



## Background and objective

During the Pandemic, socially vulnerable groups were forced to live harder. As financial difficulty and social isolation are significant determinants of health, we sought for ways to provide intervention on all such cases.

## Methods/intervention

From J-HPH pilot study<sup>1)</sup>, 4 questions were added to existing inpatient screening interview sheet: (Q1,2 financial difficulty) 1. Did you have any difficulty in meeting ends last year? 2. Is it difficult to manage before payday? (Q3,4 solitary) 3. How often do you see/talk with your friends? 4. With your family/relative? For financial cases, case worker would visit and refer them to social services; for solitary cases, hospital's Friends Association staff would invite them to community hobby circles or exercise classes.

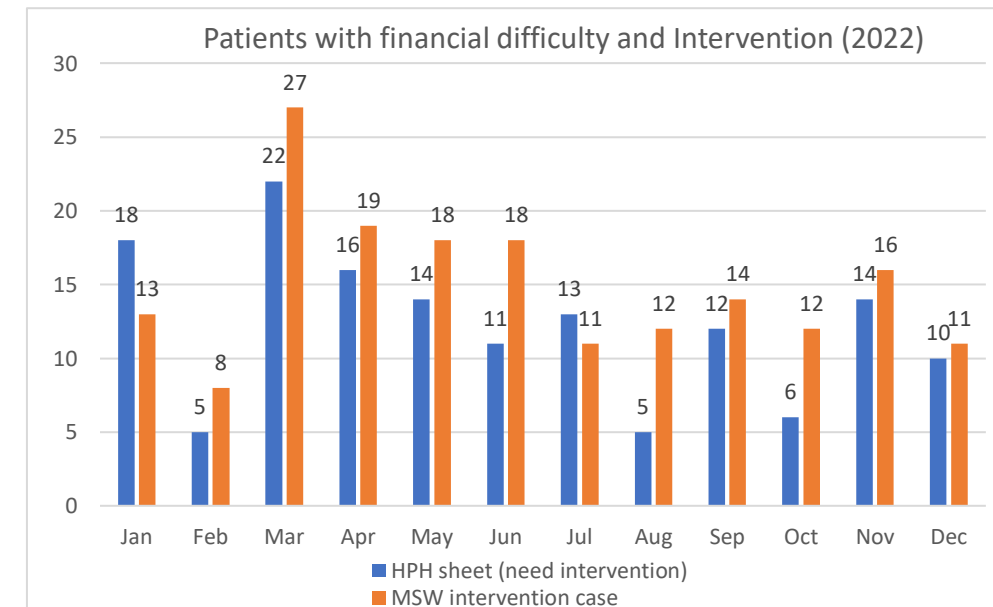
1) Development of Scale for Assessment of Financial Difficulty of Patients at Medical Institution [Daisuke Nishioka](#), [Keiko Ueno](#), [Mitsuhiro Funakoshi](#), [Masashige Saito](#), [Naoki Kondo](#) Japanese Journal of Public Health, 2020, vol. 67 no.7, p. 461-470

## Results

2022/1/1 ~2022/12/31 Total 3027 inpatients

### Intervention for Financial Difficulty

	Need	No-need	No answer on financial difficulty	Responders to interview sheet out of all inpatients
Patients (persons)	179	1436	886	2501
Ratio (%)	7.2	57.4	35.4	



In some month, MSW intervention case is more than HPH sheet case. This is because MSW make interventions not only based on HPH sheet but also other information sources such as referral source before hospitalization, outpatient department, community comprehensive care system.

### Breakdown of intervention types for financial difficulty

Total number of targets	179
Consultation only	72
Free/low-cost medication <sup>1)</sup>	52
Social welfare program	19
Information on high-cost healthcare support	1
Use installment payment	1
Others	4
No intervention because released from hospital	23
No intervention for other reason	6
No intervention wanted	1

1) Free/low-cost medication is a support program so that an opportunity to receive required medication will not be limited due to financial reason. It is stipulated in Article 2, Paragraph 3, Item 9 of the Social Welfare Law and performed at accredited institution. Income criteria depends on the medical institutions.

