

Professor David Harvey

David Robert Harvey, Emeritus Professor of Paediatrics and Neonatal Medicine, Imperial College London, has died at the age of 74 after a long struggle against Parkinson's disease. David established the Neonatal Course for Senior Paediatricians over 30 years ago, that has grown into the annual international meeting, the Neonatal Update.

David trained at Guy's Hospital Medical School and worked as a young doctor with some of the most eminent neonatal physicians of the era. He was House Physician, Registrar, and Research Fellow to Dr Pamela Davies, Professor Sir Peter Tizard and Professor John Davis at the Hammersmith Hospital, Registrar to Professor Otto Woolf at Great Ormond Street Hospital for Sick Children, and Research Fellow to Professor Geoffrey Dawes at the Nuffield Institute, Oxford. He was appointed consultant in neonatal medicine at Queen Charlotte's & Chelsea Hospital in West London in 1970. Though unforeseen at the time, he was to oversee the merging of Queen Charlotte's & Chelsea Hospital with the Hammersmith, then part of the Royal Postgraduate Medical School, and their later incorporation into Imperial College London, where he became Head of the Department of Paediatrics & Neonatal Medicine.

David's contribution to the care of children and babies was recognised around the world. In the 1970s and 80s, neonatal intensive care was emerging as a new and technology-rich speciality. David was notable for never losing sight of aspects of care then considered peripheral to conventional medicine. For example he was among the first to insist that there should be hospital residential facilities for mothers whose babies were in intensive care.

David served in senior capacity in every professional paediatric association in the UK and many abroad, but he will be best remembered as an educator and as a tireless champion of the less privileged, of children with AIDS, victims of child abuse, children in hospital, overseas doctors, and gay and lesbian doctors. Many a colleague will remember his wise counsel during troubled times.

David stood down as Head of Paediatrics at Hammersmith and Queen Charlotte's Hospitals in 1998 because of the increasingly debilitating effects of Parkinson's disease. The premature loss of his leadership came at a particularly difficult time for the Department and had profound consequences that are felt to this day. The festschrift held at the Hammersmith Hospital at the time of his retirement in October 2002 was a testament to the warmth, affection and esteem in which he was held by parents and patients, and medical and nursing colleagues.

David Robert Harvey, born 7th December 1936, died 10th April 2010.

Neena Modi

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