(5) Promoting Survey and Research

- In FY 2005, the government conducted research on the prevention, diagnosis, medical treatment, and rehabilitation of elderly-specific diseases and disabilities, as part of the General Research Project of Longevity Science. For the further promotion of comprehensive research into longevity science, the government also focused on the Long-term Care Insurance System that serves as a support base for the elderly. Specifically, the government conducted social-scientific research to establish long-term care programs, to protect the human rights of the elderly, and to harmonize policies for health care, medical care, and welfare.

- Based on the "The Third Term Comprehensive Ten-year Strategy for Cancer Control" that had been carried out since FY2004, the government conducted research to further clarify the nature of cancer as part of the Research Projects under the Third Term Comprehensive Ten-year Strategy for Cancer Control, while promoting translational research to steadily develop new medical treatment using the results of basic research.

- With regard to lifestyle-related and chronic diseases, the government developed technology for the creation of innovative and creative new drugs as part of the Research Fund Project on Health Sciences Focusing on Drug Innovation. The government also promoted research to create new drugs tailored to the needs of medical institutions, and to develop advanced and fundamental technology for longevity society in the fields of health care, medical care, and welfare.

- The detailed mapping of the human genome or genetic information was completed in April 2003. In light of this, by using the national strength of advanced technological capabilities, the government continued to actively promote genome network research, as well as other basic and advanced research activities whose results are expected to clarify complicated vital functions and help in creating innovative drugs. With regard to the Research Project on the Development of Advanced Infrastructures, the government conducted research to develop tailor-made medical treatment that enables individualized prevention and treatment, while promoting research to develop regenerative medical treatment for bones, blood vessels, etc. using self-restoration capability.

- In FY 2005, the government began the molecular imaging research, the results of which are expected to benefit tumor diagnosis and brain functional interpretation through the realization of the live imaging of movements of protein and other various molecules of living creatures.

- The government divided the research fields of the General Research Project of Longevity Science

into three, and conducted research activities in each field. The first is the “Field of Longevity Science and Technology for Aging and Geriatric Diseases” related to research on aging, geriatric diseases, rehabilitation, care support apparatus, and technical evaluation. The second is the “Field of Nursing Care Prevention and Health Care and Welfare for the Elderly” related to research on nursing care prevention, elderly health promotion, nursing care, health care service assessment, and social science. The last one is the “Field of Comprehensive Research on Dementia and Born Fracture, Etc.” related to research on developing more effective and efficient methods for preventing and diagnosing dementia, mild cognitive impairment, bone fracture, and osteoporosis, as well as those for providing medical treatment, rehabilitation, and nursing care for patients suffering from such diseases and injuries.

- With regard to anti-cancer measures, the National Cancer Center has operated the “Research Center for Innovative Oncology” since it was set up in October 2005, in order to apply new drugs, diagnosis and treatment methods discovered by R&D activities in a clinical setting in a prompt and appropriate manner.

- In order to ensure that creative, highly-qualified young researchers who will play an important role in future R&D activities may make the most of their ability, the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science has promoted a variety of programs to support postdoctorals and other young researchers, such as Research Fellowships for Young Scientists, Postdoctoral Fellowships for Research Abroad, and Postdoctoral Fellowships for Foreign Researchers.