In Memoriam – Prof. Dr. Georg Hennemann, Internist (1932–2018)

Georg Hennemann, “Jorg,” passed away on December 27, 2018, at the age of 86 years. The Thyroid Group of Erasmus Medical Center in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, once again lost a very important pillar after the decease of Theo J. Visser in the same year. Georg Hennemann, professor of Internal Medicine from 1978 to 1997, was not only an internationally renowned endocrinologist, but also a general internist who was very empathetic towards his patients and well aware of the developments in many areas of internal medicine. His broad interest and knowledge led to fellowships of two Royal Colleges of Physicians (London and Edinburgh), membership of the Advisory Board of the Ciba Foundation for third world countries, and a comparable membership of the WHO. Nationally, he was member of a committee of the Gezondheidsraad (Health Council) advising on iodine supply, radioactive iodine prophylaxis, and iodine prophylaxis in nuclear accidents.

His tutorship of students, residents, and colleagues was of an exceptional level and very much appreciated by all. It was striking to note not only the broad repertoire in which he taught, but also the ample coverage of human aspects. Many have been encouraged by his way of teaching to do medical research.

Since radioactive iodine was the first application of radionuclides in medicine, it is not surprising that he was the very person who founded the Department of Nuclear

Prof. Dr. Georg Hennemann

Medicine at Erasmus Medical Center. Under his leadership, this department has become a top center for patients who had to be examined or treated for a thyroid problem. His basic and clinical research mainly focused on peripheral metabolism and transport of thyroid hormones, including thyroid hormone kinetic studies in various human conditions and the familial dysalbuminemic hyperthyroxinemia syndrome among others. His research was of a very high level and as such acknowledged and crowned. This international recognition as an eminent researcher and expert in the thyroid field resulted in various international editorships.

After his retirement in 1997, he left the Erasmus Medical Center to continue working elsewhere as a “second opinion” consultant in Internal Medicine. He was so dedicated to his patients that he maintained this consultation until a few months before his death. Characteristic of him, he was always available for his patients, day and night, which was true already from his early days as an internist. His patients were always allowed to call him.

Georg Hennemann held many national and international positions in addition to the ones mentioned above. He served as board member of the European Society of Clinical Investigation (ESCI) for many years, as president of the local organizing committees of the 14th annual meeting of the European Thyroid Association (ETA) in Rotterdam in 1984 and the 10th International Thyroid Congress in The Hague in 1991, the Netherlands, and as member of the Executive Committee of the ETA (1977–1981) and later as President of the ETA (1991–1993). Another social function was his long and very active advisorship in the Medical Advisory Board of the Dutch Thyroid

Foundation later named Thyroid Organizations Netherlands from 1989 to 2012. He was awarded many scientific prizes, among others the Von Basedow Award (German Endocrine Society) in 1985, the Paul Starr Award (American Thyroid Association) in 1989, and the ETA Henning Prize in 1997. In 2008, he became honorary member of the ETA.

Georg Hennemann will not only live on in the annals of the Erasmus University Rotterdam, but also in the hearts of friends, PhD students, employees, and, last but not least, patients. On January 4, 2019, we, his family, friends, patients, and former colleagues, have given him, to whom we will keep the best memories with great gratitude, the last honor.

Eric P. Krenning (Rotterdam)

Roel Docter (Rotterdam)

Wouter W. de Herder (Rotterdam)

Robin P. Peeters (Rotterdam)

Wilmar M. Wiersinga (Amsterdam)