

In Memoriam: Michele Muggeo 1938–2021

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Professor Michele Muggeo peacefully passed away in Padua on August 23, 2021, at the age of 82. He was one of the pioneers in the Italian scientific community of endocrinology and metabolism and the founder of the School of Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism at the University of Verona, Italy.

He was born in Barletta, Apulia, in 1938 and achieved the degree of Medical Doctor, magna cum laude, at the University of Padua in 1964. In the following decade he achieved national board certifications in Hematology, Cardiology, Internal Medicine, Gerontology and Geriatrics, Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolic Diseases, always with highest degrees. Soon after graduation, he held the position of assistant professor and then associate professor of Internal Medicine at the University of Padua. In the second half of the 1970s he worked as Visiting Scientist at the Diabetes Branch of the NIH, Bethesda, MD, USA. Back to Italy, he was promoted to the position of full professor of Endocrinology in 1980 at the School of Medicine of the University of Ancona. He then moved in 1982 to the School of Medicine of the University of Verona, where he worked until his retirement in 2009. After that, he was awarded the position of Emeritus Professor of Endocrinology. Many attendees of his courses still remember him as one of the best teachers they have ever had and one of the persons who more strongly influenced their life.

At the University of Verona, he was for more than two decades the Head of the Division of Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolism, Department of Internal Medicine, as well as the Director of the School of Specialization in Endocrinology and Metabolic Diseases, and for several years the Chairman of the PhD School in Clinical and Experimental

Medical Sciences. In Verona he also was the Chief of the Division of Endocrinology and Metabolic Disease at the University Hospital, and the Director of the Center for the Study of Metabolic Diseases and Atherosclerosis. He led a group of scientists and technicians, physicians and nurses, post-doctoral and PhD students which progressively increased from a few up to almost 100 people.

The scientific activities conducted by Michele Muggeo, which over the years were financially supported by the Italian Ministries of University and Research, and Public Health, the Italian National Research Council and other public and private institutions, spanned from basic to clinical fields. Earlier studies focused on growth hormone secretion and action. During the period spent at the NIH in Bethesda, he collaborated with Jesse Roth, Ronald Kahn, Philip Gordon, Jeffrey Flier, Robert Bar, Emmanuel Van Obberghen, Pierre De Meyts, Len Harrison, Barry Ginsberg and other outstanding scientists in seminal studies on the insulin receptor. In the 1990s he launched and led the Verona Diabetes Study which provided many important data on epidemiology of diabetes mellitus, mortality and risk factors for chronic complications. He was among the first to point out the deleterious effects of glucose variability in diabetes, and the favorable impact on mortality of being taken care of in diabetes clinics. He also published, with his group, in the fields of hyperlipidemia, obesity, hypertension, metabolic syndrome, atherosclerosis and cardiovascular disease, polycystic ovary syndrome and many other topics. He was a strong supporter of national and international scientific collaborations and strongly encouraged epidemiological studies such as the EURODIAB IDDM Complications Study, the Verona Diabetes Complications Study, the Verona Young Men Atherosclerosis Risk Factors Study, the Bruneck Study, the Verona Newly Diagnosed Diabetes Study. Overall, he was author or co-author of more than 300 papers, including proceedings of meetings and congresses and chapters of textbooks.

Michele Muggeo was an active and insightful member of many scientific societies, including the American Diabetes Association, the Endocrine Society, the European

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Association for the Study of Diabetes (Honorary Auditor 1988–1992), the International Diabetes Federation. He served in the Executive Board of the Italian Society of Endocrinology (1982–1986) as well as the Italian Diabetes Society (1986–1990; 1998–2002). He was President of the Italian Diabetes Society in 2000–2002, becoming later an Honorary President. He joined the Editorial Board of many scientific journals and acted as referee for the most prestigious medical journals of the areas of diabetes, endocrinology and internal medicine.

Michele Muggeo was an enthusiastic and tireless organizers of local, regional, national and international educational events, both scientific and clinical. His commitment to the dissemination of knowledge in the area of diabetes was strong and lifelong. He promoted hundreds of seminars and meetings devoted to CME, and was the Chairman of two National Congresses of the Italian Endocrine Society (1988 and 2007) and one National Congress of the Italian Diabetes Society (2002), all held in Verona. He also organized the 4th edition of the International Symposium on Insulin Receptor and Insulin Action (1990), and the 34th Annual Meeting of the European Diabetes Epidemiology Group (1999), both held in Verona. Intense was also his activity of disclosure, support and advocacy for people with diabetes.

In this context, it is worth mentioning his chairmanship of the Study Group on Education of the Italian Diabetes Society (1987–1991).

Michele Muggeo had outstanding clinical skills and was a compassionate physician, always extraordinary meticulous, scrupulous and highly dedicated. He personally took care of many thousand patients, admitted to hospital or in outpatient clinics, and prompted his collaborators to always observe the most rigorous principles of medicine. He was an example of unexhausted sense of duty and spirit of sacrifice.

Last, but not least, Michele Muggeo was honest, fair, sincere, generous, available, empathetic, friendly, warm and welcoming. He was a very nice person.

Conflict of interest Not Applicable.

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Informed consent Not Applicable.

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