

Newsletter

12

International Exchange

昭和医科大学

SHOWA Medical University

Issue No. 12: Winter 2026



What's Inside?

<i>MOU with Two Thai Universities</i>	<i>Pg. 1</i>
<i>Dr. Momo's Visit to Mahidol University</i>	<i>Pg. 2</i>
<i>Visit from Mahidol University Prof. Sitaporn</i>	<i>Pg. 2</i>
<i>Visit from Medical University of Vienna Dr. Kain</i>	<i>Pg. 2</i>
<i>Visiting Exchange Students: July-December in 2025</i>	<i>Pg. 3</i>
<i>IEC-Sponsored Events</i>	<i>Pg. 4</i>
<i>Japanese Classes for International Students</i>	<i>Pg. 5</i>
<i>TOEIC Prep Course for Faculty and Students</i>	<i>Pg. 5</i>
<i>Session 8: SMU Study-Abroad Meeting</i>	<i>Pg. 5</i>
<i>International Medical Cooperation: Bangladesh, Mongolia, & Cambodia</i>	<i>Pg. 6</i>
<i>Visit from First Affiliated Hospital of Xi'an Jiaotong University</i>	<i>Pg. 7</i>
<i>Visit from Kyrgyz Republic Delegation</i>	<i>Pg. 7</i>
<i>Case Report by Exchange Student and SMU Physicians</i>	<i>Pg. 8</i>
<i>Upcoming IEC Events</i>	<i>Pg. 8</i>



MOU with Two Thai Universities

The School of Medicine established new inter-School agreements with two leading Thai medical schools in December 2025. These agreements not only secure placement sites for undergraduate students participating in one-month overseas elective clerkships but also open new possibilities for mutual exchange in education and research between faculty members.

The first institution is the Faculty of Medicine at Siriraj Hospital, Mahidol University, located in Bangkok. Founded in 1888, it is Thailand's premier medical school and a central hub for medical education and healthcare, receiving approximately 3 million outpatients annually. A visiting delegation including Professor Shizuma Tsuchiya of the International Exchange Center and Professor Takaaki Matsuyama, Chair of the School of Medicine International Exchange Committee, toured the hospital complex alongside the signing ceremony. They also observed educational settings where supervising physicians and senior residents guided medical students while discussing cases. Such an educational environment where clinical practice, education, and research are organically integrated provides an invaluable learning opportunity for our medical students participating in clinical training involving direct patient care.



Siriraj Hospital, Mahidol University

The second institution is the Faculty of Medicine at Walailak University, located in Nakhon Si Thammarat in Southern Thailand. Boasting a vast campus with numerous university hospitals, it attracts short-term and long-term exchange students from around the world seeking a robust educational environment. Consequently, the university has established a comprehensive support system, including student dormitories and other essential living infrastructure, with faculty and staff working together to provide extensive assistance to international students.



Walailak University

Finally, during this visit to Thailand, Prof. Tsuchiya and Prof. Matsuyama visited the Faculty of Medicine at Ramathibodi Hospital, Mahidol University, which has had an exchange agreement with our medical school since 2023. We confirmed specific arrangements for accepting undergraduate students for overseas elective clerkships during the 2026 academic year. We also paid a courtesy visit to the ASEAN Hub Center (Bangkok) at Sophia University, with which we collaborate on various projects, gaining practical insights into the operation of overseas bases by Japanese universities.



Mahidol University's
Ramathibodi Hospital



ASEAN Hub Center
at Sophia University

Dr. Momo's Visit to Mahidol University



Here, we present an inspection report contributed by our faculty:

Associate Professor Kenji Momo

Division of Clinical Research, Department of Hospital Pharmaceutics,
School of Pharmacy / Central Pharmacy Department

International Exchange Committee Member, School of Pharmacy

In April of this year, Professor Anpong from Mahidol University (Thailand), a partner institution with our School of Pharmacy, visited Showa Medical University to observe our clinical education programs. During Prof. Anpong's visit, I introduced the activities of clinical pharmacists working in the Pharmacy Department and at the bedside at Koto Toyosu Hospital. Following continued communication, this led to an official visit to Mahidol University by faculty of the Department of Hospital Pharmaceutics. On December 1 and 2, 2025, I and Assistant Professor Funakoshi visited Mahidol University. Following discussions on education and research, we were given the opportunity to observe the actual work practices in the hospital and of community pharmacists in Thailand.

