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IN MEMORIAM

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Robert (Bob) Francis Leslie Logan (1917-2016)

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Professor Robert Francis Leslie Logan, known to his colleagues as Bob, was professor of Organization of Health Care System at London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM). He chaired Department of Community medicine when I studied LSHTM in 1981/1982 as postgraduate student. Professor Logan was an innovative teacher and very communicative person. Concerned that students might lack real life experience when the Masters degree was shortened from two years to one, he introduced a "field service attachment" in which students addressed a practical problem in a district health authority (1).



Professor Logan was born in Bangor, Northern Ireland in 1917, during the First World War. He qualified in medicine from Queen's University, Belfast, where he won several medals and prizes but still found time to gain Blues in athletics and rugby, playing for Lancashire and Ulster after the war. Wartime was service in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve, serving on troopships in the Atlantic and North Africa (1). After gaining his MRCP he moved into Industrial medicine and later Social medicine at the University of Manchester. At this University Logan researched occupational lung disease among mill workers and lead exposure in car battery factory workers. One year (1955) he spent in the US on a Rockefeller travelling fellowship.

Professor Logan's initiative brought together students from different courses to work in teams to address real problems overseas, such as the health impact of a new dam. Committed to interdisciplinary working since his days in Liverpool, Logan appointed staff to teach a range of social sciences, providing the basis for what would become the UK's first Health Services Research Unit, and strengthened links with the London School of Economics (1, 2).

For many years after he retired from LSHTM, prof Logan attended events at LSHTM and took great interest in the careers of his students. Prof Logan was awarded the school's honorary fellowship in its centenary year, and he was one of six most influential person at the LSHTM, which names are recorded on the mramor's wall in the foyer of the School theatre, that included names of the former US president Jimmy Carter and Sir Donald Acheson, one of fathers of modern Social medicine, as academic discipline in U.K., together with prof Robert Logan.

Logan's scientific and academic work attracted international attention and researchers at Johns Hopkins invited Logan to join a 12 country study, covering the Americas and Europe (1). The study revealed big differences in the way that healthcare was organized and resourced but there were still many gaps in understanding how this related to variations in clinical practice. This issue would be addressed in Logan's next adventure, the European Collaborative Health Services Studies. Later, Logan had moved to the LSHTM where recruited a group of students who, on returning to their countries, identified a market town, away from the capital and served by a typical district hospital. These included Colchester in England (R. Logan, H. Sanderson, C. Sanderson, J. Carroll, etc.), Sarajevo and Mostar in Bosnia and Herzegovina, one of republics in former Yugoslavia (A. Smajkic, D. Niksic, A. Rudic, S. Muhamedagic, I. Masic, etc.), and Viana do Castelo, in Portugal (J. G. Sampaio-Faria et al).

For most of its existence, the study was supported by the participating hospitals. Its descriptions of how common conditions were managed provided a basis for much subsequent research.

Prof Logan's approach was extremely innovative, drawing on a wide range of disciplines, using a range of methods, and emphasizing what is now termed public and patient involvement. Robert Logan was one of a small group who changed this, pioneering comparative health services research in the late 1960s. As WHO expert of Organization of Health Care prof Logan was in great demand as an adviser to overseas governments. He was involved in the creation of new medical schools in Algeria, a programme for training hospital managers in Saudi Arabia, strategic planning in Singapore, and giving advice on health services for a new town in Iran. He made many trips to Latin America and the Caribbean and was a frequent visitor to Moscow (1).

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