Professor Anna Dyaczyńska-Herman, the founder of the Silesian school of anaesthesiology and intensive therapy — on the 80th birthday anniversary

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On April 29 of the current year we celebrate the 80th birthday anniversary of Professor Anna Dyaczyńska-Herman, a doyen and founder of the Silesian school of anaesthesiology and intensive therapy, retired Head of the Department of Anaesthesiology and Intensive Therapy, Medical University of Silesia in Katowice.

Anna Ludwika Dyaczyńska-Herman was born on April 23, 1933 in Żywiec to a craftsman family of Bronisław Dyaczyński and Michalina Minkińska. Following graduation from the Copernicus Secondary and Grammar School in Żywiec in 1951, she worked for a year at a hospital; in 1953 she began to study medicine at the Silesian Medical Academy in Zabrze, Faculty of Medicine. She received her diploma on July 7, 1959.

In 1959, she began to practise as a company doctor at the ZLZ of the Walenty-Wawel coal mine in Ruda Śląska. Subsequently, she was employed at the 2nd Department of Surgery, Medical University in Zabrze, which was moved to Katowice in 1965. Surgery and anaesthesiology have always been her main areas of interest [1, 2].

She received trainings and was granted scholarships in the field of anaesthesiology in Kraków, Poznań, Warszawa and Wrocław.

She received her first- and second-degree specialization in general surgery in 1963 and 1967 as well as first- and second-degree specialization in anaesthesiology in 1965 and 1969, respectively.

Her work at the 2nd Department of Surgery at the Medical University of Silesia in Zabrze was at first voluntary (years 1959–61). Then she became an assistant (1962), senior assistant (1964), assistant professor (1969), associate professor (1977), university professor (1989) and full professor (1994) [6, 7].

Based on the dissertation “Potassium deficiency as a cause of d-tubocurarine-induced prolonged apnoea” written under the supervision of Prof. Józef Gasiński, and under the resolution of the Medical Faculty Council, Medical University of Silesia of December 11, 1968 she obtained her PhD [4]. Her dissertation “Side effects of general anaesthetics in humans during the early post-anaesthesia period” reviewed by Prof. Jerzy Maj, Jan Hankiewicz, PhD and Marek Sych, PhD, granted her a post-doctoral degree in anaesthesiology and intensive therapy. Following the post-doctoral colloquium, which took place on October 30, 1975 the degree was awar-
ded by the Medical Faculty Council of the Medical University of Silesia and was approved by the Central Commission for Academic Degrees and Titles on April 22 1976 [5].

In 1969 she became the head of Anaesthesiology Ward at the 2nd Department of General Surgery in Katowice and since 1970 she supervised the work of anaesthesiologists at the Medical University of Silesia.

In 1974 she became the head of the newly-created Department of Anaesthesiology and Reanimation, Medical University of Silesia, moved to the Central University Hospital in Katowice-Ligota in 1976 [3]. By the resolution of the Senate of the Medical University of Silesia of November 10 1981, in 1982 the Department was transformed into the Department of Anaesthesiology and Intensive Therapy [4]. Under her supervision, the department was involved in scientific-didactic and diagnostic-therapeutic activities in the fields of anaesthesiology, emergency treatment of life-threatening cases, resuscitation and intensive therapy at numerous intensive therapy departments and units. The department's scientific activity involved research on the mechanism of molecular effects of anaesthetics and analgesics, evaluation of possibilities and usefulness of long-term parenteral nutrition in patients with acute pancreatic diseases, gastrointestinal cancers and diseases of the central nervous system. Furthermore, Professor Anna Dayczyńska-Herman supervised post-graduate trainings in emergency treatment, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, anaesthesiology and intensive therapy for general practitioners and anaesthesiologists as well as trainings and courses for mid-level medical personnel. The medical activity of the department focused on anaesthesia of patients for various corrective and exploratory surgeries, intensive care and management of various pain syndromes using pharmacological and non-pharmacological strategies. Moreover, the team of Professor Anna Dayczyńska-Herman designed and implemented new diagnostic-therapeutic methods [8]. The Department of Anaesthesiology and Intensive Therapy of the Medical University of Silesia managed by her had a substantial impact on the standards of services and development of anaesthesiology and intensive therapy in the entire region [9].

