OBITUARY

Ingrid Toft (June 2, 1959–April 26, 2014)

It is with great sadness we report that Professor Ingrid Toft, M.D., Ph.D., died on April 26 after fighting cancer for several years. She was 54 years old.

Professor Toft was the current president of the Norwegian Society of Hypertension. She joined the Norwegian Society of Hypertension in 1990, a few years after its founding, and served on the board from 2006. In 2011, she was elected president of the Society.

In 1985, she received her medical degree from the University of Göttingen, Germany. While becoming a research fellow in the Arctic University of Tromsø, she completed her residency in internal medicine and nephrology. She was involved in clinical research focusing on metabolism in patients with type 2 diabetes, hypertension and pre-hypertension with reference to glucose turnover, fatty acid flux, insulin release and sensitivity in relation to body fat, muscle fiber composition and kidney function. She defended her Ph.D. thesis in 1998 and became a board-licensed specialist in internal medicine in 2001 and in nephrology in 2002.

As an avid clinician, she continued combining research and clinical work as consultant at the Department of Nephrology, University Hospital of Northern Norway throughout her life. In 2007, she became Professor of Internal Medicine at the University of Tromsø, and had then already for some years led her own research group. From 2010, she was the head of the Metabolic and Renal Research Group at the Institute of Clinical Medicine, and from 2010 to 2013, she also headed the Department of Nephrology at the University Hospital of Northern Norway.

In the last few years, the group focused on studying cystatin C as a marker of early renal dysfunction and cardiovascular risk, and on the importance of uric acid for changes in renal function, development of cardiovascular disease and myocardial dysfunction, utilizing the rich clinical data and the biobank samples gathered in the longitudinal population-based Tromsø Study. In 2012, she also initiated a clinical trial on the effects of renal sympathetic denervation on blood pressure, glucose metabolism and hemodynamics in patients with severe treatment-resistant hypertension.

Her research was international, and she developed collaborations with the National Hospital, Copenhagen, and Skejby Hospital, Aarhus, Denmark; Uppsala University, Sweden; and the University of Glasgow, UK, to study uric acid in hypertension. Another prominent collaborative project was based on combining her research group’s data with data from the Australian AusDiab study in collaboration with the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Camperdown, Australia, and the University of Sydney, Australia. Overall she authored and co-authored more than 50 international publications.

Professor Toft was a brilliant and engaging teacher. In 2010, she served on the Organizing and Scientific Program Committees for the 20th European Society of Hypertension meeting. During her carrier, she hosted many teaching courses for medical students, doctors in clinical specialization and general practitioners, and she mentored a number of Ph.D. fellows. Her lectures, internationality and vast knowledge also gave significant added value to the biannual national meetings of the Norwegian Society of Hypertension as well as to her service on its board. Professor Toft was survived by her husband and two children.

Eva Gerdts, University of Bergen, Norway
Tonje A. Aksnes, Akershus University Hospital, Oslo, Norway
Michael Hultström, Uppsala University, Sweden
Sverre E. Kjeldsen & Ingrid Os, University of Oslo, Norway