

## **Dr Charles Jonathan Mortiboy Poole FRCP**

My friend and colleague, Jon, died after from cerebral lymphoma on 10 July 2020. He was the only son of Leslie Poole, a noted ceramicist and inventor, and of Gwyndolene Mortiboy Poole *née* Smith.

Following his birth, the family moved from Birmingham to North London, where Jon received his education. A prizeman of Westminster Medical School, Jon (as he was always known), after an MD in neuroendocrinology, elected for occupational medicine. He commenced his early career in industry at British Steel and Rover, moving to Dudley & Walsall NHS Trust in the 1980s. But despite an energetic service to staff, local government and the manufacturing concerns of the Black Country, as well as a prodigious output of original research, the Trust dispensed with his services in 2013, citing to the bemusement of his colleagues in this heavily industrial area, that his offices were “not compatible with the financial goals of the health authority”.

This phase of his life was, however, a fruitful one, uncovering for the first time the increased risk of injuries on the night shift, that public service retirements were occurring on non-medical grounds; that NHS trusts were associated with unhealthy working practices; and council waste collectors were being exposed to health risks.

His appointment to the Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust was also a productive one and was accompanied by appointments to the Health and Safety, and to Sheffield and Manchester Universities. As a Treasury adviser on ill health retirement he had a significant impact upon retirement legislation. He served as an expert witness on tribunals for disability discrimination, occupational asthma and industrial poisoning. His contribution to the medical literature was reflected in over 60 peer-reviewed papers and book chapters. His final research papers, published as recently as 2019 and 2020, provided an evidence base for the diagnosing and staging of Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome (vibration white finger)<sup>i</sup>, and for limit values of normality for the fingers of workers exposed to vibration enabling nerve damage<sup>ii</sup>.

A close friend and colleague, Guy Richardson, has written “I admired him and respected him as a physician for his intellect and honesty. He was a leader in his field; his specialty necessitated the greatest skill in resolving conflicts fairly. He was an honest critic of poor research.”

He was an inspiring teacher, and many of his pupils have achieved distinction in the specialty.

Jon was a well-rounded man, a devoted husband and father. His expertise in spoken French, dating from a time of his student days selling lawnmowers in Paris, a love of the Gers

countryside and a passion for gardening and birdwatching was exceeded only by his capacity for friendship and compassionate care for patients and afflicted colleagues.

He leaves Vivian, his wife, and his two children by his first marriage, Tom and Antonia.

Adrian Hamlyn

*Charles Jonathan Mortiboy Poole, physician and teacher, 1954-2020*

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