26/March/2026

To Whom It May Concern

Request for Research Cooperation

I plan to conduct a research study entitled, "A Survey on Clinical Transplant Coordinators' Duties and Work Styles: A Cross-Sectional Study."

The participants in this study will be Clinical Transplant Coordinators (CTCs).

I would be grateful if you would kindly review the attached information sheet and consider participation in this research.

Your understanding and cooperation are sincerely appreciated.

- **Research Topic:** A Survey on Clinical Transplant Coordinators' Duties and Work Styles: A Cross-Sectional Study
- **Research Organization:**
  - **Principal Investigator (PI)**: Kuniko Hagiwara, PhD, RN
    Professor, Graduate School of Medical Safety Management, Jikei University of Health Care Sciences
  - **Research collaborator (RC)**: Joyce Trompeta, PhD, PNP, FAAN
    Professor, Department of Surgery, School of Medicine, University of California, San Francisco
  - **Research collaborator (RC)**: Miki Ito, RN
    Clinical Transplant Coordinator, Fujita Health University
- **Funding Agency:** This study is supported by the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) KAKENHI (Grant Number: 23K16407).
- **Study Purpose:** In the United States, Advanced Practice Providers (APPs) play central roles in transplantation. In Japan, Clinical Transplant Coordinators (CTCs) have been active since the late 1990s. However, Certified Nurse Specialists (CNSs) remain few in number and have not been widely involved or recognized in the field of transplantation. Moreover, Japanese Nurse Practitioners are not nationally licensed or authorized to prescribe medications, which limits their scope of practice compared with APPs in the United States.

  CTCs in Japan engage in autonomous practice based on specialized professional expertise. These circumstances indicate the need to establish a structured career ladder for CTCs as advanced practice nurses in Japan.

  Thus, this study aims to explain the current status of the roles and work practices of CTCs. Therefore, this study aims to clarify the current roles and work practices of Clinical Transplant Coordinators in other countries and to explore an ideal model for CTCs in Japan through a comparative cross-national analysis.

Contact Information

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Research Proposal

1. **Research Topic**
   A Survey on Clinical Transplant Coordinators' Duties and Work Styles: A Cross-Sectional Study

2. **Principal Investigator**
   Kuniko Hagiwara, PhD, MSN, RN
   Professor, Graduate School of Medical Safety Management, Jikei University of Health Care Sciences

3. **Research collaborators**
   Joyce Trompeta, PhD, PNP, FAAN
   Professor, Department of Surgery, School of Medicine, University of California, San Francisco
   Miki Ito, MSN, RN
   Clinical Transplant Coordinator, Fujita Health University

4. **Research Plan**
   (1) Background
   Clinical Transplant Coordinators (CTCs) have developed primarily in the United States as essential members of transplant teams and are recognized as a specialized field of nursing (Donaldson, 2002). Most CTCs work in outpatient settings, collaborating with multidisciplinary transplant teams and demonstrating systems thinking and advanced clinical judgment in patient care. They provide patient education to promote self-care after discharge, triage patient concerns, and intervene as necessary, thereby functioning at an advanced practice level (Ohler et al., 2006).
   In Japan, the role has evolved under the title of "Recipient Transplant Coordinator" (RTC), primarily in the field of kidney transplantation, often in conjunction with donor-side coordination. Around the late 1990s, nurses began to be employed as RTCs in liver transplantation. However, the number of RTCs was limited, and nearly half concurrently held donor coordinator positions, some of whom lacked formal medical qualifications. Consequently, efforts have been made to establish a nursing-based CTC role in Japan modeled after that in the United States.
   In the U.S., the Advanced Practice Provider (APP) program was introduced in 1965 to address disparities in healthcare access. APPs include Physician Assistants (PAs), Nurse Practitioners (NPs), and Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNSs). Within transplant centers, APPs play crucial roles in improving access to care for both inpatient and outpatient transplant patients, addressing challenges such as duty

hour limitations, physician shortages, and unfilled fellowship positions (Muth et al., 2023). APPs in outpatient settings perform a wide range of clinical tasks, including reviewing test results, adjusting medications, entering orders, preparing medical records, and coordinating admissions and procedures. Approximately 30% of APPs are expected to serve as CTCs, either partially or fully (Muth et al., 2023). Furthermore, Nargiso et al. (2024) found that physicians on liver transplant teams viewed PAs and NPs as indispensable members whose collaboration improved care efficiency, continuity, patient satisfaction, coordination, and workload distribution.
In Japan, advanced practice nursing education began in 1996 with the introduction of graduate-level CNS certification programs. Currently, CNSs are certified in 14 specialty areas and Certified Nurses (CNs) in 19 areas, though none are directly related to transplantation. In 2008, the first NP training program was launched at Oita University of Nursing and Health Sciences. However, unlike their U.S. counterparts, Japanese NPs lack national licensure and prescribing authority, restricting their scope of practice to delegated medical procedures. Hagiwara et al. (2018) demonstrated that experienced CTCs in Japan engage in autonomous practice grounded in specialized professional expertise (such as, decision support during transplant selection, coordination during the transplant process, and long-term continuing care). This finding underscores the need to establish a structured career ladder for CTCs as advanced practice nurses in Japan.
Therefore, drawing on the experiences of APPs in the United States and CTCs in other countries, it is essential to develop a career framework for Japanese CTCs and to contribute to the development of a sustainable and safe transplantation system.
This study is supported by the Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research (KAKENHI, Grant No. 23K16407, Young Researcher Program).

