

Tribute to Anna Waszczuk-Gajda

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It is with great sadness that we announce that our colleague and friend Dr. Anna Waszczuk-Gajda MD, PhD, aged 41, of Warsaw, Poland, passed away on July 13, 2022.

Anna was born in Łowicz, Poland. Even in her early high school years, she was scientifically very productive and won a silver medal at the 31st International Chemistry Olympiad held in Bangkok, Thailand. Anna graduated from the Medical University of Warsaw in 2005. As part of the student's exchange program, she additionally studied at the Free University of Berlin (2002/2003). From the beginning of her medical career, she worked within the Department of Hematology, Oncology, and Internal Medicine, of the Medical University of Warsaw, renamed more recently as the Department of Hematology, Transplantation and Internal Medicine.

Anna obtained a degree in internal medicine, hematology, and oncology. She additionally commenced her specialization in clinical transplantation. She successfully defended her dissertation with honours on infectious complications

in hematological patients in 2011, under the supervision of Professor Wiesław Wiktor Jędrzejczak. Thereafter she became very actively involved in the clinical research conducted by the Polish Adult Leukemia Group, mainly within the MDS and Infections subcommittees, the Polish Myeloma Group, and the Polish Lymphoma Research Group.

Much of her scientific and clinical research effort was focused on plasma cell dyscrasias, in particular cohorts complicated by renal failure. She defended her habilitation on this issue in 2020, whilst already undergoing treatment. She continued her research focus on this issue as a member of the Chronic Malignancies Working Party of the EBMT.

She published actively on behalf of the CMWP, PMG, and PALG on various aspects of plasma cell dyscrasia treatment and its complications over the years and added greatly to the available knowledge in this arena.

Until the final stages of her medical career, she remained very interested in the compendium of infectious complications in hematology, including in the HCT setting. Her own disease prompted her to analyse hematological problems in solid tumor oncology to prevent patients from being disqualified from both novel and established treatments based on their hematological parameters.

Anna was truly an excellent clinician, always very dedicated to the patients she was responsible for and remained a true advocate for excellence in all aspects of haemato-oncology and stem cell transplantation practice. Moreover, Anna had a unique way of 'looking at us, her colleagues and her friends. She was always able to find virtuous features within all of us, features that made us unique. She was compassionate, a true friend and active and empathetic listener, sharing fondness and warm words when needed which made our day-day work and, ultimately, our lives better. We will miss her greatly and will strive to continue her work and spirit.

She is survived by her beloved husband, son and mother.



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