On the first day, we received numerous questions regarding our university's efforts in training clinical pharmacists. Strong interest was expressed not only in student exchange but also in reciprocal faculty visits. During the research presentations, both universities shared the recognition that we should deepen our collaboration and further promote personnel exchanges. On the second day, we observed pharmacy operations. We encountered a healthcare environment where the role of pharmacists differs significantly from Japan's, gaining considerable inspiration and valuable insights. We feel mutual understanding has deepened regarding the environments surrounding pharmacists at both Showa Medical University and Mahidol University. The Department of Hospital Pharmaceutics intends to continue visiting Mahidol University annually, striving to contribute to the ongoing development of internationally-minded hospital pharmacists.

Visit from Mahidol University Prof. Sitaporn

On October 1, 2025, Professor Sitaporn Youngkorn, Vice Dean of the Faculty of Pharmacy at Mahidol University (Thailand), visited Showa Medical University. Representing our university were Dean Shuntaro Hara of the School of Pharmacy, Chairman Masaru Kato of the School of Pharmacy International Exchange Committee, and seven other attendees. They engaged in a lively exchange of views, reaffirming their commitment to further strengthening the partnership between the two universities and expanding academic cooperation. Afterwards, Prof. Sitaporn toured the pharmacy school's facilities on campus, including the Pharmacy Simulation Room and the Herbal Medicine Specimen Room, as well as dormitories for international students.



Visit from Medical University of Vienna Dr. Kain

On November 17, 2025, Professor Renate Kain, a pathologist from the Medical University of Vienna (Austria), a partner institution with our School of Medicine and Dentistry, visited Showa Medical University. She delivered a lecture on the latest research findings integrating morphological analysis and molecular techniques focused on autoimmune vasculitis of the kidney. This sparked a lively discussion regarding different perspectives in bridging basic science and clinical practice.



Visiting Exchange Students: July-December in 2025

School of Medicine

INSTITUTION (COUNTRY/REGION)	INSTITUTION	RECEIVING DEPARTMENT	n	PERIOD
University of the Philippines (Philippines)	SMUH	General and Gastroenterological Surgery	1	6/30 – 7/25
	SMUH	Pediatric Cardiovascular Surgery	1	
Taipei Medical University (Taiwan)	SMUH	Gastroenterology	1	7/14 – 7/25
	SMUH	Anesthesiology	1	9/8 – 10/3
Claude Bernard Lyon 1 (France)	SMUHEB	Neurology	1	7/14 – 8/8
	SMUH	Breast Surgery	1	
Pavol Jozef Safarik University (Slovakia)	SMUH	Pediatrics	1	7/28 – 8/1
Carol Davila University of Medicine and Pharmacy (Romania)	SMUH	Otorhinolaryngology	1	9/1 – 9/26
MSB Medical School Berlin (Germany)	SMUNYH	International Training Center for Endoscopy and Endoscopic Surgery (SUITE)	1	9/1 – 9/30
Universidad de Zaragoza (Spain)	SMUH	Urology, Anesthesiology	1	9/1 – 11/28
	SMUH	Urology, Orthopedic Surgery	1	
	SMUNYH SMUKTH	Rehabilitation Medicine Gastroenterological Surgery	1	
Medical University of Vienna (Austria)	SMUH	Obstetrics and Gynecology, Otorhinolaryngology	2	9/29 – 12/19
	SMUHEB	Ophthalmology, Neurology		
Others			2	

School of Dentistry

INSTITUTION (COUNTRY/REGION)	INSTITUTION	RECEIVING DEPARTMENT	n	PERIOD
The University of Hong Kong (China)	SMUDH	Orthodontics, Oral Function Management, Endodontics, Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery	2	8/4 – 8/8
	SMU School of Dentistry	Department of Oral Pathology, Department of Oral Biochemistry, Department of Biomaterials and Engineering		
Peking University (China)	SMUDH	Orthodontics, Prosthodontics	1	7/28 – 8/1
Medical University of Vienna (Austria)	SMUDH	Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, Implant Dentistry, Orthodontics, Operative Dentistry/Aesthetic Dentistry	1	10/27 – 11/28

School of Pharmacy

INSTITUTION (COUNTRY/REGION)	RECEIVING DEPARTMENT	n	PERIOD
Claude Bernard Lyon 1 (France)	SMU School of Pharmacy Exchange Program	1	10/6 – 12/19

