



OBITUARY: Prof. Barry J Allen, PhD, DSc, AO

The International Organization for Medical Physics (IOMP) informs with great sadness that Prof. Barry J Allen, President of IOMP from 2006 to 2009 passed away on 21 November 2019 in his home in Australia.

Prof. Barry J Allen graduated MSc in nuclear physics at the University of Melbourne. After this he joined the Australian Atomic Energy Commission (AAEC) at Lucas Heights in 1963. His work was mainly associated with Radiotherapy research, but also with research in other areas of physics applied to medicine. He convened the Fourth International Symposium for Neutron Capture Therapy in Sydney in 1990. He designed the first human Body Protein Monitor (BPM) in Australia. He commenced the Targeted Alpha Therapy (TAT) project in 1994 at St George Hospital, and was the designer and Study Director of two world first trials of intralesional and systemic targeted alpha therapy for metastatic melanoma. He was Director of the Centre for Experimental Radiation Oncology at St George Hospital in Sydney. He has published over 330 papers in neutron and biomedical physics. In 2011 he co-authored the text book “Biomedical Physics in Radiotherapy for Cancer” with Drs. Eva Bezak and Loredana Marcu.

Prof. Barry J Allen has been awarded Fellowships by the Australian Institute of Physics (1972), the American Physical Society (1981), the Australasian College Physical Scientists & Engineers in Medicine (1992), the Institute of Physics (1999), the International Organization for Medical Physics (2013). Prof. Barry J Allen has been elected President of the International Society for Neutron Capture Therapy (1988), the Australasian College of Physical Scientists & Engineers in Medicine (1998) the International Organization for Medical Physics (2003).

Prof. Barry J Allen had very active international work on the global development of medical physics. He is one of the Founders of the Asia-Pacific Federation of Medical Physics (AFOMP), being its first Vice-President and second President. In this position one of his activities was the facilitation of the formation of the Vietnamese Association for Medical Physics. In 2003 he was President of the World Congress in Medical Physics and Biomedical Engineering in Sydney. In the same year he was elected Vice-President (President-Elect) of IOMP. He was President of IOMP in the period 2006 to 2009. During this period, among many other activities, he supported the formation of another Regional Organisation of IOMP – the Middle East Federation of Medical Physics (MEFOMP). From 2009 to 2012 Prof. Barry J Allen was President of the International Union of Physical & Engineering Sciences in Medicine (IUPESM). In this position, among many other activities, he was the inaugural Chair of the Health Technology Task Group, which aims at assisting developing countries in the implementation of appropriate medical technologies.

At the 50th Anniversary Conference on Medical Physics (Brighton, UK, 2013) Prof. Barry J Allen was included in the list of 50 outstanding medical physicists over the past 50 years.

In 2015 Prof. Barry J Allen was appointed an Officer in the Order of Australia award in the Queen’s Birthday honours list. The citation read “for distinguished service to biomedical physics, particularly to radiation oncology and the development of innovative methods of cancer treatment, and to international professional scientific organisations”.

We worked with Prof. Barry J Allen for a number of years and have met him and his wife Cynthia many times. Barry was an excellent person with great sense of humour, he was professional of the highest calibre and an outstanding leader. Prof. Barry J Allen will be missed by our whole professional community!

On behalf of the IOMP Executive Committee we are sending deepest condolences to the family of Prof. Barry J Allen.

On behalf of the IOMP Executive Committee we express heartfelt thanks to Prof. Barry J Allen for his enormous support for the development of medical physics – his legacy will be forever with our profession!

Prof. Slavik Tabakov, PhD, Dr h.c., FIPEM, FIOMP
IOMP Past-President, IUPESM Vice-President

Prof. Madan Rehani, PhD, FIOMP
IOMP President