2) Objective
To clarify the actual roles and work practices of CTCs in other countries and to explore the future direction of RTCs in Japan through comparative cross-national analysis.

3) Research Design
Quantitative descriptive study design.

4) Subjects
Approximately 200 Clinical Transplant Coordinators working at transplant facilities outside Japan. Participants will be recruited via the mailing list of the International Transplant Nurses Society (ITNS).

5) Methods

(1) Development of the Questionnaire

Based on the principal investigator's 25 years of experience as a Recipient Transplant Coordinator and a comprehensive literature review, the duties of Clinical Transplant Coordinators were clarified, and questionnaire items were developed accordingly.

The content was refined through discussions among the principal investigator and research collaborators.

The survey will be administered online using the paid version of SurveyMonkey, a secure platform for creating and distributing questionnaires.

(2) Questionnaire Items

- Demographics (age, gender, country, years of experience, educational background, APP qualification, etc.)
- Qualifications and roles (responsibilities within the transplant team, work style, hours, shifts, facility type, patient groups, etc.)
- Characteristics of the transplant facility (types and numbers of transplants, numbers of CTCs and APPs, team composition, etc.)
- On-call status (frequency, scope, compensation, etc.)
- Salary and job satisfaction
- Work as a CTC (scope of practice, primary responsibilities, and collaborators)

(3) Implementation Procedure

A formal research request letter will be submitted to the President of the International Transplant Nurses Society (ITNS). Upon receiving official approval to use the mailing list, an invitation letter containing the survey URL and QR code will be distributed to potential participants via the ITNS mailing list.

Participants will provide voluntary consent at the beginning of the questionnaire by selecting a checkbox to indicate agreement. Only those who consent will be able to access and complete the questionnaire. All response data will be securely collected and stored on the SurveyMonkey platform.

(4) Analysis

Quantitative data will be analyzed statistically using Excel and appropriate statistical software. Qualitative (free-text) responses will be coded and analyzed descriptively.

6) Research site

Graduate School of Medical Safety Management, Jikei University of Health Care Sciences

7) Research Period (Planned)
From ethics committee approval until March 31, 2027

8) References

1. Donaldson T.A: *The role of the transplant coordinator.* In Sandra A. Cupples, Linda Ohler, Linda J. Scheetz (eds): *Transplantation Nursing Secrets*. HANLEY & BELFUS, INC, Philadelphia, USA, 17–26, 2002.
2. Ohler L, Shafer T: *Advanced practice: Implication for clinical and procurement transplant coordinators.*, *Progress in Transplantation*, 16(2, June):103–104, 2006.
3. Muth B.L, Krieger D, Domingo H et al.: *The current state of transplant advanced practice providers: Results of the advanced practice provider practice survey.*, *American Journal of Transplantation*, 23: 408–415, 2023.
4. Nargiso S, Lo M, Ramos L et al.: *PAs and NPs in liver transplantation: Perceptions, implementation, and effect.*, *Journal of American Academy of Physician Associates*, 37(10), 2024.
5. Hagiwara K, Seto N, Shimizu Y et al.: Expertise practice of clinical transplant coordinators in Japan, *Journal of Nursing Education and Practice*, 8(6):99-111, 2018.

5. Data and Material Storage

Survey responses will be stored on the secure SurveyMonkey platform until analysis is complete. Access will be restricted to the principal investigator. Upon completion of the analysis, all data will be permanently deleted from the platform. No data will be stored locally on personal computers; all data will be securely stored in the cloud with password protection and restricted access.
If free-text responses contain identifiable information, the data will be encrypted and stored on an encrypted USB drive kept in a locked cabinet within the research facility. Printed materials will also be securely stored in locked cabinets.
All data will be retained for 10 years after study completion or 5 years after publication, whichever is longer, and then permanently destroyed.

6. Conflict of Interest

None declared.
This study is supported by the Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research (KAKENHI, Grant No. 23K16407, Young Researcher Program).

7. Ethical Considerations

1) Protection of Personal Information
The questionnaire will not collect identifiable personal information such as names

or institutional affiliations. SurveyMonkey ensures data security through AES 256-bit encryption, multi-factor authentication, ISO 27001 certification, and compliance with HIPAA, GDPR, and PCI DSS standards. Access to data will be restricted to the principal investigator.
Results will be presented in aggregate form at conferences or in publications, ensuring that no individual or institution can be identified.

2) Informed Consent
Participants will receive written information describing the purpose, content, voluntary nature of participation, right to refuse or withdraw, and data protection measures.
Consent will be obtained via a checkbox on the online questionnaire. To withdraw participation, respondents will record an eight-character alphanumeric ID, which will be used to process withdrawal requests. Withdrawal requests submitted after the specified deadline will not be accepted.

3) Risks and Burdens
Participants may experience a minimal time burden of approximately 10–15 minutes to complete the questionnaire.

Questionnaire

URL of questionnaire
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ZVKVT9Z

QR Code for questionnaire



Please access the web survey from one of the links above.

Withdrawal of Consent

UR for Withdrawal of Consent
https://jp.surveymonkey.com/r/TLC22KJ

QR Code for Withdrawal of Consent



The survey will be available until **[20, April 2026]**.
Withdrawal of consent will be accepted until **[25, April 2026]**.