



WORLD NEUROLOGY

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE WORLD FEDERATION OF NEUROLOGY

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

WFN Activities Update

Welcome to World Neurology. We are glad to be able to share WFN proceedings in this issue. Unfortunately, the worldwide situation in regard to armed conflicts has not improved. In addition, we witnessed the earthquake in the region of Turkey and Syria, and we all want to express our sympathies. We are also aware of the critique that we omit many other disasters that occur in our member societies, and I apologize for not mentioning all of them.

To continue with the bad news, our past president, Prof. Johan Aarli, died March 26, 2023. His merits for the WFN were enormous in regard to the relations with the WHO, the Africa initiative, and the history book on the WFN. His funeral was April 4, 2023, and was attended by past-President Raad Shakir and myself. (Please also see the obituaries and tributes in this issue of WFN).



WOLFGANG GRISOLD

The London office is keeping busy with our agendas. In addition to Laura, Jade, and Carlos, we have help from Yannik and, increasingly Chiu, with our expanding activities and website as well as social media. Kimberly Karlshoej, who served as the strategic and program director and has added much vigor and great ideas for the WFN, had to resign for personal reasons. We thank her for all of her work. We will implement a new structure of a voluntary project-based assistant, called an "internship," which will help with our communication with the global societies such as the WHO and UN ECOSOC under the supervision of Alla Guekht and the London office.

The cooperations with the WHO are invaluable, and the main project presently is the further implementation of the **intersectoral action plan** for epilepsy and other neurological disorders (IGAP). As you may recall, the IGAP was approved at the World Health Assembly (WHA) in



United Nations in Geneva.

Geneva in May 2022, and has a time of 10 years for the duration of the program. It focuses on advocacy, treatment, prevention, research and innovation, and public health awareness, and is meant to implement neurology in all countries of the world and also empower the existing neurological structures. The WHO has outlined the important indicators and is currently working on the further development of the toolkit

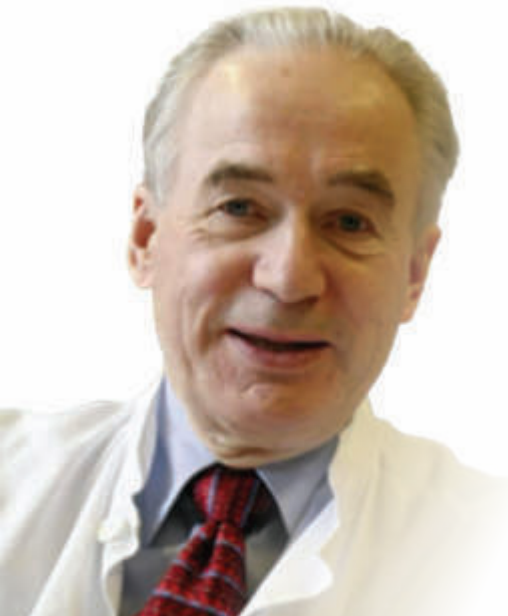
for optimal use. The WFN is proud to say that it is able to support the WHO in this important task as a donor, and we will be involved in the further process of advancing the IGAP. Our recent article on IGAP can be openly accessed here: [https://www.jns-journal.com/article/S0022-510X\(23\)00105-3/fulltext](https://www.jns-journal.com/article/S0022-510X(23)00105-3/fulltext)

One important aspect of our activities is brain health. Despite several

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IN MEMORIAM

Prof. Johan Arild Aarli (1936-2023)



BY RAAD SHAKIR

Johan Arild Aarli, former president of the World Federation of Neurology (WFN), passed away on the March 24, 2023, at the age of 86 years. His name is recognized and admired by neurologists across the world.

Johan graduated from Bergen in 1961, where he also did his training in neurology and basic training in immunology. He obtained his specialist in neurology status in 1970, defended his doctoral thesis in 1972 (muscle antibodies in myasthenia gravis) and was appointed professor in 1977.

Prof. Aarli developed the department of neurology at Bergen University Hospital making it a leading center of neuroimmunological research. He was subsequently appointed dean of the faculty of medicine at Bergen, and chair of the Norwegian Association of Neurology.

In addition to his vast number of scientific writings, he was a pioneer in the field studying the impact of neurobiology on culture and history. He was a prominent member of the Norwegian Neuro-Literary Club, contributing to all their books on neurology, art, and

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WORLD NEUROLOGY

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FROM THE EDITORS

BY STEVEN L. LEWIS, MD, EDITOR,
AND WALTER STRUHAL, MD, CO-EDITOR

We'd like to welcome all readers to the April 2023 issue of *World Neurology*.

