

Precise Classification of Generalists is Necessary to Establish Evidence in General Medicine [Response to Letter]

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Dear editor

First, we would like to thank Dr. Yokota et al for their valuable comments on our article.¹ As they pointed out, we believe that the concepts and definitions of general medicine (GM) and generalists should be discussed separately. In our previous article, we used “generalists” as synonymous with the “general medicine physicians” described by Dr. Yokota et al.^{1,2} We meant the “generalists” did not include physicians specializing solely in emergency medicine, intensive care, or palliative care. Japanese “general medicine physicians” are those who practice clinical medicine based on family medicine and general internal medicine.³ We want to emphasize that there is no room for debate on this issue.

We also strongly acknowledge the importance of including opinions from physicians of diverse backgrounds when discussing GM and general medicine physicians in Japan, as they advocate. However, in our previous paper, we did not intend to discuss the concepts, roles, and competencies of GM or general medicine physicians. Instead, we focused on the importance of classifying general medicine physicians in research targeting them.¹ We believe that developing a classification method with objective indicators for Japanese general medicine physicians to define the target population in research will greatly benefit future research in general practice and help establish solid evidence in GM.

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Disclosure

The authors report no conflicts of interest in this communication.

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