



Sarah A. Hills RGN MSc, 28 September 1960–1 May 2023

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Received: 7 May 2023 / Accepted: 7 May 2023 / Published online: 16 June 2023
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Sarah Hills was a much loved and respected colleague who was recognised for her outstanding work in support of European diabetes research and longstanding service to the EASD through Honorary Membership of the Association.

Sarah was born in London and qualified as a State Registered Nurse at the Middlesex Hospital, London, in 1983.

For the first 4 years after qualification she worked as a senior staff nurse in various departments at the Middlesex Hospital.

It was in 1986 that she first joined the EASD, when it was situated in the basement of the then British Diabetic Association's headquarters in Queen Anne Street, London. She became assistant to the Executive Director of the EASD and was responsible for organising conferences and meetings. In 1989 she moved to Uppsala, Sweden, where she supported Prof. Claes Hellerström, the Editor in Chief of *Diabetologia*, as an editorial assistant for the duration of his editorship, finishing in 1993. Immediately thereafter she moved to work with the next Editor of *Diabetologia*, Prof. Ele Ferrannini in Pisa, Italy (1993–1997). She was not only Managing Editor of the Editorial Office but also controlled the review process, copy-editing, proofreading, and other functions of the office. She was also responsible for promotion of the journal at international meetings as well as handling all contacts with the publisher, Springer.

For several years after 1997 Sarah remained in Pisa as the administrator of the European Group for the Study of Insulin Resistance (EGIR). Not only was she administrator of the whole Study Group but also coordinator of the European RISC Study (Relationship between Insulin Resistance and Cardiovascular risk), supported by the European Commission Fifth RTD Framework Programme. She became an expert in performing euglycaemic clamps and blood tests and was responsible for all other laboratory studies. She proved to be incredibly clever in this new capacity and was, as always, well liked by all, thanks to her warm and caring personality.

Thereafter, she moved back to the UK and became the Executive Director of the Alliance for European Diabetes Research (EURADIA). EURADIA was a unique alliance of organisations working in diabetes research, including academic and clinical researchers, healthcare professionals and patient groups. During this period of time until her retirement in December 2021 she was highly effective and efficient not only at running EURADIA, but also leading the major European-funded project, DIAMAP (Road Map for Diabetes Research in Europe). During 2022 and 2023 Sarah

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remained a freelance consultant helping with the day to day running of EURADIA.

Throughout her 18 years with EURADIA Sarah worked tirelessly to promote diabetes research within Europe. The Alliance soon became very active in political advocacy and lobbying in Brussels to promote the need for more funding for European diabetes research, fostering close collaboration between the EASD and several other diabetes organisations that they had not previously worked with. This would not have been possible without the tremendous effort injected into these projects by Sarah.

As will be apparent, the vast majority of Sarah Hills' working life has been dedicated to diabetes research. Her work enhanced the visibility of diabetes research in Europe, increased funding and allowed for closer collaboration than ever before between major stakeholders. Her last project was overseeing a study on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on research funding for diabetes in Europe, a project that she completed despite her worsening health. She continued to be involved in EURADIA until a few weeks before her untimely death and was able to see the results of her work published in April 2023 [1].

Sarah was an incredibly modest person who preferred to stay in the background and was always loath to receive praise, however well justified this always was. She was elected to Honorary Membership of EASD just last year (September 2022) but was unfortunately not able to receive this accolade in person through ill health. All who knew Sarah held her in the greatest affection and esteem; the entire community of diabetes stakeholders, for which she worked with such devotion and skill, owes her a huge debt of gratitude; she will be sorely missed.

References

1. Hills SA, Meadows K, Felton AM, Delicata CJ, Boulton AJM (2023) Diabetes and Covid-19: diabetes research funding and support during the pandemic. *Diabetes Res Clin Pract* 198:110597. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.diabres.2023.110597>

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