This issue includes heartfelt articles and tributes to recently departed neurologists, including the article by Dr. M. Akif Topcuoglu, president of the Turkish Neurological Society, about the devastating Türkiye-Syria earthquakes, with tributes to each of the five neurologists who passed away in the disaster.

This issue also includes obituaries and tributes to the late Prof. Johan Arli, a past-president of the World Federation of Neurology (WFN), written by WFN Past-President Raad Shakir and other colleagues of Prof. Arli from around the globe, including Nils Erik Gilhis, Ole-Björn Tysnes, Christian A. Vedeler, and Amadou Gallo Diop.

In this issue's President's Column, WFN President Dr. Wolfgang Grisold updates us on the many international activities in progress and being planned by the WFN, including the work being done with WHO and the Intersectoral Action Plan (IGAP), and the exciting plans for the World Congress of Neurology



STEVEN L. LEWIS, MD



WALTER STRUHAL, MD

in Montreal this October, including the planning for the Annual Council of Delegates meeting.

Drs. Tissa Wijeratne and David Dodick (Co-Chairs of World Brain Day) as well as Drs. Lewis and Grisold provide a followup report on the plans for this year's World Brain Day 2023, which will be dedicated to "Brain Health and Disability," including collaborations between the WFN, our global regions, national neurologic societies, and the World Federation of Neurorehabilitation. Dr. Wijeratne is also congratulated on receiving the prestigious medal of the Order of Australia.

This issue's History Column, by Dr. Peter J. Koehler, is devoted to an extensive book review on "The Idea of Epilepsy: A Medical and Social History of Epilepsy in

the Modern Era" (1860-2020), by Dr. Simon D. Shorvon.

This issue also features several reports from recent national and international conferences. Kurt Niederkorn, Yong-Jae Kim, Hee-Jung Song, and Alex Razumovsky report on the joint conference of the Korean Society of Neurosonology and the WFN Neurosonology Research Group held in November 2022. Aida Kondybayeva reports on the Fifth International Educational Forum, the Neurology Update in Kazakhstan 2023 that was held in March 2023. Stefan Kiechl and Deidre De Silva report on the World Stroke Congress that occurred in October 2022 in Singapore. Finally, Carlos N. Ketzoian reports on the Second Latin American Course on Neuroepidemiology that was held in Punta del Este, Maldonado, Uruguay, this past March.

In closing, we want to thank all readers for their interest in and attention to *World Neurology* and the chance to report such important updates about neurology and neurologists from around the globe. We sincerely hope many of you are planning on attending the WCN in Montreal in October 2023 in person (for the first time since 2019) or virtually. •



Prof. Wijeratne honored during Australia Day 2023

The World Federation of Neurology (WFN) is pleased to report that Prof. Tissa Wijeratne, OAM MBBS, MD, PhD, FRACP, FRCP, FAAN, FEAN, co-chair of Public Awareness and Advocacy and World Brain Day, was honored during the Australia Day 2023 with the medal of the Order of Australia (OAM). Congratulations to Prof. Wijeratne. •



IN MEMORIAM

Johan A. Aarli: An Inspiring Teacher and Leader of Neurology

BY NILS ERIK GILHUS, OLE-BJØRN TYSNES,
AND CHRISTIAN A. VEDELER

Johan A. Aarli was an inspiring and highly respected neurologist with a worldwide influence. Sadly, he died March 24, 2023, at age of 86 years after a long illness. He made a huge professional impact locally, nationally, and globally. Prof. Aarli was a successful president of the World Federation of Neurology 2005-2009, and a general secretary of the European Association of Neurological Societies 2003-2005.

Prof. Aarli's aim throughout his professional career was to improve the treatment for patients with disorders in

the brain and nervous system. His tools were teaching, research, leadership, and organization of neurologists and neuroservices. He combined clinical education and improvement, research, and innovation. As a WFN president, he was famous for his African initiative. He regarded better services for patients in poor countries as the major challenge for WFN. Furthermore, he was instrumental in building a true global alliance in neurology and neuromedicine with activities on all continents.

