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In memoriam: Eveline Markiewicz

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On the morning of June 15, 2014, the intensive care unit of the Institut Jules Bordet was orphaned. Its head nurse, Eveline Markiewicz, died from one of the diseases she spent 25 years of her life combatting.

Eveline was an exceptional nurse. After studying nursing at the Hadassah Graduate School for Nurses in Jerusalem, she began her career in 1973 on the first day of the Yom Kippur War and ended up in a trauma unit caring for many wounded. After practising in a kibbutz in Israel, she returned to Belgium where she obtained the central jury equivalency diploma and went to work at St. Pierre Hospital in Brussels as an assistant chief nurse in thoracic surgery then as head nurse in digestive surgery. She became chief nurse of the medical intensive care unit in 1981 and received her permanent appointment to the rank of head nurse in 1982.

I met Eveline in 1989 when she joined the Jules Bordet Institute, the Belgian multidisciplinary cancer center, as head nurse of the medical intensive care unit. We formed a great team and, over the following 25 years, built a service that became the intensive care unit for oncology emergencies. Eveline was recognized in intensive care nursing (SIAMU) and obtained a degree in oncology nursing at the School of Nursing

attached to the Université Libre de Bruxelles. She contributed to the training of many doctors and nurses, was a member of several scientific societies, and participated in numerous national and international congresses, often in an active role.

Despite her illness, Eveline always invested heavily in the future of the service; including the design of the extension in the New Bordet Institute which she sadly did not live to see inaugurated. She made me promise to continue an active role in the scientific activities of the service after her retirement.

Death freed her from the suffering caused by her terrible debilitating disease. The service truly was her second family and she was particularly proud to have been a pioneer of oncological intensive care. In order to perpetuate her memory, we have decided to name our annual international meeting on emergencies and severe complications in cancer patients “Rencontres Eveline Markiewicz.”

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