

Gian Franco Gensini: a memory by the Italian Society of Human Nutrition

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Dear Editor,

Anyone who has known Prof. Gian Franco Gensini and has had the opportunity to interact with him, in the professional field or even in social life, must have been fascinated by his forward-looking vision of the future and by his constructive optimism.

I was very impressed with the news of his recent death and this is the reason why I am sending you these few lines to express my regret and my emotion, shared by many colleagues and friends of the Italian Society of Human Nutrition, who have had the chance to meet him at some time in their life.¹

Perhaps inspired by the thought of Abraham Lincoln (*The best way to predict the future is to create it*), Gian Franco Gensini was guided in his activity by the desire to be one step ahead of the current state of knowledge and to glimpse, if possible before others, the most suitable tools to progress in the field of clinical research and patient care. It is because of these talents, largely innate and partly further developed through tireless application and work, that he has gone far beyond the simple tasks of the researcher, the clinician and the teacher, to become in his mature years a universally recognized authority in the field of research organization and services in the health sector.

The Italian Society of Human Nutrition retains a strong and heartfelt memory of the long-lasting scientific collaboration between our Society and the ISO - Italian Stroke Organization, founded by Prof. Gensini during the 90s. Gensini was the visionary promoter and tenacious coordinator for nearly twenty years of the Italian Guidelines for stroke, SPREAD (*Stroke Prevention and Educational Awareness Diffusion*).² To all the numerous editions of SPREAD SINU has made a significant

contribution with regard to the various aspects of stroke prevention and nutritional rehabilitation. Having participated in the numerous work meetings for the preparation of those documents together with many colleagues (Giulia Cairella, Luca Scalfi, Maria Luisa Luisi, Umberto Scognamiglio and several others) I have an indelible clear memory of the constructive and friendly climate that Gian Franco Gensini was able to build in all circumstances, making our collaborative work always pleasant and, therefore, most profitable. I am sure that all the participants to those meetings still remember Gensini's smooth way of transmitting his thought, most often innovative and looking to the future, and of exchanging ideas respectfully, with the purpose to identify the optimal solution to a given problem and translate it into practice.

From our participation in the work for the Guidelines and, in particular, from the interaction with Gian Franco, we in turn drew inspiration for building a Working Group on Nutrition and Stroke (of which Gensini became a distinguished member) and produced two excellent systematic reviews on this topic in 2004 and 2017.^{3,4}

Although Gian Franco Gensini is no longer with us, we are left with his extraordinary accomplishments, made through the collaborations with a huge number of academics, clinicians, researchers, patients associations and prestigious institutions, always using the unfailing method of multiplying the energies of the occasional coworkers through the profusion of his own inexhaustible energy.

May he rest in peace

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