

# Making Use of Changes in Outpatient Care to Instigate System Reforms

## *Considerations based on increase in daily medical costs during coronavirus crisis*

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### Summary

- While the total amount of outpatient medical expenses has been decreasing due to restraint of medical consultation, etc., the outpatient medical expenses per day in fiscal 2020 increased by 6.4% from the previous year. This was due to the decrease in relatively mild respiratory disease, as well as a decrease in medication associated with said condition. It can be confirmed that the number of medical examinations due to colds actually decreased drastically in fiscal 2020, based on the collected data of the health insurance association owned by Daiwa Institute of Research providing social insurance solutions.
- In Japan, where the number of outpatient visits per person is very large, it is important to take advantage of changes in the field of outpatient medicine due to the COVID-19 outbreak, and to optimize consultations. It is necessary to clarify and establish the function of the family doctor. In the medical fee revision of FY2022, it was clarified that reforms in line with actual current conditions of family doctors was advanced.
- During the coronavirus crisis, dispensing medical expenses per prescription increased, and long-term prescriptions increased. In order to reduce the burden on patients and improve the efficiency of outpatient care while increasing convenience, it is effective to use refill prescriptions for patients with stable symptoms. The system needs to be easy to use for both doctors and patients.

### Attention

This report is a summary translation. The official document is only in Japanese.