

From the International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics: A life in a minute

Cartagena is a city full of music that flows in the warm breeze of the Caribbean sea. However, in a theater full of people attending the Latin America Congress of Gerontology and Geriatrics, the sound was kept away by a deep silence. In many wet eyes a man's life passed through. His academic positions, his 10 years as President of the Sociedad Española de Geriatria and lectures in the Hospital Universitario de Getafe. In many wet eyes a man's life passed through. His several trips to Latin America where he preached more than taught geriatrics. His many pupils live in several countries in this continent; from the Caribbean sea to the Pampas, from the Cordillera to the Atlantic. A hundred or more crossed an ocean to be trained in his home land, Spain.

I myself did not have the benefit of joining him on his visits to patients, but had the opportunity to know his solidarity. He was Secretary to the European Region of IAGG and was involved in the organization of the European Region IAGG Congress in Barcelona. The congress was over, but a short note was left in his room. A Latin American friend was sick. Neither the hotel staff nor an emergency

service had been contacted. The one who was sick felt that a note to the right person would be better. The congress health insurance had expired, but not his commitment to the unfit, young or old. He accompanied the colleague to hospital and guaranteed all expenses should be paid by the congress funds. It was not too much, however he only finished his duties in Barcelona next day when the plane took off heading for Brazil.

Why a man who devoted his professional life to the care of the elderly was not given the chance to live a long life? This is beyond our comprehension.

In many Latin Americans' wet eyes a man's life passed through. An intelligent, energetic and joyful man.

In Cartagena there was sadness in our hearts, but also gratitude and tender memories of our friend Paco.

Renato Maia Guimarães

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