Prof. Aarli was the head of the department of neurology at Haukeland University Hospital for nearly 30 years, combined with a professorship at University of Bergen, until he retired in 2006. He built a modern and expansive department with specialized units for neurophysiology, neurorehabilitation, and occupational neurology, and with systematic multiprofessional treatment for well-defined neurological patient groups, such as ALS, epilepsy, multiple sclerosis, and stroke.

A main aim for Prof. Aarli was to combine clinical practice with research and education. His personal research focus was clinical neuroimmunology, and myasthenia gravis in particular. He contributed to the understanding of autoimmune disease mechanisms,

We miss Johan A. Aarli in Bergen and Norway, but his impact is still here. We are sure that this is true also for many of his friends and activities globally. Our warm condolences go to his wife, his five children, and a big family.

and he helped in developing the field internationally through his widely distributed textbook from 1987. His research policy was to combine detailed clinical information with biomarker data from laboratory investigations. As a professor, department head, and university dean, he inspired and supported research in clinical neuroscience relevant for all neurological patient groups, including the development of clinical registries and biobanks.

His ability to lead, to teach, and to build networks stemmed from his sharp intellect combined with his friendly interest in people. His short- and long-term strategies were successful because he worked so well together with colleagues and patients, and with administrators and politicians. He appreciated people, and they appreciated him.

Prof. Aarli was born in Kvinesdal, a small village valley in Southern Norway. Together with his father, he wrote the local history of that valley. He was interested in history and literature, and he was co-founder of the Norwegian Neuroliterature Club. He was open-minded, optimistic, and honorable. He listened and discussed, was a true democrat, but he combined this with an ability to make decisions and see projects through.

We miss Johan A. Aarli in Bergen and Norway, but his impact is still here. We are sure that this is true also for many of his friends and activities globally. Our warm condolences go to his wife, his five children, and a big family. •

From the Department Of Neurology at the Haukeland University Hospital and University of Bergen in Bergen, Norway.

Tribute From Africa to Johan Aarli



BY PROF. AMADOU GALLO DIOP, MD, PHD

When in Africa, definitively consider Johan Aarli as the great and generous man who, as president of WFN, put Africa on the map of world neurology. He met with Prof. Michel Dumas in 2005 at the Sydney World Congress of Neurology (WCN). Prof. Dumas is one of the first French pioneers who installed neurology in Africa, Senegal, in the late 1950s. Prof. Aarli argued that African neurologists could not be absent

in the new global affairs he was leading during his World Federation of Neurology (WFN) presidency. He rapidly cemented it by inviting, for the first time, African neurology leaders to attend a business meeting at the London headquarters in 2006. He generously accepted us and listened to our dreams and goals. He set up the WFN Africa Initiative with robust, sustainable, and efficient programs of training, bursaries, and exchanges.

He traveled to Africa (the first for a WFN president) because he was curious and excited to know us better for more substantial and structured support of neurological sciences in Africa. He endorsed, with respect and high consideration, the slogan we proposed to him: "With Africa; for Africa," which became the WCN's slogan in Marrakech (the wonderful and first WCN in Africa) in 2011. The outcome of Prof. Aarli's "WFN Africa Initiative" is concrete, visible, measurable, and impacting:

1. Four Regional Training Centers "in Africa, for Africa" (Cairo, Cape Town, Dakar, Rabat) receiving four-year and one-year trainees from African countries with priority for the those lacking neurosciences human resources.

Prof. Aarli argued that African neurologists could not be absent in the new global affairs he was leading during his World Federation of Neurology (WFN) presidency. He rapidly cemented it by inviting, for the first time, African neurology leaders to attend a business meeting at the London headquarters in 2006.

It led to training neurologists on site, in the continent, increasing their number and combating the brain drain.

2. Travel bursaries for complementary hyperspecialized training for post-doctoral African fellows to voluntary hosting sites, such as Austria, Germany, France, Italy, Norway (Prof. Aarli's country), and Turkey.
3. Strong support to regional teaching courses (RTCs) with a powerful implication of institutions such as the AAN, EAN, and others.
4. Facilities and bursaries for young African neurologists for attending the WCN and other major neuroscience congresses around the world.
5. The establishment of the African Academy of Neurology (AFAN), in

Dakar in 2010, was a tremendous and historic administration outcome of Johan Aarli's global initiative and legacy.

Definitively, the smiley, generous gentleman Johan Aarli will count a lot in the history of neurology in developing countries, particularly in Africa, from where we send our condolences to his extraordinary wife, Gullburg, who was with him at every WFN event around the world. Also, to his colleagues in Norway and the successive WFN staff all these last years.

