

In memoriam: Professor Julian Liniecki

Professor Julian Liniecki, the doyen of nuclear medicine in Poland, co-founder as well as first and long-term (1998–2010) Editor-in-Chief of *Nuclear Medicine Review – Central & Eastern Europe* passed away on November 25, 2017 at the age of 87.

Julian Liniecki was born on March 13, 1930 in Lodz to a medical family. He obtained his medical degree as *summa cum laude* from the University of Lodz in 1953. Then he completed his postgraduate internship at the Institute of Occupational Medicine in Lodz, where he was rewarded a PhD degree in medical sciences (1959). During this period he also completed his specialization training in Internal Medicine (1956)

Then, Julian Liniecki started his research on the kinetics of the accumulation of radioactive alkaline earth elements, mainly strontium (Sr-90), in bones. The rationale for the choice of this topic was the global environmental contamination with radioactive substances containing in particular strontium (Sr-90) and caesium (Cs-137), which resulted from aerial nuclear tests carried out in the 1950s and 1960s. For the above research, he received the postdoctoral degree (habilitation) in 1967.

He was also a co-organizer (in 1964) of a system of monitoring individual doses of people exposed to ionizing radiation in medicine and industry, which today covers tens of thousands of employees in Poland. While working at the Institute of Occupational Medicine, Julian Liniecki was also one of the initiators of long-term research on occupational exposure to ionizing radiation from radon in the Polish mining industry, the effect of which was, among others, significant reduction of radiation doses for miners. Being the head of the Department of Radiological Protection, he was also Deputy Director of the Institute for many years.

In 1973, Julian Liniecki left the Institute and started working at the Medical Academy of Lodz. Initially, he was the head of the Department of General Pathology (1973–1974), and from 1974 until his retirement in 2000, he headed the Department of Nuclear Medicine. From 1992 to 2000 he was also the Director of the Institute of Radiology.

Professor Julian Liniecki was twice the Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and for three terms the Vice-Rector of the Medical Academy of Lodz (Vice-Rector for University Development – from 1981 to 1982 and Vice-Rector for Science and International Cooperation – from 1990 to 1996).

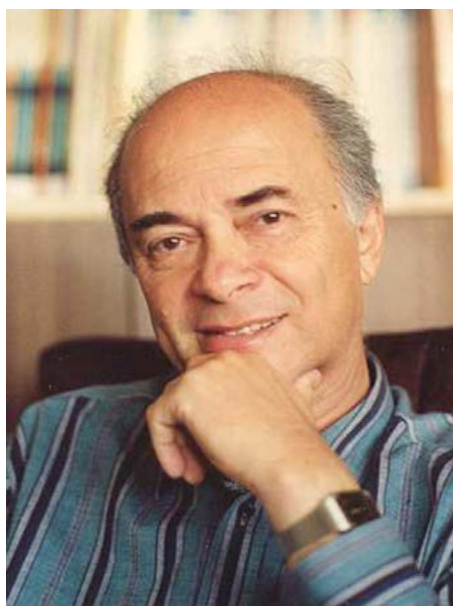


Figure 1. Professor Julian Liniecki

The Department of Nuclear Medicine directed by Professor Liniecki became the leading facility of this type in Poland. Under his leadership, the team of the Department conducted intensive research on a number of modern scintigraphic procedures and radioisotope clearance assays. Most of these methods have been implemented for daily diagnostic practice, including original method for assessing myocardial perfusion.

The research inspired by Professor Liniecki on the synthesis of new radioactive markers resulted in the development and introduction into the diagnostic practice in Poland of several radiopharmaceuticals designed, among others, for the diagnosis of kidney function, bone structure tests, myocardial perfusion assessment and the detection of neoplastic and

inflammatory lesions. Thanks to the efforts of Professor Liniecki, the Radiopharmaceutical Production Unit was established at the Central Clinical Hospital (one of two such facilities in Poland).

During the whole period of work at the Medical Academy of Lodz, Professor Liniecki remained connected to the Institute of Occupational Medicine – he was a member of the Scientific Council, and for several terms – its chairman.

The cooperation of Julian Liniecki with international organizations dates back to 1964, when he became an expert of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (UNSCEAR). In 1964–1966 and 1978–1986 he was the Scientific Secretary of this Committee. In 1979 he was the Head of the Secretariat of UNSCEAR.

From 1969 until his retirement, he was a member of the International Commission on Radiological Protection (ICRP). In 1973 he was elected to the Main Commission of the ICRP. From 1984 to 1992 he was the Chairman of the Committee dealing with protection against ionizing radiation used in medicine, later he became its Vice-Chairman. He was a member and Vice-Chairman of the ICRP Working Group dealing with dose dosimetry from radiopharmaceuticals used in nuclear medicine.

For many years he was also an expert of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and a member of a number of foreign scientific societies.



Figure 2. The Main Commission of the International Commission of Radiological Protection (ICRP). Professor J. Liniecki – first from the right in the second row.

Professor Liniecki's activity in Poland was equally outstanding. He was the Vice-Chairman of the Committee of Medical Physics of the Polish Academy of Sciences, a member of the Atomic Energy Council and Chairman of its Committee on Radiological Protection and Nuclear Safety. For a number of years he was a member of the Sanitary and Epidemiological Council and Chairman of the

Radiation Hygiene Commission. His membership in many scientific societies, including the Polish Society of Nuclear Medicine (he became its honorary member), is also noteworthy.

From 1978 to 1994, Professor Liniecki was a member of the Scientific Board at the Minister of Health and Welfare, and later Vice-Chairman of the Minister of Health Group for the Implementation of EU Law.

Professor Liniecki received many state and departmental awards and distinctions, including the Commander's Cross of the Order of Polonia Restituta and the Maria Curie-Skłodowska Medal (2007).

Professor Liniecki has been an educator of many specialists in the field of nuclear medicine and protection against ionizing radiation; he was a doctoral thesis supervisor of 16 of his co-workers, and 8 of his close associates became professors.

He is the author of many articles and a number of books.

Professor Liniecki was a keen skier, a music lover (he had a several-thousand-item collection of CDs with classical music) and a photographer (there were several exhibitions of his works; a collection of his photograms can be found in the interior of the Department of Nuclear Medicine of the Medical University of Lodz).

We, the students and associates of Professor Liniecki, were lucky to be in the circle of influence of his rich and impressive personality. Even after retiring, he supported us with his extensive knowledge and experience.

Prof. dr hab. med. Jacek Kuśmierek