Farewell, Norbert

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We were shocked to hear the tragic news that Prof. Norbert Gutknecht passed away on the 19th of July 2021 due to this terrible COVID disease. On behalf of the Editorial Board and all of his coworkers at Lasers in Dental Science, we wish to extend our condolences to his family!

His death is a loss for everyone in the world of laser dentistry. Norbert Gutknecht was the personification of the development and successful introduction of dental laser therapy, or laser supported dental therapy, as he liked to call it. Since 1991, when he released his first academic publication, he was involved in or first author of more than 200 books and articles. He was a founding member and President of the German Society for Laser Dentistry (DGL); one of the first members and President of the International Society for Laser Dentistry (ISLD); co-founder and Scientific Director of the Aachen Dental Laser Center (AALZ) from 1993; co-founder and Scientific Director of the World Academy for Laser Education in Dentistry (WALED) from 2007; and Program Director of RWTH Aachen University's Master of Science in "Lasers in Dentistry" from 2004, as well as Editor-in-Chief of the journal Lasers in Dental Science (LIDS) and Associate Editor of the journal Lasers in Medical Science (LIMS), to name just a few of his most important positions. He was first a research assistant, later (after completing his postdoctoral degree) a senior physician and Vice-Director, and finally Acting Director of RWTH Aachen University's Clinic for Operative Dentistry, Periodontology and Preventive Dentistry. His last professional postings were at the University of Namibia in Windhoek (UNAM), where he served as Director of the Dental School and Associate Dean of the Dental Faculty.

With his magical enthusiasm, but also his unique wealth of evidence-based knowledge, he was able to win over

thousands of dentists worldwide for dental laser therapy. Norbert Gutknecht was actively involved in the development, research, training and therapy design of laser dentistry, and championed the field like no other person in the world.

Norbert was like a spiritual father to all of us, and we now have to continue and build on his legacy, just as he always asked us to do.

Norbert, we will never forget you. Rest in peace.

Aslihan Usumez – Leon Vanweersch

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Declarations

Conflict of interest Aslihan Usumez and Leon Vanweersch declare that we have no conflict of interest.

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