



**PROFESSOR ROGER WILLIAMS, CBE (1931 – 2020)**

***MD, FRCP, FRCS, FRCPE, FRACP, FMEDSCI, FRCPI(HON), FACP(HON)***

**DIRECTOR OF THE INSTITUTE OF HEPATOLOGY, LONDON AND**

**THE FOUNDATION FOR LIVER RESEARCH**

Professor Roger Williams, a pioneer in the field of hepatology (the branch of medicine concerned primarily with the study of the liver) and Founder of The Liver Unit here at King's, has sadly died. He was 88 years old.

Professor Williams was educated at St Mary's College, Southampton, and The London Hospital Medical College (now Barts and Royal London Medical School), graduating in 1949. After National Service in the Royal Army Medical Corps, he worked at the Postgraduate Medical School in London. Between 1959 and 1965 he was a Lecturer in Medicine at the Royal Free Hospital and spent a year as the Rockefeller Travelling Fellow in Medicine at the Presbyterian Hospital, New York.

Appointed as Clinical Tutor and Consultant Physician here at King's in 1966, he founded a unit dedicated to research into liver disorders based on multidisciplinary groups of scientists, physicians and surgeons. Together with Professor Sir Roy Calne, he pioneered liver transplantation in the UK. The first liver transplant at King's was carried out on 28 September 1968. Other pioneering work in acute liver failure led to the first dedicated unit for patients with this condition. The Liver Unit was recognised in 1992 by King's College London as an Institute of Liver Studies.

In 1996, Roger Williams moved to a new research Institute at University College London, funded by the charity he had helped set up in 1974, the Foundation for Liver Research. New areas of translational clinical study were initiated including Living Donor Liver Transplantation and devices for temporary liver support. In 2014, he was invited to return to

King's and, supported by the Foundation, he relocated the Institute of Hepatology to a new purpose built research centre on Coldharbour Lane.

Over the years, Professor Williams received numerous awards and medals, the most notable being the Distinguished Achievement Award of the American Association for the Study of Liver Disease in 2013, the first British subject to have this honour. Other awards include the American Society of Transplantation Senior Achievement Award in 2004, a Hans Popper Lifetime Achievement Award in 2008, and the Distinguished Service Award of the International Liver Transplant Society in 2011. He was a Fellow of the Academy of Medical Sciences, Honorary Fellow of the American College of Physicians and of the Irish College of Physicians. He was a founder member of European Association for the Study of the Liver (EASL), serving as Chairman in 1983 and as Honorary President in 2008. He was appointed CBE for services to medicine in 1993. He authored approximately 3,000 papers, chapters and reviews published in learned journals and books. In 2010 he was quoted as the most cited researcher of the year in his specialty by ISI Thomson Scientific.

Roger Williams was awarded the Living Legend Award of Hepatobiliary Surgery and Nutrition in 2019 and in August 2020, at the re-scheduled digital annual meeting of EASL, he was due to receive the EASL Lifetime Recognition Award. He was indeed, a legend.