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IN MEMORIAM

Per Bech

January 12th 1942 – May 9th 2018

Obituary

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Photo: Markus Redvall

Per Bech became a specialist in psychiatry in 1978 and was appointed as a professor of clinical psychiatry at Odense University, Denmark, in 1991. His main career was, however, based at his research unit at Mental Health Centre North Zealand. In 2008, he was specially appointed (called) by the University of Copenhagen as professor of Clinical Psychometrics, a discipline established and developed by himself. Per Bech continued extensive research and supervisor activities until his death, and besides his extensive work in psychometrics, he was also devoted to psychopharmacology and new treatment modalities for depression. Per Bech led one of WHO's most important European Collaboration Centres, which focused on depression, stress, quality of life, psychometrics, and diagnostic assessments. His scientific excellence was reflected in numerous prestigious awards.

Per Bech was a very active board member in Scandinavian College of Neuropsychopharmacology (SCNP) in the 1980s–1990s. He was at the 25th SCNP anniversary in 1984 instrumental in gathering the leading psychiatric organizations to a research symposium focusing at psychopharmacological research in Europe. At this symposium, the idea of founding the European College of Neuropsychopharmacology (ECNP) was put forward by Carl-Gerhard Gottfries and Per Bech. Three years later, Per Bech became the Founding President of ECNP, when the College was formally established in Brussels in 1987. Per Bech was later elected as a President of European Psychiatric Association (AEP/EPA – in 1993) and was the driving force for the first AEP congress in Copenhagen in 1994 and 1998.

Per Bech was always a supportive and ambitious academic supervisor, giving room for the individual students – novices as well as experienced. Numerous colleagues gained from Per Bech's unique academic and scientific commitment.

With the death of Per Bech, we have lost a significant personality: a visionary mentor and inspiring guide. His enthusiasm, advice and knowledge will be greatly missed, but his spirit, science and visions will always be part of us.

Gregers Wegener
President, SCNP

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