※SMU: Showa Medical University

SMUH: Showa Medical University Hospital

SMUHEB: Showa Medical University Hospital East Branch

SMUNYH: Showa Medical University Northern Yokohama Hospital

SMUKTH: Showa Medical University Koto Toyosu Hospital

SMUDH: Showa Medical University Dental Hospital

IEC-Sponsored Events

2025 IEC Winter Party

On December 18, 2025, four international postgraduate fellows, three undergraduate international students, thirteen students from the School of Medicine, Dentistry and Pharmacy, and nine staff members gathered at Cafeteria Ami for a winter party. They enjoyed an early Christmas celebration with food, bingo, and conversation.



International Student Exchange Chat Club



To enhance international exchange on campus, the International Exchange Center and the student club ESS co-host a Chat Club. Primarily involving international students from partner universities and Showa Medical University undergraduate students, the club meets on Wednesdays at 5:30 PM. Through simple games and group activities prepared by ESS, participants discuss their respective cultures and healthcare systems, enjoying cross-cultural

exchange. Additionally, international students give presentations introducing their home countries and universities. This provides an excellent opportunity to hear highly informative talks, especially for students considering future overseas internships.



Introduction to Japanese Culture Events

Showa Medical University organizes many activities for international students to experience Japanese culture. On July 25, 2025, they participated in the Hatagaoka Bon Odori Festival. The students experienced four-beat dances like the “Shinagawa Ondo.” For students accustomed to upbeat modern dances, the Bon Odori felt very fresh, and many remarked that it was a fun experience.



On September 21, 2025, they watched sumo at the Ryogoku Kokugikan. Participants tried the sumo stable's “chanko” stew and took commemorative photos with a former rikishi stablemaster. When the bouts began, they enjoyed the uniquely Japanese style of cheering, loudly calling out the wrestlers' names.



Japanese Classes for International Students

Since 2014, the International Exchange Center has offered a “Survival Japanese Class” for international students as part of its safety efforts for foreign visitors studying at Showa Medical University. This fall, six sessions were held from October to November, with six international students from South Korea, Spain, Austria, and France participating.

The class focused on learning useful phrases and expressions for daily life, and received positive feedback from the students again this year.



TOEIC Prep Course for Faculty and Students

From October to November, we conducted a TOEIC preparation course (5 sessions total). This course covered an overview of the TOEIC, general test-taking strategies for the Listening & Reading sections, practice exercises, explanation of key points, and tips for English learning.

It serves as an excellent opportunity for improving English skills not only for students aiming to study abroad but also for faculty and staff.

This time, a total of 43 participants enrolled: 26 undergraduate students (7 from the School of Medicine, 5 from the School of Dentistry, 11 from the School of Pharmacy, and 3 from the School of Nursing and Rehabilitation Sciences), 2 graduate students, and 15 faculty/staff members. We strongly sensed a heightened motivation for English learning among the participants.

Session 8: SMU Study-Abroad Meeting

On October 9, 2025, the Study Abroad Exchange Meeting (hosted by Showa Medical University Research Administration Center - SURAC) was held. Presentations were given by Dr. Motoki Yamagishi (Department of Urology, School of Medicine: Study Abroad at the University of Hawaii) and Dr. Shotaro Kamijo (Department of Pharmacology, School of Pharmacy: Study Abroad at the University of Pittsburgh). In addition to their research findings, the presentations covered daily life and challenges encountered abroad. Following the presentations, a networking session was held, which allowed for discussions between the two presenters and participants aspiring to study abroad in the future.



International Medical Cooperation: Bangladesh, Mongolia, & Cambodia

We are expanding international medical cooperation! Below are some of the activities that faculty from Showa Medical University are doing around the world.

From Pediatric Cardiology and Adult Congenital Heart Disease Center to Mongolia



The NPO “Heart Saving Project”, chaired by Dr. Hide Tomita, conducted pediatric echocardiography screenings and provided catheterization treatment to patients in need in Mongolia during 2025. Dr. Hiroaki Kise and Dr. Shun Yauchi shared their experiences from this program in a lecture for the Fujiyoshida Campus Education Department's elective course on International Cooperation Theory.

This provided first-year students with an excellent opportunity to broaden their horizons toward the world.

