

Obituary: Professor Angelika M Shamshinova

On October 4th 2009 a dear friend to all of us, Professor Angelika Shamshinova, passed away.

Angelika M Shamshinova was born in the year 1937 into a doctor's family. In 1961 she graduated from I.M. Sechenov Moscow Medical Institute #1, then moved to the District of Liepay (Latvian SSR) and worked as a general doctor. From 1963 to 1965 she underwent clinical training in ophthalmology in the Odincov Hospital of Eye Diseases at I.M. Sechenov Moscow Medical Institute #1, and in 1965 began work as an ophthalmologist in the Institute of Neurology of the of the USSR Academy of Sciences. In 1968 she joined the staff of the Moscow Helmholtz Institute of Eye Diseases, heading the S.V. Kravkov laboratory of clinical physiology of vision, where she spent 40 scientifically productive years.

In 1972 she defended her first dissertation for a Candidate Degree (regarded as equivalent MD), then in 1989 a second dissertation: *Local electroretinogram in the eye disease clinic* for her Doctorate Degree (regarded as equivalent to PhD). The main thrust of her research and clinical investigations were development of electrophysiological and psychophysical diagnostic methods, a study of functional symptoms and pathogenesis of acquired, inherited and vascular diseases of the retina and optic nerve, pathogenetic mechanisms of visual function disturbances in glaucoma and endocrine ophthalmopathy, amblyopia, myopia and other diseases. In 2005 she was awarded the title of "Honoured Doctor of the Russian Federation".

Her family was very strong and mutually supportive, and she was immensely proud of all its members: daughter Victoria, son-in-law Dmitry, and two grandsons; Michail and Alexey.

She first joined ISCEV at the 1989 meeting in Dresden. In those days it was difficult for Russian scientists to travel, but after the opening up of Eastern Europe, she was an almost constant presence at ISCEV meetings all around the world, and attracted many young collaborators to ISCEV.

Angelika was a shining figure in Russian electrophysiological for almost half a century. Her career was notable for her initiatives and innovations in ophthalmologic, electrophysiological and psychophysical research, as well as her active participation in professional associations. She had more than 250 publications, 4 handbooks and 2 monographs – one of them in Spanish, and was still publishing this year. She was an originator of many new methods, including her own macular electroretinography and psychophysical methods of investigation of contrast and colour sensitivity, and of on-off channels in the visual system. One of her greatest achievements, in cooperation with "MBN Company" (Russia), was the development of the first Russian computerized program for electrophysiological testing that met ISCEV Standards. This was successfully adopted in many clinics, and had especially great significance in that long period of time where there were no foreign diagnostic systems licensed in Russia. Her boundlessly creative personality was not satisfied by a standard approach to ERG methods; a real professional, she always was full of different original ideas and constantly searched for new instruments to study pathogenesis of retinal diseases.

She had inexhaustible energy, which allowed her to supervise innumerable young researchers and to win their love and deep respect. In 1969-1970, she was the organizer of the first electrophysiological diagnostic centre in Cuba and she later received a special award for having been instrumental in introducing electrophysiology to Cuba.

Her colleagues in Russia know her not only as a selfless scientist, but also as a great

sportswoman who was active in a kayaking, mountaineering, tennis, riding and surfing. She always managed to really enjoy herself, both for the science and the opportunity to see the world.

We shall miss her extreme kindness, her joie de vivre and wonderful sense of humour; we shall miss her special personality and her enthusiasm; we shall miss this unique individual who touched the hearts of all she met. She will always stay in our hearts and in our memories.

Marina Zueva and Mariam Arakelyan