

OBITUARY

PROF. WIESŁAW J. SUŁKOWSKI, M.D., PH.D. (1934–2021)

With great sadness we have received news of the demise of Prof. Wiesław Sułkowski, an eminent laryngologist, audiologist, and phoniatician, and an acknowledged “Friend Forever” of the Institute of Physiology and Pathology of Hearing.

Prof. Sułkowski died at age 87 in August 2021. He was a most distinguished expert in his field. He started his outstanding career in military medical centers – he was a scholarship fellow of the Ministry of Health during a residency at the Otolaryngology Clinic of the Military Medical Academy, then head of the laryngology department in the 105th Military Hospital in Żory for 2 years. In the 1970s he was employed in the Nofer Institute of Occupational Medicine in Łódź, where he created the Center of Laryngology, Audiology, and Phoniatics, a leading national diagnostic and certification center for occupational diseases. The center carries out numerous research projects under the 5th EU Framework Program, grants from the Ministry of Science and Education, and others. In 1992, he was named full professor by the President of Poland. In 1998–99 he was a National Consultant in occupational medicine.

Prof. Sułkowski was a research fellow at the Institute of Laryngology and Otology in London, the Institute of Occupational Health in Helsinki, and the Central Institute for the Deaf in St. Louis, focusing on noise-related hearing disorders. In 1990–91, he was an expert for the World Health Organization on hygienic norms and standards in noise and hearing protection. In 1999–2000, he held the post of visiting professor at the Institute of Audiology and Phoniatics at the University of Turin.

He maintained scientific, clinical, organizational, and educational collaboration with the Institute of Physiology and Pathology since its establishment. He was a member of the Institute’s Scientific Council for three terms, and actively participated in national and international scientific conferences organized by the Institute. In 2011, at the 10th European Federation of Audiology Societies Congress, hosted by the Institute, he was given a diploma of honor by Prof. Henryk Skarżyński, the Congress president, for exceptional merit in Polish and European audiology.

Prof. Sułkowski will be remembered as the author of over 300 original research papers, four books (including the 250 page monograph, “Industrial Noise Pollution and Hearing Impairment”, National Library of Medicine, 1980), and eight chapters in academic handbooks. An eminent scientist and practitioner, he was nominated an honorary member of the Polish Society of Otorhinolaryngologists, Head and Neck Surgeons; for many years, he was the president of its Audiology Section, his last term in that office was for 2020–22. He was an honorary member of the Polish Society

of Occupational Medicine and an elected member of the prestigious Collegium Otorhinolaryngologicum Amicitiae Sacrum (CORLAS); he was also a member of the International Commission on Occupational Health (ICOH) and the European Federation of Audiology Societies (EFAS).

Among numerous awards and distinctions, he received the Knight’s Cross of the Order of Polonia Restituta, the Gold Cross of Merit, Diploma of Merit for the development of Polish–American scientific collaboration, the Medal of Honor of the Polish Society of Occupational Medicine for merit in occupational healthcare, the Przemysław Pieniążek Medal of Honor for merit in Polish otolaryngology, and the Medal of Honor of the Institute of Occupational Medicine for scientific research.

As a preeminent Polish expert in otolaryngology, audiology, and phoniatics, Prof. Sułkowski was an example for the young generation of physicians and scientists. His long-time colleagues at the Institute of Physiology and Pathology of Hearing and the Polish Society of Otolaryngologists, Head and Neck Surgeons will remember him most of all as a good friend and kind, warm person.

Thank you, Professor, for the pleasant times together. You will stay forever in our memory.

Prof. Sułkowski was buried at the communal cemetery in Łódź on 26 August 2021.