



With deep sadness, we have to announce that on Thursday January 11, 2018, prof. dr. Manfred Schmitt passed away at a hospital in Munich at the age of 70. He was diagnosed with advanced gastric cancer in November 2016. After he underwent extensive surgery and chemotherapy, and experienced an initial favorable response to therapy, he finally lost his battle against this devastating disease.

Prof. Schmitt was born in Norderham, Germany, in 1947. After his study of biology and chemistry and subsequent graduation in biochemistry (*magna cum laude*), followed by a 3-year assistant professorship at the University of Mainz, he went for 2 years to the Scripps Clinic in La Jolla, California, as a visiting researcher. After returning to Europe and fulfilling a 4-year associate professorship at the University of Bern, in 1987, he was appointed director of the Clinical Research Unit, Klinikum rechts der Isar, at the Technical University of Munich (TUM). In 1993 he was appointed full professor of Experimental Gynecology at TUM. He was a co-founder of the biotech company Willex AG, Munich. After his retirement from university in 2015, he became co-founder and Chief Scientific Officer (CSO) of the company Therawis Diagnostics GmbH, Munich.

Prof. Schmitt has been editor of five books and organizer of over 30 (inter)national scientific conferences. He has been chair of the Pathobiology Group of the European Organisation for Research and Treatment of Cancer (EORTC, Brussels) from 2003 to 2009. He was a very inspiring chairman and established a wealth of collaborations between various members of the group. Prof. Schmitt's major research interest was focused on the spread and metastasis of tumors in the field of gynecological oncology. He discovered and investigated several new biomarkers for cancer and therapeutic response markers. Among many other scientific achievements, he was the driving force behind the introduction of urokinase (uPA) and its inhibitor PAI-1 into the clinic. He authored over 400 scientific publications, underlining his significant contributions to science.

He leaves behind his wife Elisabeth, daughter Michaela with husband Fabian, and two grandchildren Amelia and Christian.

We, as members of the Pathobiology Group, have lost a dear friend. The scientific community has lost an inspiring and visionary scientist, with an unselfish personality. A memorial ceremony will be held in prof. Schmitt's honor at the Ostfriedhof (Krematorium) in Munich on Monday, January 22nd at 1:00 p.m.

Prof. dr. John Foekens & prof. dr. Fred Sweep