CANCER SCIENCE INSTITUTE OF SINGAPORE

# SEMINAR ANNOUNCEMENT

## Makoto Suematsu

**President,**
**Japan Agency for Medical Research and Development (AMED)**



## AMED Starts With IRUD to Fast-track Medical R&D

**Date:** Wednesday, 16 Mar 2016
**Time:** 4pm – 5pm
**Venue:** #01-01B Learning Rm, Centre for Translational Medicine (14 Medical Drive, Singapore 117599)
**Host:** Prof. Toshio Suda

### Abstract:

AMED was a newborn funding agency launched in April 2015. Since Japanese researchers suffered from a complexity of "Balkanized" funding systems which were derived from 3 different ministries, our government decided to build AMED to unify these sources of budgets and to fast-track medical R&D. AMED supports both basic and clinical researches considering three different concepts of LIFE; life science, daily life and a quality of life. Global collaboration and data sharing are other important challenges to fast-track social implementation of research outcomes; surveillance of infectious diseases, fast diagnosis for those undiagnosed, and development of novel therapeutic interventions for rare diseases require such efforts. During a great success to reform the previous funding systems within the first year, AMED has started many challenges to accelerate medical R&D. IRUD (Initiative on Rare and Undiagnosed Diseases) is such a leading challenge: Our country has 45 years' history of rare disease researches that have been supported by budgets from Ministry of Health Labor and Welfare. Despites a lot of knowledge and experiences, there are still many patients with rare and undiagnosed diseases. Many difficulties exist; retarded implementation of genome researches into clinical fields, data sharing among hospital network and even among foreign countries, complicated IRB system to be harmonized, and slow development of orphan drugs, etc. The field of rare diseases thus reflects typical problem lists of obstacles or cultural gaps among different communities including patients and their family member, physicians, co-medical staff, basic researchers and policy makers. This seminar aims to introduce challenges to overcome these difficulties in Japan, and some successful outcome of IRUD which is now collaborating with Undiagnosed Disease Network in NIH.

### Biography:

Dr. Makoto Suematsu is the President of the Japan Agency for Medical Research and Development (AMED). Dr. Makoto Suematsu's role as President is to fast track medical R&D in Japan to improve the quality of life for people. To this end, his challenge is to tackle obstacles in previous funding systems. Dr. Suematsu is also the leader of the Japan Science and Technology Agency, ERATO, Suematsu Gas Biology Project in which he discovered several intriguing gas-responsive receptors in mammals. Prior to this, he was the Dean of the School of Medicine at Keio University in Tokyo from October 2007 to March 2015.