

Statement by the board concerning publication fraud committed by a former member

[9 May 2017]

The Japanese Society of Anesthesiologists received a notification in May of last year from the editorial board of an overseas anesthesiology journal. This stated that Mr. Yuji Saito, at that time a member of this Society, was suspected of publication fraud. The board set up a special committee to investigate Mr. Saito's alleged fraud. Approximately 40 publications by Mr Saito were investigated by this committee. An editorial in anesthesiology-related journal 'Anaesthesia' outlining the alleged fraud cited numerous publications where it was almost certain that data manipulation and fraud had taken place. The committee concluded that in the case of several other publications there were severe breaches of research ethics.

At the start of the investigation, Mr. Saito tendered his resignation from the Society, and we considered that under the regulations and Articles of Incorporation we had no choice but to accept it. However, since the results of this investigation were made known, the Society has suffered a major loss of credibility among anesthesiologists and researchers in Japan. Mr. Saito has also had an adverse influence on the provision of safe medical care. We consider that Mr. Saito lacks the qualities required for an anaesthetist and a researcher, and will not be considering allowing him to ever again become a member of this Society.

We wish to publicize information about Mr. Saito in order to raise awareness of the issue, and to prevent a recurrence in any other society or organisation.

The Society, in the future, with regard to obligations of research institution administrators, lead authors, co-authors' medical institutions, as well as reporting obligations, shall thoroughly disseminate the "Ethical Guidelines on Medical Research" and "Guidelines on the Handling, Etc., of Misconduct in Research Activities" prescribed by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, and the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare, at academic meetings and seminars, etc., as well as through the use of media such as newsletters, magazines, and papers, will confirm that efforts are being made to prevent recurrence via its Board of Directors, and will act as described in this statement.

May 9, 2017

Board of Directors, Japanese Society of Anesthesiologists