, 1973, when Japan was hit by the first oil shock, Kobe Adventist Hospital was established at Kita-ku Arinodai. In order to secure money for the new hospital, Pastor Kensaku Yasui and Mr. Arata Emoto solicited funding from companies in Kobe, Osaka, and even Tokyo. The Japan Union Mission and the Far Eastern Division also helped with funding.

The hospital was staffed by Dr. C. D. Johnson, medical director; Arata Emoto, business manager; four medical doctors; and 31 workers. It started with 45 beds and rose to 60 in 1980, 67 in 1985, and 116 in 1987.

In 1983, on the 10th anniversary of the project, and in order to promote the Seventh-day Adventist lifestyle, Sanku Center was completed. It contains a vegetarian restaurant, a gift shop, a library, a Japanese-style room for group activities, a 100-person capacity multipurpose hall, and a training room. This center achieved accreditation by the Ministry of Health and Welfare as a facility for health enhancement on March 20, 1991.

In 1988 the first major building plan was completed, bringing the number of patient beds to 116. Doctors' offices, laboratory facilities, a physical therapy unit, and a patients' business office were added.

In 1992 the second major renovation and expansion provided more space for diagnostic radiology, dietary service, and administrative offices, as well as space for the hospice service.

On October 1, 1993, the unit for hospice service achieved accreditation by the Ministry of Health and Welfare. It was the first in Hyogo prefecture and the eleventh in Japan. The hospice service started with eight beds, which became ten in 2000, and 21 in 2004. The director of hospice, Kenji Yamagata, who was the fourth medical director of the hospital, made a great contribution in the area of spiritual care in Japan.

On January 17, 1995, the hospital was hit by the Hanshin Earthquake, and the building was divided into three parts. However, the hospital never missed a day of operation.

In 1998 the third renovation and expansion were completed. The reconstruction was necessary because of the damage caused by the earthquake. As a result, the total floor space tripled.

Following the long service of the medical director, Jouji Henmi, an obstetrician-gynecologist, a new department of obstetrics was set up in 2005. At the same time, the Center for Agenesis<sup>1</sup> was opened.

The hospital has continued to grow. In April 2008 a room was opened for a cardiac catheter. In October 2013 an electronic chart was introduced at the hospital. In 2020 a nursing home, Shalom Kobe Arinodai, was opened. The hospital cares for 80 inpatients daily and 7,000 outpatients monthly.

## Medical Directors

C. D. Johnson (1973-1974), Jouji Henmi (1975-1995), Yasutsugu Yanami (1995-2000), Kenji Yamagata (2001-2015), Tsuneharu Mori (2016-present).

---

### SOURCES

“Enkaku (History)” in the home page of Kobe Adventist Hospital, <http://kahns.org/>.

Kajiyama, Tsumoru. Shimeini Moete: Nihon Sebunsudeadobenchisuto Kyoukaishi (“The History of Japanese Seventh-day Adventist Church”). Yokohama, Kanagawa, Japan: Fukuinsha, 1982.

*Kouyu*. The 30th Anniversary Issue, November 30, 2003. Edited by Kouyu Henshu linkai.

Machida, Hidesaburo. “Nihon no Adobenchisuto Kyoukai niokeru Kikan no Yakuwari to sono Rekishi 4: 2 Ijidendou no Hataraki.” *Adobenchisuto Raifu* 101, no. 7 (July 2015): 18-21.

Machida, Hidesaburo. “Nihon no Adobenchisuto Kyoukai niokeru Kikan no Yakuwari to sono Rekishi 5: 2 Ijidendou no Hataraki.” *Adobenchisuto Raifu* 101, no. 8 (August 2015): 18-21.

Machida, Hidesaburo. “Nihon no Adobenchisuto Kyoukai niokeru Kikan no Yakuwari to sono Rekishi 6: 2 Ijidendou no Hataraki.” *Adobenchisuto Raifu* 101, no. 9 (September 2015): 18-21.

Machida, Hidesaburo. “Nihon no Adobenchisuto Kyoukai niokeru Kikan no Yakuwari to sono Rekishi 7: 2 Ijidendou no Hataraki.” *Adobenchisuto Raifu* 101, no. 10 (October 2015): 18-19.

---

### NOTES

1. Agenesis is “in human physiology, failure of all or part of an [organ](#) to develop during [embryonic](#) growth” (The editors of Encyclopedia Britannica, “Agenesis: Pathology,” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, July 20, 1998, accessed April 14, 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/science/agenesis>

---

encyclopedia.adventist.org is an official website of the [Seventh-day Adventist World Church](#)

© 2020 General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists 12501 Old Columbia Pike Silver Spring , MD 20904 USA 301-680-6000