Professor Alfons Chodera, Ph.D., M.D.  
(1925–2005)  

OBITUARY  

Professor Alfons Chodera was born on February 6th, 1925 in Nowa Święta, district Złotów, and attended there a minority primary school with Polish language. In October 1939, together with his family he was displaced and driven to Germany for forced labor while property of his parents was confiscated. In April 1945, he was liberated by American troops and returned to his native locality which in the meantime was incorporated in Poland.  

In the period between 1946–47, he worked as a clerk in the District Starosty in Złotów and in the District Guild Association, preparing himself at private evening courses for examination for the secondary-school certificate, which he was granted in 1948. In 1949, he started his studies at the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Poznań and in 1954 he was qualified as a doctor. Then beginning from 1954 till 1996, he had been working at the Department of Pharmacology of the Medical Academy of Poznań as an assistant, research associate, associate professor and, finally, as a professor.  

In 1960, he obtained 2nd degree of specialization in internal medicine. In 1963–64, he visited scientific centers in the Soviet Union and Germany. He participated in numerous scientific conferences in Poland and abroad.  

On March 1st, 1967, Professor Chodera was appointed to be the Head of the Chair of Pharmacology
at the Medical Academy in Poznań, and had remained at this position till October 1990. For his enormous knowledge, exceptional organizational skills and managerial talent in heading such a large team, he was esteemed by his coworkers. In particular, they respected him for his ability to carry on a dialogue, intention to cooperate and positive attitude to all arising organizational and interpersonal problems.

He was not only a distinguished scientist and clinician but also an outstanding academic teacher transmitting his knowledge to students and physicians working on their specialization. His lectures often interspersed with anecdotes and based on broad knowledge of the subject matter were greatly enjoyed.

After he had retired, he remained in scientific contact with the Chair of Pharmacology. He was a professor conferring master’s degree on 105 graduate students and doctor’s degree on 20 postgraduate students, moreover, his 8 co-workers were promoted to an associate professor level and his 7 collaborators became full professors.

Professor Alfons Chodera was the author and co-author of 305 articles, a majority of which had an international impact, he was an author of 11 textbooks which had 25 editions in total, 6 handbooks and many monographs. The works usually focused on tolerance of the central nervous system to drugs, and also on cardiac effects of propandione derivatives, influence of glucagon and other endogenous compounds on the course of hypoglycemic shock, and the role of biogenic amines in the effects of narcotic analgesics.

From 1972 to 1995, Professor Chodera was a member of the Scientific Council of the Institute of Pharmacology, Polish Academy of Sciences in Kraków, from 1975 to 1986 a member of the Experimental Therapy Committee, from 1972 to 1974 and from 1981 to 1986 a member of Physiological Sciences Committee, from 1978 to 1980 a member Pharmacokinetics and Biopharmacy Commission in the section of the Experimental Therapy Commission, PAS and from 1981 to 1983 a member of Scientific Council at the Health Ministry as the Chairman of the Main Board of the Polish Pharmacological Society, whose honorary member he was. Professor Chodera was one of organizers of clinical pharmacology in Poland. Many symposia in this field were held in Poland and abroad on his initiative. In recognition of his merits in science, education and organization of science, he was awarded many prizes: 4 prizes of the Minister of Health, the prestigious Begański Award for outstanding achievements in didactics and education and 20 prizes of the Rector of the Medical Academy. He was awarded the Knight’s Cross of Polonia Restituta Order, Gold Cross of Merit, Medal of Commission of National Education, Honorary Award for Merits in Development of Poznańskie Voivodeship, Honorary Award for Excellent Job in Health Service, and others.

Professor Chodera passed away on July 23rd, 2005. In his funeral, beside his family and university authorities, many of his pupils – physicians, pharmacists and students paid a tribute to worthiness of his heart and mind.

Professor Chodera has been a symbol of excellence for us, a remarkably humble, honest and kind men, who always masterly and properly laid out accents of importance in life.

Elżbieta Nowakowska