

PRESS RELEASE

Japan Institute for Health Security (JIHS) and the Network of University Medicine (NUM) Sign Memorandum of Understanding to Advance Bilateral Collaboration in Infectious Disease Research

Berlin, Germany |24 April 2026 — The Japan Institute for Health Security (JIHS) and the Network of University Medicine (NUM) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to establish a framework for future scientific collaboration in the field of infectious disease research. The MoU marks a new step in strengthening bilateral cooperation between Japan and Germany in clinical and epidemiological research, research infrastructure development, and public health preparedness.

Under the MoU, JIHS and NUM with its Specialty Network Infectious Diseases (SNID) will collaborate on the construction of research-driven networks of national stakeholders in the field of infectious diseases and will work to further connect the respective Japanese and German research landscapes. The cooperation will include exchange of experience on network building, governance, infrastructures, technologies, and best practices, as well as joint research activities aimed at improving the understanding and management of infectious diseases.

The scope of cooperation includes integration of experience in governance arrangements and stakeholder engagement, joint planning and implementation of multicenter clinical studies, sharing of methodologies and protocols in clinical and epidemiological research, facilitation of personnel exchanges and joint training, and the organization of joint meetings, conferences, and delegation visits. The MoU is effective for an initial period of three years, with the possibility of renewal by mutual agreement.

The signing of the MoU coincided with the **JIHS–NUM Bilateral Symposium** held in Berlin on 15 April 2026. The symposium provided an opportunity for experts from both countries to exchange perspectives on governance and operational processes for collaborative research networks, and to discuss concrete scientific cooperation in key thematic areas, including viral hemorrhagic fevers and severe fever with thrombocytopenia syndrome (SFTS), antimicrobial resistance (AMR), surveillance of severe acute respiratory infections (SARI) and acute respiratory infections (ARI), and research utilizing repositories.

The symposium also highlighted complementary strengths of the two institutions. NUM, as a collaborative clinical research network of all 37 German academic medical centers, has developed national research infrastructures to support prospective clinical and clinical-epidemiological studies. JIHS, as Japan's integrated science center for infectious diseases, combines infectious disease intelligence, research and development, clinical functions, and international cooperation. Together, the two institutions aim to promote practical, high-quality collaboration that contributes to stronger research readiness and preparedness for future infectious disease threats.

“This Memorandum of Understanding reflects our shared commitment to strengthening international collaboration in infectious disease research.” said Ralf Heyder, Head of the NUM Coordination Office. “By linking the German and Japanese research ecosystems, we hope to accelerate scientific exchange, promote high-quality multicenter studies, and build durable partnerships that will contribute to better preparedness for future health threats.” added Prof Dr J. Janne Vehreschild, Director of the Institute for Digital Medicine and Clinical Data Sciences, Medical Faculty, Goethe University Frankfurt and Principal Investigator of SNID.

“JIHS is committed to advancing integrated science, clinical research, and global collaboration in infectious diseases.” said Professor Dr. Norihiro Kokudo, President of JIHS. “Through this partnership with NUM, we look forward to deepening cooperation in research networks, governance, and clinical study implementation, while fostering mutual learning between experts and institutions in Japan and Germany.”

The collaboration reflects a shared recognition that effective preparedness for future infectious disease threats requires strong research infrastructure, trusted institutional partnerships, and sustained international exchange. Building on the dialogue initiated through the symposium, JIHS and NUM will continue discussions toward operational cooperation and future joint activities under the MoU framework.

About JIHS

The Japan Institute for Health Security (JIHS) is Japan's national institution dedicated to strengthening preparedness and response to infectious diseases and other health threats. Established through the integration of Japan's National Institute of Infectious Diseases (NIID) and the National Center for Global Health and Medicine (NCGM), JIHS functions as an integrated science center combining infectious disease intelligence, research and development, clinical capabilities, and international cooperation. For more information, visit: <https://www.jihs.go.jp/index.en.html> and follow JIHS on [X](#) and [YouTube](#).

About NUM

The Network of University Medicine (NUM) is a collaborative clinical research network of all 37 German academic medical centers. Established in April 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, NUM was initially created to coordinate national clinical COVID-19 research and has since expanded to support collaborative multicenter clinical research more broadly, including through dedicated research infrastructures and study networks. The Specialty Network Infectious Diseases (SNID) within the NUM supports clinical and clinical-epidemiological studies in the field of infection medicine and aims to help strengthen the research landscape in Germany in the long term. The NUM is funded by the Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space.

For more information, visit: <https://www.netzwerk-universitaetsmedizin.de/en> and <https://www.netzwerk-universitaetsmedizin.de/en/platforms/specialty-network-infectious-diseases-snid>.

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Group photo of participants at the symposium

Photo credit: JIHS/NUM



Officials at the MoU Signing Ceremony

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