

Dr António M. Sarmento awarded honorary membership of the Portuguese Society of Nephrology

Fernando Carrera

Editor-in-Chief

The Portuguese Journal of Nephrology and Hypertension is very pleased to inform its readers that the well-known Portuguese nephrologist Dr António M. Sarmento was awarded honorary membership of the Portuguese Society of Nephrology at the March annual congress.

António received this honour during the congress's opening ceremony, where I proudly intended to pay homage to my colleague. Unfortunately I was unable to attend that part of the ceremony and so I instead take this opportunity in the first edition of our journal after the congress to speak some words of praise about António. I feel this is an even more appropriate forum in which to pay tribute to him as the Journal is read by all Portuguese nephrologists and in addition reaches many of his international colleagues who regularly read these pages.

António graduated in Medicine from the medical school of the University of Porto in 1969. He then trained in Internal Medicine and Nephrology at Hospital S. João and Hospital Santo António (Porto) and completed his medical training with a two-year research fellowship in the US. He returned to his beloved *alma mater*, the hospital Santo António, where he worked for several decades until his retirement last year at the age of 65. António reached the top in his hospital career; for several years he was appointed Director of Nephrology and later became Director of the Department of Medicine.

He returned from the US with a dream in his heart – instituting renal transplantation in his hospital. 1981 saw this dream come true when this activity began. The Service soon became one of the busiest and most prestigious in the country, currently performing around a hundred transplants a year. António's tireless work has certainly contributed to the high ranking position Portugal



enjoys in Europe in cadaveric renal transplantation per million inhabitants. He is currently the President of the Portuguese Society of Transplantation.

António M. Sarmento also served the Portuguese Medical Association (*Ordem dos Médicos*) in several positions throughout his career, beginning very early on as the Portuguese representative at the Permanent European Working Group of junior hospital doctors.

The Portuguese Society of Nephrology was another area to which António devoted his time and expertise, right from the beginning of the society's existence. He has been President, Congress

President twice and is currently President of the General Assembly and Associate Editor of this journal.

What many people may not know, especially his international colleagues, is that António served his country for the three years of his compulsory military service (1970-73) at the front line as a medical doctor with the Portuguese army in Africa during Portugal's colonial wars, where he was commended for his heroism.

As many of you know, António and I go way back. We've been close friends for over thirty years, since meeting in the mid-1970s when we both happened to be doing research fellowships in the same hospital in the US. This gives me the opportunity to briefly sketch his personality. Despite his glittering career he remained always a modest man who never sought the spotlight. Everyone who worked with António remarked on his total dedication to his patients both as a physician and a human being. His patients' problems became his own. He extended his dedication to his staff and was always particularly concerned to promote and educate junior colleagues.

In sum, António M. Sarmento is a great man and I feel privileged to be his friend.