Obituary

Vladimir Albert Lovric

MB BS, FRCPA, DipClinPath, GradDipPH, FRCPath, FRACP

Vladimir Albert Lovric was a pioneering haematologist whose innovations in component separation and anticoagulant solutions fundamentally altered blood banking in Australia.

Lovric was born in Belgrade in the former Yugoslavia on 14 June 1926. He entered military service in the (Partisan) People's Liberation Army in 1944 and was decorated for wartime bravery. He completed 4 years of medicine in Belgrade before emigrating in 1951 to Australia, where he joined the University of Sydney medical course, graduating in 1956.

After 2 years at Royal Newcastle Hospital, he returned to Sydney as a resident medical officer, registrar and then staff haematologist at Royal Alexandra Hospital for Children in Camperdown, later becoming head of department. He spent 17 years there. As well as clinical duties, he undertook research into anaemia, haemophilia, leukaemia and sickle cell anaemia, publishing extensively.

Lovric received a Diploma in Clinical Pathology in 1962 and a Graduate Diploma in Public Health in 1974, both from the University of Sydney. In 1967, he became a Fellow of the Royal College of Pathologists and, in 1974, a Fellow of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians.

In 1975, he was appointed Deputy Director of the Sydney Blood Bank and Director of Country Blood Banks NSW. He developed new methods of blood use and storage — his quadruple-bag system, the Lovric–Wisdom circle pack, allowed for better component collection, especially of plasma for immunoglobulins, clotting factors and platelets. In 1998, he received the Distinguished Service Medal of the Australian Red Cross.

He shared a passion for Indonesia with his wife Barbara, whose work focused on medical anthropology in Bali. He served as secretary-general of the Asian-Pacific division of the International Society of Haematology from 1975 until 1982, and undertook numerous consultancies and teaching assignments for the World Health Organization in South-East Asia and Geneva. For more than 15 years, he ran courses in transfusion techniques in various Indonesian cities. He also taught in Thailand, the Philippines and Korea.

Until his death, he remained active in the Haematology Society of Australia and New Zealand, and in the Australian and New Zealand Society of Blood Transfusion.

From the 1970s, "Doc" was a well-known figure at the Gordon's Bay Amateur Fishing Club. He also took pleasure in classical music, theatre and literature.

Vladimir Lovric died on 14 October 2015 and is survived by his children Michelle, Kathryn, Jenny, Melissa and Michael. ■

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