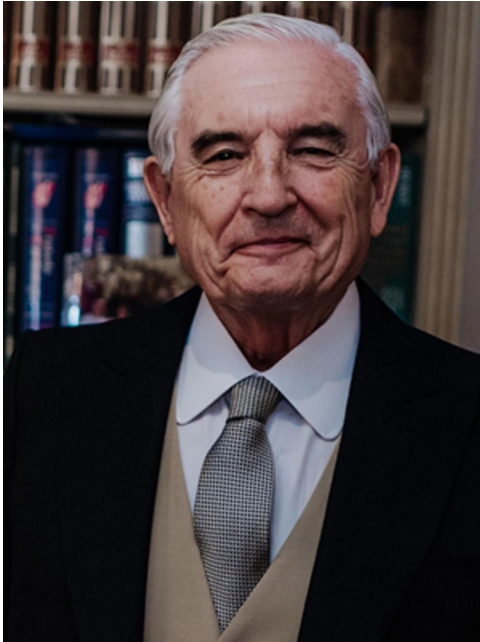


In memoriam

Alfredo Llovet Verdugo



Thursday 2 April 2020 was a sad day for the old residents of Hospital 12 de Octubre. Our tutor and cardiology expert, Alfredo Llovet Verdugo, died, in Madrid.

Alfredo Llovet Verdugo's life story could summarize the history and development of cardiology in Spain. He graduated in medicine from *Universidad Complutense de Madrid* in 1969, completed his residency at the old *Instituto Nacional de Cardiología* in Madrid, where he started work as a consultant and then went on to train in cardiac catheterization and angiography at the Texas Heart Institute in Houston, USA.

On his return to Spain in 1977, he began working, as a cardiologist, at *Hospital 12 de Octubre* in Madrid, a post he kept for 33 years until his retirement. His initial interest lay in congenital heart disease, greatly influenced by Dr. Angelini, with whom he always had a close friendship. The early years of his career were focused on the study of complex congenital heart disease; along with the Texas Heart Institute he wrote several important publications in this field.

Later, and coinciding with the opening of the catheterization unit at *Hospital 12 de Octubre*, his activity concentrated on interventional cardiology and he became director of the unit between the 1991 and 1993, before finally focusing on clinical care. Between 1990 and 2001 he was head of cardiology at *Hospital de San Rafael* in Madrid and combined his clinical work with teaching, as demonstrated by his being appointed member of the *Hospital 12 de Octubre* Teaching Commission and clinical faculty member

for cardiology at *Universidad Complutense de Madrid* faculty of medicine. As cofounder and the driving force of the *Sociedad Castellana de Cardiología*, he was an active participant in organizing their meetings and courses. During the later years of this career, he led the International Registry of Aortic Dissection (IRAD) in Spain and contributed to important publications in international journals.

While he was always enthusiastic, optimistic and cheerful, his residents will remember him for his dedication to cardiology teaching, championing for each and every one of us. He always listened to our conflicts with a wry smile, a twinkle in his eye, and a subtle irony, mediating when necessary, defending the underdog when warranted and celebrating our successes like a father.

He never went after fame or glory. "The patients come first"; they were always his priority, as well as excellence of care based on knowledge, hard work and tenacity. We all knew where to find him: in his office on the fifth floor, with the "baby residents", the rotating trainees, and everyone who wanted to learn from him.

His love for his family pervaded. Beloved husband to Carmen and proud father to his children (Alfredo, Patricia, Carmen, Josito, Juan Francisco and Leonor) – we felt like we had always known them from their photo in his office and the stories he would tell us. We sometimes felt a shred of jealousy for his affection and devotion to them, competing with them for his time and attention.

We were blessed with his sweet, funny conversations, his overwhelming enthusiasm and his tremendous humanity, and he also gave us some expressions that now form part of our own private language ("you are the best", "this one knows it all!", "you have to maintain a sense of wonder", "you do whatever you want with me, I'm like your grandmother", the list goes on...).

It was a bitter and painful goodbye, without getting to say goodbye. Solitary, silent, irrational. Alfredo left us to allow life to continue. Stoic, calm, and confident, while the rest of us felt that it was not his time, not yet. For those of us who had the privilege of being his residents at *Hospital 12 de Octubre*, these have been some very dark days, saddened by not having been able to be with him or help him during his last moments. He believed in every one of us and that helped us to grow and improve every day and to feel part of the group that we created. He was proud to be our tutor.

Alfredo, today, wherever you may be, thank you. You can be proud that the cardiology that we practice has in it a part of you.

Leire Unzué^a and Adolfo Fontenla,^b on behalf of the old residents of Hospital Universitario 12 de Octubre, Madrid

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