### Breakdown of intervention types for social isolation

Total number of targets	50
Leaflet	50
Invitation for activity group + leaflet	30

## Nishiyodo Hospital



Small (200beds) private hospital in old neighborhood of Osaka. It became HPH in 2014 and is active ever since.

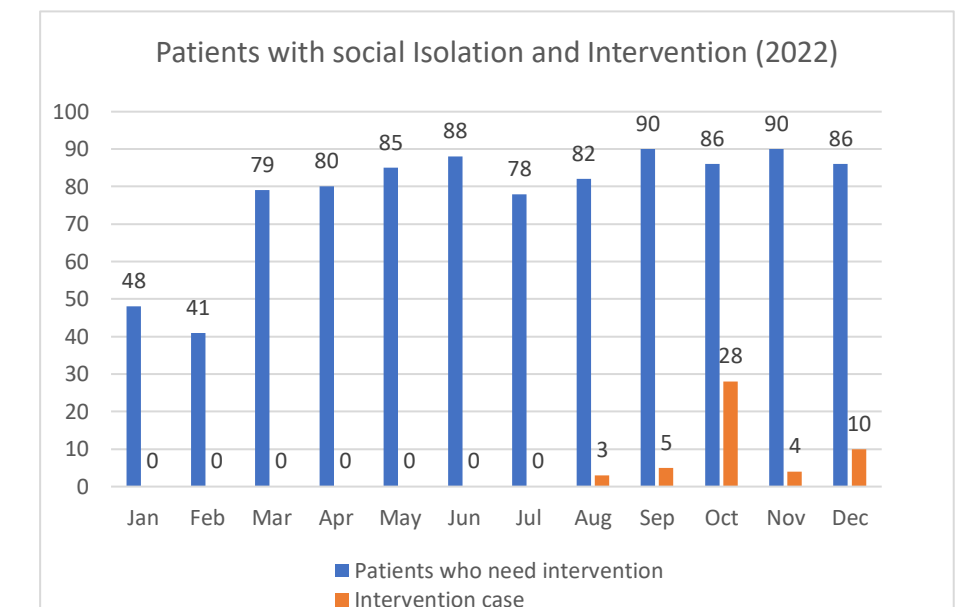


### Sample view of the interview sheet (excerpts)

Responses on the questions are incorporated into e-MR, and the staffs of corresponding department take intervention action.

### Intervention for Social Isolation

	Need	No-need	No answer on social isolation	Responders to interview sheet out of all inpatients
Patients (persons)	993	578	930	2501
Ratio (%)	39.7	23.1	37.2	



Intervention was not possible due to mid-2022 because community activities such as hobby circles and exercise classes were closed. As the activities started again in late-2022, intervention has also started again.

### Examples of activity groups to refer the patients

#### Online exercise class



#### Square stepping class



#### Smart phone class



#### Mah-jongg game circle



## Lessons learned

The 4 questions are useful to identify intervention targets without asking sensitive questions on income or relationship. But since some patients do not answer the questions, it is necessary to find out the reason why they didn't and revise the questions to make it easier to answer. Previously concerned cases were referred to social services only when hospital staff noticed Social Determinants of Health during hospitalization. With this interview sheet, screening of every case became possible and more intervention is provided. Solitary intervention is still few and needs to be increased. Possible collaboration with Community-Based Integrated Care System and Medical Association is underway.

## Relevance to HPH, Relation to conference main theme, Relation to one of the HPH Task Forces

The Pandemic brought more hardships on socially vulnerable groups. In Japan, many are hesitant to admit financial hardship or being solitary or losing social connections. It is significant as HP effort that we can now identify and intervene for poverty, social connection, or social resources during hospitalization.