Philippe Guttwirth

Our dear friend and colleague Philippe Gutwirth passed away on May 16th after a tragic accident in Spain, while fulfilling his childhood dream of flying a plane.

Four years ago he moved to Andorra, where he enjoyed the good weather and food, the long walks in a beautiful and peaceful nature.

For many of us Phil was a dear friend you could always count on, even in a long-distance way. Integrity was very important to him and he did not shy away from declaring his opinion and putting his fist on the table when he did not agree with some decisions. He was ridiculously intelligent, with an encyclopaedic memory for medicine, mathematics, physics, chemistry, history, geography, art astronomy, you name it, he knew it...

In everyday life he was always optimistically respectful and friendly for his patients, co-workers and colleagues. He had a vast knowledge of and a passion for non-invasive diagnostics in vascular surgery and his knowledge benefitted many patients, without necessity for CT or MRI.

He was very generous with this knowledge and organised workshops and trainings with professionalism and enthusiasm.

He was very active in national and international vascular societies, making necessary critical remarks when needed. His intentions were good, but not always understood by everyone and one of his sayings was: “not only you have to be right, you also have to make others see you are right”

He was an excellent surgeon, caring for his patients, always keeping in mind the potential risks and complications. I can truly say that he never operated if he was not convinced of the benefit for the patient.

Iniquity and the commercial evolution of medical treatment made him very angry.

He was an invaluable mentor and colleague for his co-workers, someone who also became the good friend they could always count on, not only professionally, but also personally.

These last years his personal hobbies had changed from the safe walks, reading and playing the guitar, to the more adventurous sailing trips and flying a ULM.

He died while realising a chilhood’s dream.

Bernard Koentges.