



## Greeting

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It has been about two years since the first report of the new coronavirus infection (COVID-19), and a new way of life has just been established. Vaccination in Japan has progressed steadily, and measures to prevent infection have also advanced. Also, the development of therapeutic drugs has made progress, and some oral therapeutic drugs have been approved for use. I believe that we are now entering a phase where we will be able to live our lives while keeping the economy running by using vaccinations and therapeutic drugs.

The Japanese government has been supporting a wide range of research and development for the development of domestically produced vaccines and therapeutic drugs. Through AMED, it has supported a range of research and development activities related to COVID-19, from basic research to practical application, through four projects on drug development: the "Project Promoting Support for Drug Discovery", the "Vaccine Development Promotion Project", the "Japan Program for Infectious Diseases Research and Infrastructure", and the "Research Program on Emerging and Re-emerging Infectious Diseases."

The Catalyst Unit, which hosts this event as it did last time, is one of the Drug Discovery Support Promotion Units established as part of AMED's efforts to strengthen the driving force for drug creation in all Japan. The Catalyst Unit acts as a base for public relations and information sharing on pharmaceutical projects, including the Drug Discovery Support Network.

It has been about half a year since the first results briefing in June, and we have decided to hold this results briefing as an opportunity to report the progress of R&D issues and a wide range of results that we were not able to share with you last time.

This time, too, we will have presentations by researchers on epidemiological characteristics of COVID-19, research on viral mutants, diagnostic methods, immune response, development of therapeutic agents according to severity, prediction of severe disease, and vaccine development.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all the researchers who will present their research results despite their busy schedules. I also hope that the conference will be used as an opportunity to understand COVID-19 and explore ways to overcome the disease as soon as possible.