Thank you, dear Johan. Africa is grateful to you. God bless you. •

Prof. Amadou Gallo is head of the Dakar WFN Regional Training Center and past WFN trustee (2013-2016)

Joint KSN and WFN NSG Conference

The meeting in Seoul, Korea, explored the use of neurosonology as an essential modality for neurologists.

BY KURT NIEDERKORN, MD, YONG-JAE KIM, MD, PHD, HEE-JUNG SONG, MD, PHD, AND ALEX RAZUMOVSKY, PHD, FAHA, NVS

The Neurosonology Specialty Group (NSG) of the WFN is dedicated to the promotion of science and research as well as of education and training in the field of ultrasonic techniques and its clinical use. Therefore, international cooperation and the dissemination of scientific information within the field of neurosonology is part of NSG WFN activities.

On Nov. 3-5, 2022, a joint conference of the Korean Society of Neurosonology (KSN) and NSG WFN considering clinical applications of carotid duplex, transcranial Doppler and transcranial color-coded duplex utilization in the wide arrays of different aspects of neurology, neurocritical care, and neurosurgery was conducted in Seoul, Korea. Invited speakers included prominent experts from Austria, Egypt, Germany, Japan, Korea, Portugal, Singapore, Switzerland, and the United States. Numerous speakers from Korean medical schools and universities were involved and presented high-quality clinical and research lectures.

A program full of lectures including teaching courses, hands-on sessions, poster sessions, international certification examination, and special interest events covering diverse topics, with networking and social activities, was presented. A special session was dedicated to sonography education where experts from Germany, Korea, and the United States exchanged opinions and presented country-specific approaches to neurosonology and ultrasound education

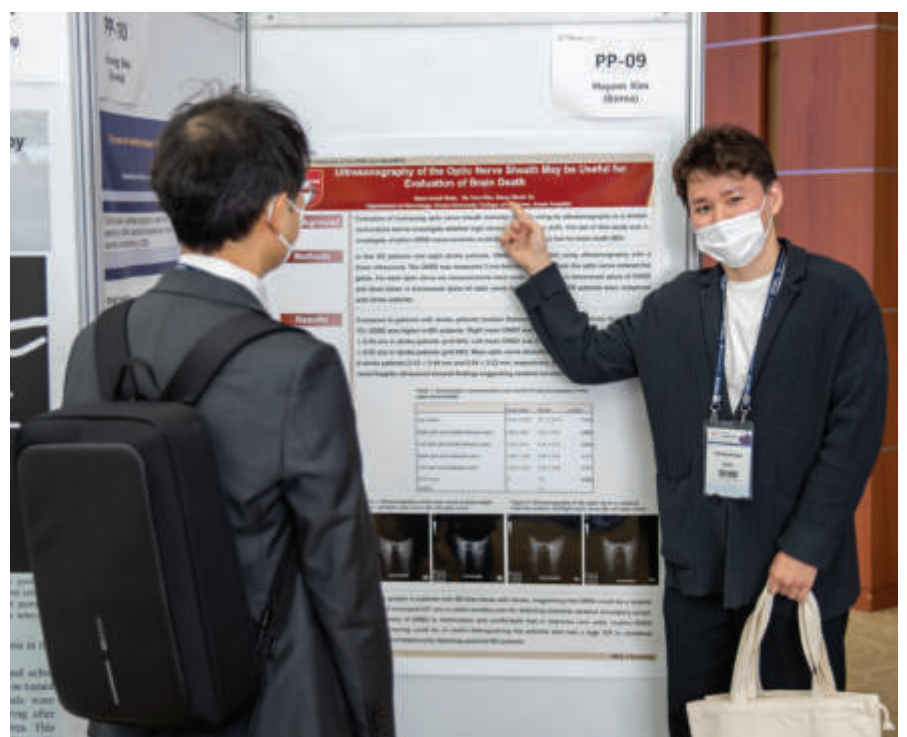
in medical schools. However, the wide application of ultrasound, including neurosonology across many medical specialties, increased portability and decreased cost of ultrasound devices, and enhancement of learning both basic and clinical sciences with ultrasonography will continue to demand appropriate teaching and training on ultrasound in undergraduate medical education.

A special issue of the *Korean Journal of Neurosonology and Neuroimaging (JNN)* published all lectures and presentations (JNN, volume 14, supplement 2, November 2022).

