

Remembering Professor Maurizio Longinotti

Professor Maurizio Longinotti passed away on the 15th of October 2013 after spending his professional life between patient care, teaching and research. Born in Predazzo, Trento, in north-east Italy, in 1943, he lived most of his life in Sassari, Sardinia, where he obtained his medical degree in 1968.

Amid a high-profile clinical practice, he dedicated a large part of his time to research. His studies made a huge contribution to our understanding of the molecular basis of thalassemias, especially within the Sardinian population, a population that has one of the highest prevalence rates for these diseases worldwide. He later focused on the analysis of the T-cell receptor repertoire in different conditions, ranging from hematologic neoplasms to various immune-mediated disorders. His achievements have been documented in a large number of publications in some of the most prestigious international scientific journals. For more than ten years, he was also the co-ordinator of the local section of the Italian National Research Council.

On the clinical scene, he was instrumental in the establishment of the Sassari Hematology Unit with referrals from a large area of northern Sardinia where, until then, there had been scarce provision of onco-hematologic care. Never discouraged by the many hurdles he had to face, in 1999 he inaugurated the Hematology Ward and Stem Cell Transplant Unit in Sassari, offering thousands of onco-hematologic patients the chance to be treated close to home. Since its very inauguration, most of the therapeutic protocols that have been used there for patients with acute leukemia and other malignant diseases have always been adopted and developed within the framework of the Italian Group for Hematologic Diseases in Adults (GIMEMA) co-ordinated by Franco Mandelli.

Last but not least, Maurizio Longinotti constantly devoted an important part of his work to teaching, considering this opportunity to guide the younger generation of physicians and researchers a key part of his scientific mission. He became Associate Professor in 1981 and then Full Professor in Blood Diseases at the University of Sassari in 1987, offering hundreds of students an enthusiastic and sometimes provocative academic approach. He gave constant encouragement to his colleagues in their search for solid and always evidence-based medical knowledge, thus becoming a driving force in the scientific development of many young hematologists.

Both in his clinical practice and his research, his work was characterized by a number of fruitful collaborations, including those with the Department of Hematology at the University "La Sapienza" in Rome and with the Cornell University in New York. In the last few years, a vigorous exchange project was established with the



Maurizio Longinotti (1943-2013).

Department of Hematology at Imperial College London, which offered a stimulating experience for some of his exchange students under the supervision of Jane Apperley and Francesco Dazzi.

Together with his wife Maria Teresa and his children Angelo, Anna Lia and Manlio Stefano, we will always remember the value of his sharp intellect and his independence of thought, which so inspired the lives of those around him and left such a formidable inheritance.

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