



## ASIA

# JAPAN

### **1. What has been making news in this country in terms of the business of wellness?**

We have been hearing lots of news about the new records for Japanese athletes in various sports (including swimming, running, climbing, ball games, martial arts, surfing and skateboards), as we will have the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games and the Paralympic Games two years later. Seizing this opportunity, the government and relevant industries are not only encouraging people's wellness activities but also boosting sports-related businesses. The Tokyo Metropolitan Government is betting on a 32.3 trillion yen (= approx. US \$290 billion) boost to the Japanese economy between 2013 through 2030. On the other hand, our long-held working behaviors have been changing since a labor reform law was introduced in June, setting a legal cap on overtime as one of its pillars. Therefore, many workers are using their leisure time to enhance their wellness life and spend time with their family or friends. This is a great chance to develop wellness movements and relevant industries.

### **2. Please provide 1-2 sentences that describe what you think is an important development in this country for each of the following wellness sectors.**

#### **BEAUTY & ANTI-AGING**

The research on iPS cells is quite active in Kyoto.

#### **FITNESS & MIND-BODY**

The fitness market in Japan keeps growing, and the annual turnover reached 461 billion yen (= US \$4.15 billion) in 2017. Recently, small fitness businesses, such as 24-hour gyms, circuit gyms for women only, hot yoga, kids' fitness and personal training gyms, are emerging. On the other hand, the customer target of full-scale fitness gyms is shifting to elderly people.

#### **THERMAL/MINERAL SPRINGS**

The international hot springs summit was held in Beppu, a famous hot springs town in May. This was a great step toward having a mutual understanding of hot spring cultures and to promote spa-related markets together with many of the international hot spring operators in the world.

## **WELLNESS TOURISM**

Some leading Japanese resort hotels, including Aman, Hoshino and Fufu, launched their original immersion wellness programs or mindfulness programs. On the other hand, the government of Japan is planning to develop three full-scale integrated resorts (IR) like Marina Bay Sands and Resorts World Sentosa in Singapore. The wellness concepts and concrete services would be essential at those three IRs.

## **WORKPLACE WELLNESS**

Several major insurance companies launched new wellness policies that offer premium discounts or refunds to those living healthily. For example, Sumitomo Life Insurance Co. has joined with Discovery Ltd., an international financial services operator based in South Africa, to sell a new life or medical insurance policy that can be discounted if the insured takes steps toward leading a healthier life. The company will collect lifestyle data on the insured, including diet and fitness habits, and the premiums will be reviewed each year, with discounts available to policyholders recognized as adopting healthy lifestyles. The strength of this policy is that we will be able to utilize data that have been collected by Discovery from all around the world.

### **3. What are the most important, eye-opening or emerging trends in wellness happening now in this country?**

Many IT-related companies have been involved in creating innovative wellness technologies by utilizing AI, big-data, wearable /IoT, SNS, visual contents, VR/AR, Fintech (wellness points, etc.) and drone.

### **4. What do you see as the greatest strength of the wellness market in this country?**

- Technology
- Advanced research on iPS cells
- Healthy foods, bountiful natural resources
- Healthy habits that come from ancient cultures
- Longevity

### **5. What do you see as the greatest weakness of the wellness market in this country?**

The system of public health insurance for the whole nation is hampering the growth of the wellness industry in Japan.

### **6. What do you see as the biggest opportunity in the wellness market in this country?**

There is great opportunity in regards to the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games and the Paralympic Games and the rapidly aging society.

### **7. What do you see as the biggest threat to the wellness market in this country?**

Natural disasters, such as typhoons, earthquakes, tsunami and any problems that come from global warming.

### **8. Which sector of the wellness economy are you most involved with?**

Workplace Wellness

**SUBMITTED BY:**

**Name:** Tomonori Maruyama

**Company:** Mitsui Knowledge Industry

**Job Title:** Chief Research Consultant / Manager

**Country (Where You Reside):** Japan

**Email Address:** maruyama-tomonori@mki.co.jp

**Phone Number:** +81.90.6109.7427

