

## OBITUARY

### BARBARA FRISTOE PROWANT: 1953–2009

It is with great sadness that we write this piece about our long-time colleague, Barbara Prowant. While the opening ceremony of the 29th Annual Dialysis Conference (7 March 2009) was in progress in Houston, Texas, Barbara Prowant, MS, RN, CNN, one of the conference founders, died peacefully at home at the age of 55 years after a prolonged fight with cancer.

Barbara Prowant's contributions to the field of nephrology, especially to peritoneal dialysis, made her one of the most well-known and highly respected nephrology nurses in the world. In her nearly 30 years as a nephrology nurse she had great impact on patient care, education, and the advancement of knowledge through clinical research. Her publications, presentations, and editing efforts were a monumental achievement, for her and for the Nephrology Division, the Department of Medicine, and the University of Missouri.

Her Bachelor of Science degree in nursing (*magna cum laude*) was awarded by the Union College in Lincoln, Nebraska, and her Master of Science degree in nursing was awarded by the University of Missouri in 1989. She was certified as a nephrology nurse in 1988 and as a peritoneal dialysis nurse in 1989.

Barbara joined the Nephrology Division at the University of Missouri Health Sciences Center in 1977 as the Coordinator of the CAPD program. Since 1979, she has served as a Research Associate and coordinated clinical research activities in the Division of Nephrology. Many of the nephrology fellows and faculty learned how to do high quality clinical research, how to analyze data, and how to write abstracts and papers from her. She also encouraged and mentored many nurses to participate in clinical research. She was the principal investigator of five grants and a co-investigator of two other grants.

Barbara served on the Planning Committee of the Annual Dialysis Conference since its inception in 1981 and had the major responsibility for the nursing components

of the program. She served as Co-Chair of the General Session at the Annual Dialysis Conference also since 1981.

Since the University of Missouri was only the second clinical center to offer CAPD (starting in 1977), Barbara helped pioneer some of the early nursing procedures for the therapy. She prepared procedure manuals (guidelines) for peritoneal dialysis nurses for the University of Missouri and many national and international organizations. She was invited to lecture all over the world at meetings and centers as "the leading world expert" in CAPD nursing techniques.

Her publications include over 160 abstracts, 140 papers, 14 book chapters, 2 electronic papers, 15 continuing educational programs, 8 editorials, 5 letters to editors, 7 book reviews, 3 patient education publications,



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and 40 news articles. She was co-editor of the *Nephrology Nursing Standards of Practice and Guidelines for Care* published in 2005. Barbara made over 260 presentations and chaired 48 sessions at national and international meetings. She had over 21 editorial responsibilities, including serving as Associate Editor of *Peritoneal Dialysis International*, Co-Editor of *Advances in Peritoneal Dialysis*, and Consulting Editor of *Hemodialysis International*.

Barbara had over 10 awards to her credit. One of the most prestigious of these was the 1995 Maher Award from the International Society for Peritoneal Dialysis for contributions to peritoneal dialysis. She is the only nurse to have received this award. She also received the Ron Brady Memorial Award for Excellence in Volunteer Leadership in 1998 and the Nephrology Nurse Educator Award in April 2009 from the American Nephrology Nurses' Association.

Barbara was active in 10 professional organizations. She was a cofounder and the first president of the Central Missouri Chapter of the American Nephrology Nurses' Association and served as treasurer of the ANNA National Board of Directors. She served on the board of the Nephrology Nursing Certification Commission for many years. She served in an advisory capacity for many boards and agencies and was a member of the Technical Expert Panel for the Centers of Medicare and Medicaid Services, End Stage Renal Disease Clinical Performance Measures.

A very important role for Barbara involved serving as the Nursing Advisor for the NIH National CAPD Registry from 1981 to 1988. The University of Missouri was the Clinical Coordinating Center for the Registry, which registered nearly 20 000 patients on CAPD at 400 centers.

Barbara leaves behind her husband Leonard, two children, Greg, who has a Mechanical Engineering degree from the Mizzou, and Lori, an elementary school teacher. Her personal life was just as busy, full, and rewarding as her professional accomplishments. She was active in her church and volunteered in various capacities, including church clerk. She had many hobbies and always took time to spend the weekends outdoors to enjoy her love and passion: wildflowers. She also loved bird-watching, hiking, and gardening. Indoors, she found it relaxing to do needlepoint and enjoyed knitting, crocheting, scrapbooking, and table tennis.

Barbara touched and influenced so many lives, both personally and professionally. Her death leaves a big void among those that were fortunate enough to know her. We will miss her very much.

The organizers of the Annual Dialysis Conference have named the annual nursing award the "Barbara Prowant Lifetime Achievement Award in Nursing." In addition, the "Barbara Prowant Scholarship" has been established to promote nursing education and research. For more information contact Elaine Rogers at 573-882-9973 or by e-mail at [rogers@health.missouri.edu](mailto:rogers@health.missouri.edu)

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