From Pediatric Medicine to Bangladesh

The Department of Pediatrics, led by Professor Mitsuhiro Kato, is implementing the “Project to Enhance the Level of Pediatric Neurology and Support the Development of Leadership Personnel in Bangladesh.” This project utilizes funding from the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare's FY2025 International Expansion Promotion Project for Medical Technology, secured by the Japanese Society of Pediatric Neurology. As part of project, three physicians are training at Showa Medical University who will lead the future of pediatric neurology in Bangladesh.



From Pediatric Surgery to Cambodia

The Department of Pediatric Surgery, led by Professor Yutaka Watai, accepted a request from the Foundation for International Development and Relief (FIDR) to host three physicians and staff from the provincial hospital in Kratie Province, northeastern Cambodia. The visiting physicians appeared deeply interested in our hospital's sophisticated medical system and the meticulous attention to detail in the medical services provided by our faculty/staff. The Department of Pediatric Surgery's support for pediatric healthcare in Cambodia is an ongoing activity dating back to the 1980s.



Visit from First Affiliated Hospital of Xi'an Jiaotong University

On July 8, 2025, a nine-member delegation from Xi'an Jiaotong University First Affiliated Hospital, China, led by Vice President Yu Junjun (General Surgery) and Vice President Han Suxia (Radiation Oncology), visited our university and the Department of General Surgery, Division of Gastrointestinal Surgery (headed by Professor Takeshi Aoki). Representatives from both institutions engaged in extensive discussions regarding their respective cancer treatment initiatives and medical environments, and exchanged views on the potential for future friendly relations.



Visit from Kyrgyz Republic Delegation

On April 25, 2025, five representatives from the Kyrgyz Republic, including incumbent Member of Parliament Mr. Chingiz and Presidential Advisor Mr. Arslan, visited our university to exchange views on technological collaboration and personnel exchange in the medical field. Seven representatives from our university attended this meeting, including Professor Yosuke Sato from the Institute of Brain Function Analysis and Digital Medicine and Professor Shizuma Tsuchiya from the International Exchange Center. They provided an overview of Showa Medical University, its international exchange activities, and cutting-edge research, such as AI-powered real-time 3D image conversion technology and glasses-free 3D displays. The Kyrgyz delegation expressed strong interest in Japan's advanced medical technology and their desire for continued collaboration with our university.



Case Report by Exchange Student and SMU Physicians

A case report co-authored by Dr. Jonathan Hu, a short-term exchange student from the University of Hawaii School of Medicine who studied at the Division of Cardiology at our university's School of Medicine in January 2025, and physicians from our Department of Cardiology has been published in the journal *European Heart Journal – Case Reports*.

“Diagnostic challenges in identifying myocardial infarction due to coronary vasospasm in pregnancy complicated by partial HELLP syndrome: a case report”

Jonathan Hu, Satoshi Higuchi, Hiroki Tanisawa, Toshiro Shinke

European Heart Journal – Case Reports, Volume 9, Issue 10, October 2025, ytaf496, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ehjcr/ytaf496>

This publication is highly significant, as it represents the continuation of exchange fostered during the study abroad period that persisted even after returning home and culminated in tangible academic achievement.

Upcoming IEC events

January - February, 2026

International elective clinical clerkship for pharmacy students

February - June, 2026

International elective clinical clerkship for medical students

March 2, 2026

Certificate award ceremony and farewell party for international fellows

April - May, 2026

International elective clinical clerkships for dental students

Inquiries: International Exchange Center

Showa Medical University, Building #15
1-5-8 Hatanodai, Shinagawa-ku Tokyo 142-8555 Japan
Phone: 03-3784-8266
Email: int-exc@ofc.showa-u.ac.jp
Web: <http://www.showa-u.ac.jp/en/international>

Editors: International Exchange Center staff

Takashi Miyazaki: Director General
Yoshiko Kudo: Vice Director
Shizuma Tsuchiya: Professor
Michael W. Myers: Associate Professor (senior)
Atsuko Furuta: Associate Professor (junior)
Rei Ono: Assistant Professor
Yuka Hiraizumi: Program Coordinator
Takeshi Miura: International Exchange Center Staff (chief)
Taeko Suzuki: International Exchange Center Staff
Mieko Ukon: International Exchange Center Staff
Aya Kawaguchi: International Exchange Center Staff

Hatanodai Campus