Neurosonology has been developed based on ultrasound diagnosis in cerebrovascular diseases, like ischemic stroke and extracranial and intracranial stenosis, but is currently being applied and used clinically in various fields ranging from diagnosis and monitoring of cerebral vasospasm after subarachnoid hemorrhage and traumatic brain injury, and cerebral degenerative diseases, and to diagnose and follow up on peripheral nerve and muscle diseases.

This Joint KSN and NSG WFN conference will definitely create a better cooperation of neuroscience researchers around the world who are conducting clinical and translational research beyond ultrasound diagnosis. •

Kurt Niederkorn, MD, is professor of neurology and chair of the NSG of the WFN. Yong-Jae Kim, MD, PhD, is professor of neurology and chair of the Korean Society of Neurosonology. Hee-Jung Song, MD, PhD, is president of the Korean Society of Neurosonology. Alex Razumovsky, PhD, FAHA, NVS is secretary of NSG of the WFN.

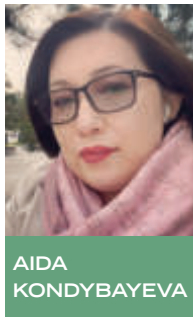


The Fifth International Educational Forum

Neurology Update in Kazakhstan 2023

BY AIDA KONDYBAYEVA, MD, PHD

The Fifth International Educational Forum Neurology Update in Kazakhstan 2023 was held March 10-11, 2023. The forum was held in hybrid mode. With the joint work of the Kazakhstan National Association of Neurologists Neuroscience (KNANN) and the faculty of medicine and health at the al-Farabi Kazakh National University (al-Farabi KazNU). The event was attended by 846 doctors, including neurologists, internists, GPs, rehabilitation specialists,



AIDA
KONDYBAYEVA

and intensive care specialists from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan.

Welcoming speeches to the participants were given by Prof. Saltanat Kamenova, president of KNANN; Prof. Zhanna Kalmataeva, dean of the faculty of medicine and health at al-Farabi KazNU; Aizhan Sadykova, president of the National Medical Association; and Symbat Abzalieva, deputy director of the Higher School of Medicine at al-Farabi KazNU. They noted the special significance of the forum for all practitioners who took part in this event.



The speakers of the Forum were Prof. Valery Feigin (New Zealand), Prof. Natan M. Bornstein (Israel), Prof. Adnan Siddiqui (U.S.), Prof. Afshin Divani (U.S.), Prof. Mesoud Ashina (Denmark), Prof. Tatyana Negrish (Ukraine), Prof. Aksel Siva (Turkey), as well as doctors from Kazakhstan: Saltanat Kamenova, Bagyzhan Syzdykova, Korlan Saduakasova, Tatiana Kaimak, Maksharip Martazanov, Aigul Akimniyazova, Gulnar Kabdrakhmanova, Karlygash Kuzhibaeva, and Aida Kondybaeva.

Current issues of neurological diseases were discussed, including autism, migraine, multiple sclerosis, myasthenia gravis, pain, and stroke.

Within the framework of the forum, there was a master class titled,

“Evidence-Based Neurology. How to Search for Information to Answer Specific Clinical Questions, Interpret and Critically Evaluate Scientific Evidence.” This training course was organized for young doctors and discussed the basic concepts and tools of evidence-based medicine, as well as their application in clinical and scientific practice. The course was conducted by doctors Maurizio Leone (Italy), Luca Vignatelli (Italy), Katina Aleksovska (Macedonia), and Teia Kobulashvili (Austria). •

Aida Kondybayeva, MD, PhD, is a neurologist and chair of the Educational Committee at Kazakhstan National Association of Neurologists “Neuroscience” Institutional Delegate of the European Academy of Neurology from Kazakhstan.

WORLD FEDERATION OF NEUROLOGY

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Earthquake Disaster and Turkish Neurology

BY PROF. M. AKIF TOPCUOGLU

On Feb. 6, 2023, two major earthquakes occurred, nine hours apart, with epicenters in Gaziantep and Kahramanmaraş in Türkiye. In this disaster, called the 2023 Türkiye-Syria earthquakes,” nearly 43,000 people died in Türkiye and 6,000 people in Syria. A total of approximately 150,000 people were injured, of which 120,000 were in Türkiye. It is estimated that at least 3 million people migrated from the affected zone to different cities after the earthquakes. Aftershocks still continue and pose a serious risk for rescue teams. Earthquakes affected 13.5 million Turkish people in an area of 1,000 square kilometers. This refers to about one-seventh of Türkiye’s population.