In 1988 Professor Dayczyńska-Herman supervised the Department of Anaesthesiology and Intensive Therapy created at the Mining Hospital in Sosnowiec. Furthermore, since 1993 she worked as a supervisor of the following departments: Department of Cardiac Anaesthesia and Post-operative Intensive Therapy at the Upper-Silesian Cardiology Centre in Katowice-Ochojec, Department of Anaesthesiology at the University Hospital No. 1 in Zabrze, and since 2001 Department of Emergency Medicine at the Św. Barbara District Specialist Hospital No. 5 in Sosnowiec.

Apart from her work at the Medical Academy, she was also employed at the District Outpatient Department for Miners from the Coal Industry Plant in Bytom as well as District Cardiovascular Outpatient Clinic in Katowice.

During her work at the Medical University of Silesia she performed the following functions: deputy of chancellor’s proxy for student workers’ training (1977–1979), pro-vice-chancellor of the Department of Nursing (1978–1980), chairperson of the Committee on Development of the Department of Nursing (1980–1981), member of the Committee on Doctoral Studies (1981–1985) and Spokesperson for Student Disciplinary Appeals Committee (1981–1985). Moreover, she actively took part in the senate committee on medical equipment (1982–1985), appeal committee for independent scientific workers (1985–1986), and from 1996 in the appeal committee for university teachers. Since 1987 she headed the publishing committee and in 1990 became a member of the Senate of the Medical University of Silesia. As its representative, in 2002 she became a member of the Social Council of the University Hospital No. 5 of the Medical University of Silesia in Katowice.

The achievements of Professor Dayczyńska-Herman in the field of anaesthesiology and intensive therapy in Silesia are immense. The post she held in the specialist supervision triggered cooperation of specialists at the district and municipal level with academic anaesthesiology. She was a longstanding district and regional consultant for the Silesian, Bielsko and Częstochowa provinces.

Creative and fruitful work of Professor Anna Dayczyńska-Herman, her practical abilities and management skills raised the standards of treatment and saving patients in life-threatening situations.

The main fields of Professor’s research and treatment interests include anaesthesiology (in particular neuroanaesthesia and cardiac anaesthesia), intensive therapy, chronic pain management, biotransformation of anaesthetics and their effect on metabolism, homeostasis imbalance in children during the perioperative period.
The scientific achievements of Prof. Dyaczyńska include over 200 papers published in Polish and foreign journals and 60 abstracts and reports presented at congresses in Poland and abroad. Her articles were published, inter alia, in “Anaesthesiology and Intensive Therapy” (formerly “Anaesthesiology, Resuscitation and Intensive Therapy”), “Polish Journal of Surgery”, “Polish Medical Weekly”, “Medical News”, “Dilemmas in Educational System and Medical Sciences”.


The Professor’s teaching activities encompass supervision over the teaching process provided by employees of the Department of Anaesthesiology and Intensive Therapy concerning first aid, resuscitation, anaesthesiology and intensive therapy at all the faculties of the Medical University of Silesia, lectures on medical first aid with elements of nursing for 2nd year students of medicine in Katowice, and seminars on resuscitation and anaesthesiology for 4th year students of medicine. The Professor was also a supervisor of the Students’ Scientific Society attached to the Department and was responsible for post-graduate courses in anaesthesiology and intensive therapy organized by the Medical Centre for Post-graduate Education and District Centres for Medical Personnel Education, as well as local basic and advanced courses for anaesthesiologists and anaesthesiological nurses. She supervised a first- and second-degree specialization of 42 and 33 doctors, respectively [9].

