



In Memoriam: Prof. Dr. Akgün Hiçsönmez

Dear EUPSA Members,

The Turkish Association of Pediatric Surgeons announces with great sadness that Prof. Dr. Akgün Hiçsönmez, one of the pioneers of Turkish Pediatric Surgery has passed away on August 14, 2019 at the age of 88. His contributions in the field of Pediatric Surgery over 58 years were extraordinary and he was actively present in the pediatric surgical community as a great teacher, mentor and surgeon till the time of his death.

Dr. Akgün Hiçsönmez got his M.D. degree from Ankara University, Faculty of Medicine in 1955 and went on with specialization in General Surgery. As a general surgeon, in 1961 he moved to USA where he completed his Pediatric Surgery training in Pittsburgh Children's Hospital, Pittsburgh and Le Bonheur

Children's Hospital, Memphis. During his training; he worked with pioneering pediatric surgeons; Dr William Kieseewetter, in Pittsburgh and Dr. Robert G. Allen in Memphis. He also collaborated with the prominent pediatric cardiothoracic surgeon, Dr. Robert Pontius in Pittsburgh. At that time, when open heart surgery was a part of the work of pediatric surgeons, he performed around 25 congenital heart disease operations individually. In 1963 he presented a paper at the Annual Meeting of Lilliputian Surgical Society, in Memphis, which was one of the first Pediatric Surgical meetings in the USA.

As one of the pioneering pediatric surgeons in Turkey, he founded the Department of Pediatric Surgery of Hacettepe University Faculty of Medicine in 1963. Following his visit to Alder Hay Children's Hospital, Liverpool, UK, in 1968, he organized the neonatal surgical unit at Hacettepe Children's Hospital including its operating theatre within. He received his Professor degree at Hacettepe University in 1971.

He served as the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine between 1978 till 1981 at Hacettepe University. Meanwhile he participated in the founding of the Turkish Association of Pediatric Surgeons where he served, as the secretary general and the president between the years 1983 and 1990.

He trained many pediatric surgeons and initiated the development of many Pediatric Surgical Departments all over Turkey.

In 1998 he retired from Hacettepe University and was honored by Prof. Dr. İhsan Doğramacı, the founding Rector of Hacettepe University, with a gold medal as a symbol of gratitude for his superior service.

Dr. Akgün Hiçsönmez also actively participated in integrating the Turkish Association of Pediatric Surgeons internationally. He contributed to the acceptance of Turkish Association of Pediatric Surgery to European Paediatric

Surgeons' Association (EUPSA), was a member of British Association of Paediatric Surgeons (BAPS) and Asian Association of Pediatric Surgeons.

He became the chairman of the Department of Pediatric Surgery in Başkent University, Ankara in 2000 and continued working and lecturing till his last days.

In 2015 he received the WOFAPS Lifetime Achievement Award.

In a study published by Turkishtime he was cited among the '100 Turkish Scientists that influenced Medicine in Turkey'.

He contributed to the book, Progress in Pediatric Surgery, edited by P. P. Rickham. He had over 250 publications in national and international journals.

In addition to his many professional accomplishments, Dr. Akgün Hiçsönmez was happily married to Dr. Gönül Hiçsönmez since 1965, who is a prominent Professor of Pediatric Hematology. They have two successful sons, Burak and Bülent, and two grandchildren Elif and Akgün.

Dr. Akgün Hiçsönmez was a pioneer, a mentor and masterful surgeon that will be greatly missed by his colleagues and patients.

Prof. Dr. Gonca Topuzlu Tekant

On behalf of the Turkish Association of Pediatric Surgeons

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