



## Obituary of Professor Fumimaro Takaku: a tribute to a real leader in medicine in Japan (1931–2022)

Akio Urabe<sup>1</sup>

Received: 1 May 2022 / Revised: 9 May 2022 / Accepted: 9 May 2022 / Published online: 24 May 2022  
© Japanese Society of Hematology 2022



Professor Fumimaro Takaku passed away on the 24th of March 2022, at the age of 91. He greatly contributed not only to the field of hematology, but also to medical sciences in general as well as medical administration in Japan. He graduated from University of Tokyo Faculty of Medicine in 1954. He studied hematology at the Third Department of Internal Medicine in the University of Tokyo Hospital, and also studied at the University of Chicago collaborating with Dr. Eugene Goldwasser from 1962 to 1963. Professor Takaku played an important role in the establishment of Jichi Medical University as a professor of medicine. After a 10-year professorship at Jichi Medical University, he was appointed as a professor of the Third Department of Internal Medicine at the University of Tokyo Hospital in 1982, and then as the Dean of the University of Tokyo Faculty of Medicine in 1988. After that, Professor Takaku was appointed as President of the National Center for Global Health and Medicine (1990–1996), President of Jichi Medical University (1996–2012), and chairperson of the Japan Association

for Development of Community Medicine (2012–). He also contributed greatly to The Japanese Society of Hematology.

Professor Takaku completed many projects in the field of medicine, including the establishment of the Bone Marrow Bank in Japan, and the Medical Accidents Investigation System in Japan. He also contributed to the improvement of the medical system in Japan as the chairman of the board of directors of the Japanese Association of Medical Sciences (2004–2017). As a researcher of hematology, Professor Takaku conducted many studies on erythropoietin and erythropoiesis, analysis of sideroblastic anemia, immunological pathogenesis of aplastic anemia, and clinical application of hematopoietic factors including erythropoietin and G-CSF. Most notably, he was one of the first in the world to introduce molecular biology to clinical medicine, leading the epoch-making study of oncogenes in myelodysplastic syndrome in collaboration with late Professor Hisamaru Hirai. He also educated many researchers at University of Tokyo and Jichi Medical University.

Professor Takaku had a charming character, and had a good sense of humor. He was loved by everybody around him. He was also a good tennis player.

Professor Takaku suffered from prostate cancer, esophageal cancer, and colon cancer late in life, and recovered well. But, it was a pity that his beloved wife died last year. He suffered from repeat pneumonia due to dysphagia from January this year. He returned from the hospital to his home, and stayed at his house for the last 2 weeks of his life. His son Tomoiku, who is an associate professor of hematology at Juntendo University, spent the last days by his father's side. Professor Takaku remained fully alert and aware until the end of his life, and spent his last several days free of pain.

On behalf of all the students of Professor Takaku, I would like to thank him for teaching us not only in medicine but also in living significant life. I would like to pray for Professor Takaku, expressing the deepest gratitude and sincere sorrow.

✉ Akio Urabe  
urabe.ak@aoikai.jp

<sup>1</sup> NTT Medical Center Tokyo, Tokyo 141-8625, Japan

**Publisher's Note** Springer Nature remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.