Anna Dyaczyńska-Herman is also a supervisor of 40 doctoral theses, 39 master’s theses (in the field of clinical nursing), 9 postdoctoral theses, 3 Honoris Causa Degrees at the medical University of Silesia, reviewer of several dozen master’s theses, over 20 doctoral theses, and several postdoctoral ones, as well as petitions for conferral of scientific titles and full professor titles.

Moreover, she is a co-author of an extensive review of medical assistance in mining emergencies.

Owing to her efforts, on March 2, 1968 a Resuscitation Team “R” was created at the District Emergency Service in Katowice. It was the third team of that kind, apart from the ones in Wrocław and Łódź, which by 1973 covered the vast area from Częstochowa to Bielsko. On October 13, 2006, during the 1st Silesian Emergency Medical Services Day, Professor Anna Dyaczyńska-Herman was granted an award in recognition of her achievements in the field of emergency service structures in the Silesian Province [11, 12].

Professor Anna Dyaczyńska-Herman participated on numerous occasions in international congresses, symposia and scientific conventions, chaired congress sessions and supervised round table meetings on surgery, anaesthesiology, first aid in life-threatening situations, chronic pain management and nutrition of the severely ill. In 1971 she organized the IV National Symposium on Emergency Services in Katowice, and in 1996 the XII Congress of the Polish Society of Anaesthesiology and Intensive Therapy and the I Forum for Polish community abroad in Katowice.

The Professor’s active involvement in the activity of numerous scientific societies is also worth stressing, including Polish Medical Association (since 1960), Polish Society of Surgery (since 1967), Polish Society of Anaesthesiology — currently Polish Society of Anaesthesiology and Intensive Therapy (the Society’s President in the years 1996–1999), Historical Section of Polish Society of Anaesthesiology and Intensive Therapy (Vice-president since 1986) [13], Silesian Division of Polish Society of Anaesthesiology and Intensive Therapy, Polish Society of Phlebology (since 1995), Poznań Society of Friends of Sciences — Perioperative Medicine Committee (since 2001). Furthermore, since 1975 she was for several terms of office as...
an active member of Anaesthesiology and Resuscitation Commission of the Clinical Pathophysiology Committee at the Medical Sciences Institute of the Polish Academy of Sciences, member of the section of the Surgery Guidelines (since 1995), and the Medical Sciences team of the State Committee for Scientific Research. Moreover, she is a member of Programme Committee of a quarterly “Intensive Care and Emergency Medicine” (since 1998) and a quarterly “Pain”.

Her scientific, educational and social activity brought her many distinctions and awards. The most important include: the Knight’s Cross of the Order of Polonia Restituta, Medal of the Commission of the National Education, Distinction “For Exemplary Work in Health Service”, Gold Distinction “Merit for Development of Katowice Province”, “MUS 50th Anniversary Laurel”. She was also honoured by the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare — 4 times for scientific activity as a team member and individually for her educational activity. Furthermore, she was granted multiple III-degree awards of the Chancellor for her achievements in the fields of research and education. In 2001, during the 60th International Congress of Surgery in Warsaw, she was awarded honorary membership of the Polish Society of Surgery.

Professor Anna Dyaczyńska-Herman retired on September 30 2003. She combines her thorough medical knowledge with her passion for nature, history, music and poetry.

What distinguishes her is her deep humanism, openness to the needs of others, devotion to students, kindness and modesty. Her portrait would not be complete without mentioning the fact that together with her husband, Professor Zbigniew Herman — distinguished clinical pharmacologist of the Medical University of Silesia (deceased in 2010), they decided to leave their estate to fund scholarships for young doctors training in the field of anaesthesiology and intensive therapy.

True to her ethical and moral ideals, she is a role model for students, co-workers and the entire academic community.

On the 80th anniversary of your birthday, we wish you — AD MULTOS ANNOS!

References:

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