

Editorial

Clinical practice guidelines for the management of biliary tract and ampullary carcinomas

Although the prognosis of biliary carcinoma remains poor, no clinical practice guidelines for biliary tract and ampullary carcinomas have been published to date. We hope that the publication of *Evidence-Based clinical practical guidelines for the management of biliary tract and ampullary carcinomas* will contribute to the development of evidence-based diagnosis and treatment in this field.

I will describe how the present guidelines came to be published. In 2003, the publication of guidelines was proposed to the Japanese Association of Biliary Surgery as part of an Integrated Research Project for Assessing Medical Technology, sponsored by the Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare. Immediately, a working group was organized for the purpose of preparing evidence-based guidelines. In 2005, the Japanese Association of Biliary Surgery and the Japanese Society of Hepato-Biliary-Pancreatic Surgery (JSHBPS) united, and the preparation of the guidelines was continued by the JSHBPS as its main task.

The guidelines were disclosed at the draft stage to facilitate external assessment, and the text: *Evidence-Based clinical practice guidelines for the management of biliary tract and ampullary carcinomas* was later published in collaboration with the Japan Society of Clinical Oncology and the Integrated Research Project for Assessing Medical Technology, sponsored by the Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare.

We believe these guidelines will be of great use and so we decided to publish an English-language version. It is anticipated that, in future, the volume of important evidence and evidence-based evaluations will increase the scope of the guidelines. To allow for the incorpora-

tion of evidence as it arises, the guidelines consist of independent articles on important subjects. An abstract of each article is followed by clinical questions to ensure that the guidelines may be used in everyday medical practice.

Acknowledgment. We would like to express our deep gratitude to the members of the the Japanese Association of Biliary Surgery, the Japanese Society of Hepato-Biliary-Pancreatic Surgery, and the Japan Society of Clinical Oncology, who provided us with great support and guidance in the preparation of the Guidelines. This process was conducted as part of the Integrated Research Project for Assessing Medical Technology 2005 and 2006 sponsored by the Japanese Ministry of Health, Labour, and Welfare.

We truly appreciate the following active working members who developed the draft of the evidence-based clinical practice Guidelines for the treatment of biliary tract cancer (Japanese version, 2007): Masahiro Kai (Miyazaki), Yasutoshi Kimura (Sapporo), Shigeaki Sawada (Toyama), Hiroaki Shimizu (Chiba), Hisatoshi Nakagawara (Kanazawa), Kohei Nakachi (Kashiwa), and Hiroyuki Yoshitome (Chiba). We also appreciate very much the following members who reviewed and approved the final Japanese version of the guidelines: Hiromitsu Saisyō (Ichikawa), Munemasa Ryu (Chiba), Satoru Shikata (Kyoto), and Yuji Nimura (Nagoya).

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