

2.6 Prof. Urban Wiesing, German Medical Association; Tuebingen University

Interview: Kurihara C, Matsuyama K

①Stability of ethical principles in the age of AI and post COVID-19

Prof. Urban Wiesing of the German Medical Association stated that a major achievement was the confirmation that we do not need to change the fundamental ethical principles. Confronting the new technologies such as digitalization, AI, and the experience of the COVID-19, do we need new ethical principle? The answer is very simple and clear: No. What we need is to work to apply them to new situations. A new paragraph on public health crises has been added, which states that the DoH principles remain the same. New technologies such as crispr, gene therapy, germline manipulation, etc. are emerging, but what is needed is an adequate risk-benefit assessment, not a change in principles or the addition of new principles. A distinguished research result from Tuebingen University was published in the front page of the Lancet. The emergence of such studies does not require special new legislations.



Left: Prof. Wiesing, interviewed by Kotone Matsuyama on the revision of the DoH and review of cutting-edge research in Germany, Oct 16, 2024.

Right: Prof. Urban Wiesing together with interviewers Kotone Matsuyama and Chieko Kurihara, just after the adoption of the revised DoH at the plenary session of the General Assembly. Prof. Wiesing has been engaged in long process not only this time of revision of the DoH, as well as other core documents of the WMA.

②Reform of principle for the vulnerable and various challenges

Having such premise emphasized, what we consider important is that paragraphs 19 and 20 brought significant change of the concept of vulnerable groups. The importance of promoting research while protecting vulnerable groups was recognized in this revision. Emphasis was placed on avoiding research waste ensuring research conducted with high level of science.

Regarding the use of personal data, the establishment of the European Health Data Space (EHDS) is underway, but even within the framework of the same EU General Data Protection Regulations, it differs greatly among countries, e.g., that of Denmark with liberalism and of Germany with strict regulations.