

## INTERNATIONAL SUMMIT ON DIABETES, ENDOCRINOLOGY, AND METABOLIC DISORDERS



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### **Community-Driven Diabetes Management in a Super-Aged Society: The Challenge of the Uonuma School for Community Health and Social Care**

#### **Abstract**

Uonuma City, a rural municipality in Niigata Prefecture, Japan, is facing an advanced stage of population aging, with the elderly expected to comprise 41.1% of the population by 2025. In response to this demographic shift, the city launched a series of community-centered health initiatives beginning in 2008, followed by a comprehensive regional healthcare reorganization between 2010 and 2020. As part of this transformation, a 350-bed general hospital was restructured into Koide Hospital, a more agile 134-bed facility serving as the region's core medical institution. Guided by the philosophy that "local residents are an indispensable health resource," Uonuma City established the "Uonuma School for Community Health and Social Care" in 2011. This platform fosters professional collaboration, health literacy, and civic engagement. It serves as a hub for co-creating health strategies and educational programs, particularly for diabetes care. A multidisciplinary diabetes education and empowerment team was organized at Koide Hospital, initially composed of nurses, therapists, pharmacists, dietitians, and laboratory technicians. Over time, it expanded to include general practitioners, public health nurses, fitness instructors, and dentists. These professionals supported patients and families both in clinical settings and the wider community. As a result, the proportion of individuals with HbA1c  $\geq 8\%$  decreased significantly from 2008 to 2010, and this improved glycemic control was maintained through 2020. Community activities such as health clubs, public lectures, and interactive learning also contributed to improved outcomes. In the Uonuma Medical Area, the incidence of new dialysis patients with diabetes as the primary underlying condition has shown a reduction of approximately 25% compared to preceding years. This case exemplifies how community-led initiatives, combined with interprofessional education, collaborative practice and participation of community residents can support sustainable chronic disease management. Uonuma's experience offers a transferable model for other aging communities worldwide.

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**Keywords:** IPE, IPCP, municipality government, demographic changes

### Biography

Professor Baoru Yang is the Director of Food Sciences and the Vice Dean of the Faculty of Technology, University of Turku. She is a member of the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters. Professor Yang's research is in the field of Food Chemistry and Food Development, with special focus on the composition and health effects of food with special focus on polyphenols and lipids. She has published over 300 peer-reviewed papers