

## EDITORIAL

# New Editor-in-Chief

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On 4 August, Dr Shokei Kim-Mitsuyama submitted his resignation as Editor-in-Chief of *Hypertension Research* to the executive committee of the Japanese Society of Hypertension (JSH) and after careful consideration by the board members this was accepted. Professor Ryuichi Morishita, Deputy Editor, has assumed the role of Acting Editor-in-Chief beginning 5 August 2013.

A sudden change of Editor-in-Chief like this is not something expected to happen in a journal like *Hypertension Research* and we are aware that this change may draw the interest of our readers and members of the hypertension research community. We feel it is our responsibility to give a clear explanation about the background to this change and hope it will avoid unnecessary speculation about those involved.

On 9 June, the *Hypertension Research* editorial office received an email questioning the possibility of data manipulation and misconduct in the article 'Excess aldosterone under normal salt diet induces cardiac hypertrophy and infiltration via oxidative stress' published in *Hypertension Research*, volume 28, number 5 (2005). Given the serious nature of these allegations, the Japanese Society of Hypertension and the *Hypertension Research* editorial board immediately started an investigation. Noting Dr Kim-Mitsuyama's role as a corresponding author of the article we contacted Kumamoto University and Osaka City University to ask for their cooperation in examining this and other papers published by Dr Kim-Mitsuyama.

To ensure strict neutrality, the Japanese Society of Hypertension and the *Hypertension Research* editorial board concluded that Dr Kim-Mitsuyama should be suspended from the role of Editor-in-Chief

during the investigation. However, Dr Kim-Mitsuyama proposed he step down from the post to avoid any negative impacts the investigation might have on the society and the journal. This was accepted by the society and Dr Kim-Mitsuyama tendered his resignation.

The investigation into the alleged figure manipulation is still underway, for which Dr Kim-Mitsuyama has promised to provide his full cooperation. *Hypertension Research* will await the report from the universities, assess all the facts of the situation and form a considered conclusion. At this point the journal will take appropriate editorial action.

In the interim, the Japanese Society of Hypertension has appointed Dr Ryuichi Morishita of Osaka University as Acting Editor-in-Chief and Dr Hironori Nakagami of Osaka University as Managing Editor. A new Editor-in-Chief will be appointed later this year at the society's executive committee meeting.

An increasing number of scientific papers are being discovered to be the result of intentional and unethical behavior such as plagiarism, forgery and figure manipulation. The Japanese Society of Hypertension and *Hypertension Research* are firmly committed to implementing the highest ethical standards and following the Committee on Publication Ethics Code of Conduct for Journal Publishers. The journal will take all actions necessary to attend to and resolve any violations of the scientific code of conduct and so maintain the integrity of the scientific record.

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