

Symposium | Suicide prevention : [Symposium 78] Suicide Prevention Laws in Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan: Achievements, Challenges, and Future Directions

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[Symposium 78] Suicide Prevention Laws in Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan: Achievements, Challenges, and Future Directions

Moderator: Shu-Sen Chang (National Taiwan University), Tadashi Takeshima (Taisho University)

[SY-78-02] Suicide Prevention Act and Action Plan of Korea

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The Suicide Prevention Act was enacted in March 2011 as the suicide rate was surged. This act emphasizes the responsibilities of the central and local governments for suicide prevention and focuses on prevention and awareness improvement. To this end, the Minister of Health and Welfare establishes Action Plan every five years, and the central and local governments implement and evaluate annual suicide prevention plans. The government also perform the implementation of suicide surveys and psychological autopsies, integrate and manage suicide-related data, and establish and operate the national and regional suicide prevention centers to perform counseling, education, and crisis intervention tasks. The Suicide Prevention Act has been amended several times to reflect the latest suicide prevention programs, services and policies. The amendment in February 2022 included provisions of information on suicide attempt survivors from the police and fire departments to the local suicide prevention and community mental health and welfare centers (CMHC). The amendment in July 2023 incorporated measures for mandatory suicide prevention education in schools, public agencies, and medical and welfare facilities. The 5th Action Plan (2023-2027) aims to reduce the suicide death rate by 30% until 2027, through strengthening community-based suicide prevention policies and support for high-risk groups. This plan was structured around five major strategies and 15 key tasks. Firstly, in relation to the strategy of building Life Safety Network, the 5th Action Plan proposes expanding community-based suicide prevention programs and mental health screenings, mandating suicide prevention education, and introducing the Suicide Zero Town as a new project. The project is designed to implement community-specific suicide prevention programs at the township level, integrating various needed suicide prevention activities, including awareness campaigns, gatekeeper training, customized services for high-risk groups, and blocking access to suicide means.