

OBITUARY

In memoriam: Anthony Molyneux Meyers

Professor Anthony Molyneux Meyers (“Tony” as he was fondly called by all who knew him), a pioneer in nephrology in South Africa and a past president of the African Association of Nephrology, died on 24 September 2022 at the age of 89. Tony Meyers had a long and distinguished career as a physician and nephrologist, and also as an educator, having been a pioneer in many aspects of nephrology and especially in haemodialysis and kidney transplantation in South Africa. He was a member of the team that carried out the first kidney transplant in South Africa in 1967.

Tony was born on 13 March 1933 and matriculated at St John’s College, Johannesburg in 1951. He studied at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) and achieved his medical degree (MBBCh) in 1960. He undertook postgraduate studies at Wits and clinical training at Baragwanath and Johannesburg hospitals between 1963–1966, was awarded the Fellowship of the College of Physicians in 1965 and received the Fellowship of the Royal College of Physicians in 1997. He headed the Division of Nephrology for many years and was appointed Chief Physician and Professor and Head of Nephrology at the Johannesburg Hospital and University of the Witwatersrand from 1997–2001, subsequently being awarded the title of professor emeritus. Following retirement, he worked part-time as a consultant in nephrology at the Charlotte Maxeke Johannesburg Academic Hospital from 2002–2013 and in private nephrology practice at the Wits Donald Gordon Medical Centre. Having established nephrology services at Klerksdorp Hospital in 1993, he was deeply committed to its success, maintaining regular consultant visits until 2018.

Tony Meyers was a founding member of the National Kidney Foundation of South Africa, in 1967, and remained a member of the board since 1968, being chairman of the board of directors of the foundation from 2006–2022 and serving energetically in this position until his death.



Anthony Molyneux Meyers, 1933–2022.

He was a member of South African Renal Society since its inception and served as president for two terms (in 1971–72 and 1979–81). In addition, he was a member of the Southern African Transplantation Society and also served as its president for two terms.

He was also a founding member of the Renal Care Society of South Africa, in 1975. Tony served as president of the African Association of Nephrology in 1997–99 and was a member of the Council of the International Society of Nephrology from 1999–2005.

He contributed extensively to academia, with urolithiasis as a major research interest, establishing a multidisciplinary Stone Clinic, and carrying out cutting-edge stone research with several publications, master’s and doctoral degrees emanating from this work. He visited the Departments of Nephrology and Experimental Orthopaedics at the Mayo Clinic in the United States as a research scientist in 1973 and was invited as a guest speaker to Johns Hopkins Hospital in 1984 and to the Taiwanese Transplantation Society Congress in Taipei in 1987, followed by a lecture tour of Taiwanese universities. He

served on the editorial board of the South African Journal of Infectious Diseases and as an editorial advisory board member for Medicine International. He served also as a reviewer for numerous journals around the world, while authoring or co-authoring more than 150 full papers in both national and international publications.

Tony Meyers was a teacher and mentor to numerous physicians and nephrologists, who all remember his role in their lives with gratitude, both as a teacher and a friend. I was personally fortunate to undertake a transplant fellowship at Wits under Tony's supervision, and we maintained a long friendship thereafter. The many students he mentored included those in the basic sciences, surgery, pharmaceuticals and nephrology. He served as an examiner of both undergraduates and postgraduates, including internally at Wits as well as externally at the various South African medical schools, and for the Colleges of Medicine of South Africa.

He served energetically on numerous committees at his institution and nationally, including as chairman of the Johannesburg Hospital Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee (1989–2001), the Transvaal Provincial Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee (1984–1994), the Urology and Nephrology MRC Advisory Subcommittee, the Audit Subcommittee of the Pharmacy Committee, and the SAIMR Liaison Committee. In addition, he participated actively on numerous hospital and faculty committees.

Tony engaged with great enthusiasm and energy in the many aspects of medicine and nephrology and continued to contribute unflaggingly to academic medicine long after his retirement; in fact, he had only "retired" from his official hospital and university positions and continued to give talks, lectures and attend conferences! He made numerous appearances on radio and television to promote kidney health and awareness and was an invited speaker at South African Medical Association (SAMA) events and at the South African Nephrology Association. His continuing community engagement was recognised by the SAMA/Bonitas House Call Award for Community Work in 2014. He joined the Civil Aviation Authority as a member of the Aeromedical Committee in 2018 and was a highly respected specialist who was consulted widely on medical aspects of aviation.

Wits awarded him a Doctorate in Medicine in 2020 on a topic that he was passionate about – kidney stones. I was honoured and humbled to serve as the supervisor of his doctoral degree. Most recently, he undertook the mammoth task of recording the history of nephrology in South Africa.

Tony was an ardent mountaineer, having climbed several

high mountains, including Kilimanjaro in Kenya and Anapurna (the highest peak in the range at 8091 m) in Nepal. With the passage of time, he confined himself to hiking in the Drakensberg mountains. As a wildlife enthusiast, he spent much time in the Kruger and other national parks. Travel was another passion, and he travelled extensively in South Africa and abroad.

Tony is survived by his wife Jennifer, sons Kevin, Stephen, Neville and Bruce, daughters-in-law Shiralee, Marie-Anne, Megan and Julie, eight grandchildren and two great grandchildren. He will be greatly missed by family, friends and colleagues, who will remember him as a warm-hearted, hospitable and enthusiastic family man and friend, who maintained his interest in nephrology and medicine all his days.

Acknowledgments

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