Reconstruction of Long-term Time Series Statistics on Causes of Death by Simple Classification in Japan

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The statistics on the causes of death are based on the Statistical Classification of Diseases, Injuries and Causes of Death, which is based on the International Classification of Diseases (ICD) established by the World Health Organization (WHO), and are published in the Vital Statistics of Japan by the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare. However, since the ICD is revised periodically, statistics on the causes of death are disrupted with each revision, making it difficult to accurately grasp long-term trends. Therefore, the National Institute of Population and Social Security Research has been working to reconstruct the long-term time series of the cause of death statistics for Japan by converting ICD-9 (applicable in Japan: 1979-94) into ICD-10 (applicable in Japan: 1995-) at the 4-digit level, which is the most detailed classification of the ICD.

This paper confirms the aggregation of the reconstructed cause of death statistics by a higher classification, the simple cause-of-death classification. The results clarify the long-term trends in the number of deaths for each cause, which had been unclear in the official statistics.

Key words: Statistics on causes of death, ICD