



## In Memoriam – Prof. Anton Carel Stoltz (1 April 1961 to 20 May 2020)

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“Prof. Stoltz will be remembered for his passion for research, being a mentor for staff and students, his clinical excellence and the love he had for his family. We have lost a good friend, a dedicated colleague, and a great leader”.

Prof. Tiaan de Jager, Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences at UP

### Prof. Anton Carel Stoltz

The health sciences fraternity, nationally and globally, mourns the loss of Prof. Anton Carel Stoltz, a highly rated infectious diseases expert from the University of Pretoria (UP), who passed away suddenly from heart surgery complications.

Prof. Stoltz held the following positions: Gauteng Health/UP: Principal medical sub-specialist and head of the Division of Infectious Diseases in Internal Medicine; Foundation for Professional Development (FPD): Head of the Infectious Diseases Unit; Medical Research Council: Principal medical researcher; and Ndlovu Care Group: Principal medical specialist.

Prof. Stoltz started his career as a biochemist and researcher. In 1983 he completed his Honours degree in biochemistry, with research into the physical properties of IgM molecules. His Master's degree in biochemistry focused on malaria. He then went on to study medicine and, while completing his MMed (Internal Medicine) degree, he was selected to go to Belgium as a researcher to pioneer a new field in tuberculosis (TB), working in the world-class laboratories of Professors Johan Grooten at Ghent University and Patric De Baetselier at the University of Brussels. He was asked to start a new field in lipid biochemistry to investigate immunological properties of long chain fatty acids, related to mycolic acids in the cell wall of the TB mycobacterium. After two years, he published a paper on the innate immunity of mycolic acids. Papers that followed were on the use of biosensors to detect anti-mycolic acid antibodies and their use in a novel assay for TB.

This was the start of a brilliant career in which he dedicated himself unconditionally to relieving the burden of infectious diseases. In 2010 he became the head of the Division of Infectious Diseases at UP after registering with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) as a sub-specialist in infectious diseases. He was an internist and infectious diseases sub-specialist with interests in the management of patients with multidrug-resistant and extensive drug-resistant TB co-infected with HIV; and diseases originating from Africa, including severe malaria, schistosomiasis and drug-resistant infections in intensive care units. His research interests were in the field of infectious diseases, including resistant TB using novel nanoparticle medicine, resistant TB transmission/aerobiology and novel prevention of infection, HIV infections and the heart, as well as HIV and cytomegalovirus co-infections, malaria pheromones and malaria drug reformulations.

Prof. Stoltz worked with various intensive care units at the referral academic hospital and initiated an Infection Prevention and Control

Unit, as well as antibiotic stewardship from several Centers for Disease Control (CDC) grants. These projects were used as a platform to teach healthcare workers, students and hospital managers the correct management of infectious diseases and infection control practices. He was also a consultant to the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and to UP's TB research programmes, focusing on nanoparticle medicine and novel diagnostics in TB. He was involved in a major breakthrough in collaborative research with the University of Leicester in revolutionising the way TB is detected, through the invention and application of a 3D-printed insert added to simple face masks. This new approach has the potential to detect millions of currently missed infections across the world. Prof. Stoltz was the director of the recently approved TB@UP Research Centre and was also steering the Human Health Cluster of UP's Institute for Sustainable Malaria Control (ISMC).

Since February 2020 he had dedicated his time and efforts to the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, especially in the Ekurhuleni and Tshwane District Health Services, despite facing personal setbacks in his own health. He proved his dedication yet again to improving the lives of others, and will forever be remembered for his clinical excellence, his dedication to research, his unfaltering leadership, and his unwavering love for his family.

Prof. Stoltz, a friend of the South African Society of Occupational Medicine (SASOM), was invited to present on 'Infectious diseases sapience' at the SASOM Annual Congress held in 2018, during the listeriosis outbreak in South Africa. He reported on studies conducted in his laboratory, which evaluated airborne transmission of multidrug-resistant TB and the various types of control measures. Over and above his expertise in this field, his use of amusing public health awareness video clips to illustrate concepts was very appreciated by the audience.

“We mourn the loss of this talented hero, who devoted his life to saving the lives of others”, said UP Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Prof. Tawana Kupe.



On behalf of its members, SASOM extends deepest condolences to Prof. Stoltz's wife and children, friends and colleagues; may his soul rest in peace.