



JOZEF KESECIOĞLU



Jozef Kesecioğlu is Professor of Intensive Care Medicine at the Department of Intensive Care Medicine, University Medical Centre, Utrecht, the Netherlands. During his career, Jozef has authored around 170 peer-reviewed papers and has been giving lectures at many scientific meetings. His main interests are ethics, intensive care environment and selective decontamination of the digestive tract. He completed his medical education and training in anaesthesia and intensive care at the Medical School of the University of Istanbul, Turkey, where he was later appointed as the head of the intensive care department between 1987-1989. After moving to The Netherlands in 1989, he worked in Erasmus Medical Centre and Sophia Children's Hospital Rotterdam as an anaesthetist and paediatric intensivist, respectively. After that, he moved to the Academic Medical Centre in Amsterdam as the deputy director and became interim director in the same department before taking up his current position in 2002 at University Medical Centre in Utrecht.

He has re-organised the four intensive care units and made one department of it before designing and moving to the new, award-winning, state-of-the-art ICU. In addition, he has been the chair of the Department of Intensive Care Medicine between 2005-2020 and the Division of Anaesthesiology, Intensive Care Medicine and Emergency Medicine between 2013-2019.

An example of his innovative way of thinking is the vision behind the realisation of a new State of the art ICU. This ICU was awarded the so-called "ICU Design Citation Award", which is co-sponsored by the Society of Critical Care Medicine (SCCM), American Association of Critical-Care Nurses (AACN) and American Institute of Architects Academy on Architecture for Health (AIA).

I visited his ICU several times, and I can testify that you will find it challenging to find a more human and patient-centred environment. When you ask Jozef questions about it, you will not find a single screw on the walls and ceilings that he cannot account for!

Anyone who had the chance to work with Jozef can tell you that he is an excellent leader who values human interactions very much in all aspects of his work. This attitude is evident in the way he works at the bedside, the way he manages his teams, and the way he interacts with patients and families. And indeed, his passion for these fields led him to develop essential contributions in the areas of ethics in intensive care.

Jozef was Chairman of the Ethics Section of the European Society of Intensive Care Medicine (ESICM). After finishing his term, he worked in the Executive Committee of ESICM as the elected Chair of the Division of Scientific Affairs. In 2016, he became the President-Elect of ESICM. He was President of ESICM from 2018 to 2020. Currently, he serves on the Executive Committee of ESICM as Past President.

I was lucky to work with Jozef during many of his mandates. When the pandemic started in 2020, Jozef was at the helm of the Society during the most challenging months. Thanks to his resilience, support, and guidance, ESICM established itself as a society at the service of the entire medical community. As he often says, the good sailor adapts the sails to the wind. The Society was able to navigate and adjust its sails quickly thanks to his leadership, to grow in the number of activities delivered and keep everyone safe and connected.

I was lucky to have Jozef as President and as Past President. He has been supportive, and his loyalty, integrity, and commitment to keep his word and maintain his promises inspire anyone working with him.

During his mandate, we built a strong relationship with European institutions, particularly with the European Commission. Testimony of these collaborations is the EU-funded training course we organised to train more than 17000 healthcare workers not regularly working in Intensive Care (C19_SPACE), and Jozef's work for the free movement of intensivists in Europe.

He has trained many intensivists in The Netherlands, and I would not be surprised if he remembers hundreds of anecdotes about each and anyone of them.

Jozef has a phenomenal memory and knowledge of many aspects of life. His attention to detail is impressive and this coupled with a great sense of humour mean you appreciate any conversation with him; even better if over dinner.

I cannot think of a better person to receive the Society's medal this year, and on behalf of the entire ESICM and ICU Community, I am thrilled to congratulate him on this achievement.

MAURIZIO CECCONI

ESICM President