From the first news of the catastrophe, both state institutions, organizations,

and volunteers rushed to the earthquake zone. Especially in Hatay and Maraş, there was such a severe destruction that the emergency response teams were also affected. The frigid, snowy weather and the fact that people were caught asleep increased our loss and made emergent intervention difficult. Significant assistance came from many countries around the world. As a result of these efforts, many lives were saved in a short time, and life was attempted to be restored as fast as possible. This effort still continues at the highest level.

Turkish medicine intervened in the earthquake with great effort. Although there was a short-term overcapacity in some regions, all of the injured could be taken to hospitals, and all necessary interventions could be made with the system created all over the country. The Turkish Neurological Society provided

containers, heaters, portable beds, and generators in line with the demands of the regional neurology clinics and within its capacity. Our society is going to continue its academic and physical aids so that life in the region can be re-established as soon as possible.

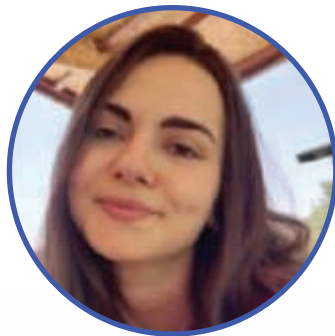
Unfortunately, nearly 100 doctors died in the earthquake, and five of them were neurologists. These friends passed away in the most hopeful and productive period of their lives. Our sadness is endless and unbearable. We have written this article to share this disaster experienced with the neurologists all over the world. As the Turkish Neurological Society, we want to keep the memory of these five colleagues alive. We will miss them very much. •

Prof. M. Akif Topcuoglu is President of the Turkish Neurological Society.



Bessam Ezelsoy, MD

Bessam Ezelsoy was born in 1961 in Hatay. He graduated from Istanbul University Faculty of Medicine in 1985. He completed his neurology residency training at Bakırköy/Istanbul Sadi Konuk Training and Research Hospital in 1994. He was working as a neurologist at Hatay Training and Research Hospital. He was recognized by his patients as a warm, tolerant, and understanding doctor. In 2015, he was selected as the doctor of the year in Hatay. We unfortunately lost Dr. Ezelsoy and his beloved wife in the 7.7 magnitude earthquake that occurred in our country on Feb. 6, 2023. Dr. Ezelsoy’s two children survived the earthquake. That was our only consolation.



Eda Kahiloğulları Aşkar, MD

Eda Kahiloğulları Aşkar was born in 1995 in Antakya. She was continuing her neurology residency training at Mustafa Kemal University, Tayfur Sökmen Medical Faculty, Department of Neurology. Colleagues remember her for her kindness, helpfulness, sincere smile, and hard work. Unfortunately, she passed away in the earthquake with her beloved husband. She loved neurology very much, and there is no doubt that she would have been a very good neurologist.



Bircan Turunc, MD

Bircan Turunc was born in Antakya in 1992. She graduated from Maltepe University Faculty of Medicine in 2019. Her friends describe her as “beautiful on the outside but more beautiful inside.” We lost our angelic and devoted friend and cat guardian, Dr. Turunc, at a very young age. Had she lived, we are sure that she would have touched many patients and become a very successful physician and neurologist. Unfortunately, we live in a time when words become meaningless in Türkiye.



Murat Güntel, MD

Murat Güntel was born in 1984. He graduated from Mersin University Faculty of Medicine in 2009. He completed his neurology residency training at Hatay Mustafa Kemal University Faculty of Medicine in 2015. Between 2015 and 2016, he worked as a neurologist at Elazığ Training and Research Hospital. He had been working as an assistant professor at Mustafa Kemal University Tayfur Sökmen Faculty of Medicine, Department of Neurology since then. He was a prolific academic with numerous case and research articles in international journals. He was described by his colleagues as a friendly, hardworking, kind, and wonderful person. He was loved by his students and patients. He died in the earthquake disaster with his beloved mother and two cats.



Tülay Yücel, MD

Tülay Yücel was born in 1959 in İzmir. She graduated from Ankara University Faculty of Medicine in 1984. She completed her neurology specialization training at Ankara Dışkapı Yıldırım Beyazıt Training and Research Hospital in 1991. Dr. Yücel was working as a retired-freelance neurologist. She, her daughter-in-law, and 6-month-old granddaughter lost their lives in the earthquake in Hatay.