



Today the pharmacy world lost a leader in pharmaceutical care

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In most published papers about pharmaceutical care, there is somewhere a reference to the work or proposed definitions by one of the world's leaders in this area. Probably the person that did the most work for the advancement of pharmaceutical care in Europe, and certainly with global recognition, was Foppe van Mil. Foppe was a practitioner who worked daily in a local community pharmacy, interacted with his patients, visiting them at home if needed, and worked collaboratively with the local physicians to optimise therapy and ensure optimal medication use. This is a mere snapshot of his practice-based tangible contribution to pharmaceutical care. This work was restricted to a small remote location in the Netherlands but becoming aware of the benefits in outcomes experienced by his patients, Foppe quickly understood that the concept needed to be expanded and engaged in this task in various formats.

One of his greatest contributions to research and science was the creation of the International Journal of Clinical Pharmacy (IJCP) in 1979. IJCP, named Pharmacy World & Science until 2010 [1], is a peer-reviewed bi-monthly international journal that focuses on research and practice in pharmacotherapy, outcomes research, clinical pharmacy, pharmacoepidemiology, pharmacoconomics, medicines information, pharmacy services research and pharmaceutical care [2]. Foppe van Mil was the editor in chief, an exemplary one, who carefully read all submissions to the journal and competently and progressively increased the journal's reputation, its dissemination, outreach and impact factor.

Through this and other journals, Foppe published many articles showing the world the benefits of pharmaceutical care as a new practice, for patients, for the profession and for society as whole. He took it as his duty to change a profession and improve pharmacy practice [3], ultimately aiming to improve patient outcomes that matter [4]. His work is used as reference by many researchers worldwide to better

understand the meaning and scope of pharmaceutical care practice in the Netherlands [5], in Europe [6, 7], in Asia [8] and in Latin America [9].

Foppe was very much concerned with terminology and accurate and precise definitions [10]. For this reason, he produced important papers to define the scope and implementation of pharmaceutical care [11–13], clinical pharmacy [14] and medication review [15, 16].

Another associated concern was the need to document interventions [17] and do so in a way that may be retrievable, reproduceable and useful to demonstrate the added value of pharmaceutical care. This led Foppe to spend an important part of his career developing and refining classifications for drug-related problems [18, 19]. Foppe has often advocated for the need for pharmacists to be able to communicate beyond the profession and to use words and concepts that could be understood by clinicians and other allied health care professionals [20].

Another means he used to expand the concept and associated practice was by liaising with various organisations, both at the national and at the international level, to provide visible contributions to the dissemination of this practice. In 1994, he was a founding member of Pharmaceutical Care Network Europe (PCNE), an organization committed to support the development of pharmacy along the lines of pharmaceutical care through the establishment and completion of research or implementation projects and through the exchange of ideas and tools in co-operation with the groups and countries that participate in the network. This network in 2020 comprises 150 members and 11 honorary members. Foppe was always the soul of the organisation, being a board member (chairperson between 1996 and 1999), currently an honorary membership, the professional secretariat, the leader of the working group on the drug-related problems classification, to name a few of his roles and activities.

His contribution to the European Society of Clinical Pharmacy (ESCP) was also immense. ESCP is an organization focused on promoting practice and research in clinical pharmacy, mostly in Europe, and aims to advance education, practice and research in this area. Foppe was an active

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member of this organization, awarded research fellowship, mostly for his contribution to the development of the organization and for the continuous support in organizing research, scientific writing and implementation workshops, that complemented Steve Hudson's clinical pharmacy centred teaching, inspired pharmacists from various areas of the profession to improve their clinical pharmacy practice and research skills.

Although between 1993 and 2000, Foppe worked part-time as a teacher-practitioner at Groningen University, he was no longer affiliated to any faculty and could not formally be called a professor. However, his contribution to the education of pharmacists worldwide was clear. Much of Foppe's work focused on peer education, one-to-one mentoring and tutoring. Foppe was one of the initial faculty members of the Community Pharmacy Section within the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) that from 1994 until 2004 supported by the Planning Committee to organise the CPD programme, often as workshop leader or speaker, with other well-known names such as Hepler, Noyce, Holland, McEl-nay, Bugnon, Herborg, Schulz, and Benrimoj to name a few. As part of a collaboration between the FIP and the World Health Organization (WHO), Foppe developed a course focusing on pharmaceutical care to be delivered in Uruguay and other Latin American countries. The course was entitled "the patient at the centre of care" and followed a train the trainers' model, through which theory based sessions were followed by visits to the settings where the trainers practiced to better understand their reality and adapt the learnings to their needs. This constitutes just one example of the pragmatic approach to improving care from Foppe, a practice-based person who was most focused on improving the care of patients worldwide. His first concern was certainly the patient and their healthcare related needs [21, 22].

Later in his career, he created Van Mil consultancy, specializing in drug information, pharmaceutical care and (international) community pharmacy. As an experienced science editor, practitioner, lecturer, and researcher, Van Mil consultancy was often called to support many individual researchers and international platforms and organizations.

Although this editorial is a tribute to his professional career, which it is impossible to summarise in two pages, it would not be complete without a few words to describe Foppe as a person. Foppe was always concerned with doing the right thing and was the most precise person I have known. He often sounded abrupt, but in every sharp word was a constructive criticism that aimed to motivate the person to do better. As an example, even when going through the experience of becoming a patient, he saw it as an opportunity to document and factually demonstrate what could be improved in healthcare, particularly in seamless care [23].

He was always available to young researchers and to make newcomers welcome in all events and organizations and kept

incentivizing the older to mingle with them; the true spirit of a mentor. He was also a very dedicated person to his loved ones, and all of those that were fortunate to be among his group of friends will miss his yearly postcard with messages to keep "enjoying life, even when clouds come up!". Finally, but equally important he always had the right balance between professional and personal life, always kept his work up-to-date and never failed in any task but at the end of each day he would quietly sit with his loved partner, listening to classical music and would say "no more work for today; now time to enjoy life". I truly believe this is one of his many secrets for being so successful and becoming a role model for so many researchers and practitioners. Today I lost a father figure, a friend and a mentor, I thank him for all I have learned and for all the opportunities he granted me. The pharmacy world however lost much more, a global leader and a passionate and competent professional in pharmaceutical care.

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