

## **Tribute: Prof Derek Calam CBE**

Derek Calam made a unique contribution to public health, particularly through his work over many decades with medicines regulators, pharmacopoeias and the World Health Organization. He was Chair of both British and European Pharmacopoeia Commissions, a long-term member of the Commission on Human Medicines (CHM) and Chair of its Chemistry, Pharmacy and Standards (CPS) Expert Advisory Group of which he was a member for 35 years.

These activities and more were undertaken whilst working for the National Institute for Medical Research and the National Institute of Biological Standards and Control where he held positions of European Coordinator and Head of the Chemistry Division. Derek was also Visiting Professor at Strathclyde University and an honorary member of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society. His enormous contributions were recognised with an OBE in 1997 and in 2016 a CBE for services to public health.

I worked with Derek on CPS, where he was a completely un-showy and unflappable Chair; knowledgeable and insightful with excellent interpersonal skills. He encouraged all group members, comprising pharmacists, pharmaceutical scientists and lay members to contribute to discussions, and at CHM he conveyed the Group's advice on the quality aspects of new drug product applications in a succinct and readily understandable way. At meetings, he drew on his extensive knowledge and occasionally personal experience; particularly sharing his 'user perspective' on the design (and frequently inadequacies) of the packaging of new eye-drop products - pulling his own medicines from his pockets for comparative purposes.

I was privileged to succeed Derek as Chair of CPS. He was very supportive and encouraging in the year preceding my appointment when I effectively shadowed him at both CPS and CHM. I was delighted when he agreed to continue as a CPS member, and he attended meetings until his final illness earlier this year.

Derek was selfless with an ingrained sense of duty and of doing the right thing. He balanced his regulatory work with very strong commitments to his family and local community. Over recent years, throughout his own ill-health, and that of his wife Claudia, his commitment to his regulatory work never wavered.

I can think of no-one who has contributed more than Derek, so widely over so long a period of time to ensure that medicines licensed and used in the UK are of the appropriate quality. His colleagues and friends will miss him greatly and will remember with immense fondness his good humour, concern for others, wisdom and modesty. Derek was a wonderful individual and a true gentleman. It was a tremendous privilege to have known and worked alongside him.

**Kevin Taylor**