

Professor Lars Hagmar, MD, PhD



Professor Lars Hagmar, MD, PhD, died of cancer on 14 June 2006 at the age of 56.

In 1978, he obtained his degree in medicine in Sweden at the University of Uppsala. Thereafter, he primarily worked as a physician and researcher within the Division of Occupational and Environmental Medicine at the University of Lund. In 1986, he successfully defended his doctoral thesis on asthma and cancer in the chemical industry and was appointed Professor in Environmental Medicine in 1997. In 2000–2002 he was Vice-dean of the Faculty of Medicine, Lund University, and, in 2002, he headed the Department of Laboratory Medicine.

At the time of his death, he was the leader of a large and very successful research group that is mainly active in the field of occupational cancer and environmentally induced reproductive impairments in males and females. His main focus in the latter part of his career had centered on persistent organic pollutants, for example, polychlorinated (PCBs and dioxins) and brominated compounds. He also made major contributions as regards the metabolism and toxicity of acrylamide and worked untiringly, until his last days, on the publication of the latest important results. He published about 500 papers, of which about 200 appeared in international, refereed scientific journals. His scientific work earned him several awards.

Lars Hagmar had a unique capacity for creating, and working within, complex scientific networks. His creativity, analytical sharpness, force of action, and social capacity were important qualities in these efforts. He became a world authority in environmental epidemiology and participated in a series of international expert missions. Since 2000 he had also been a prominent member of the associate editors of the *Scandinavian Journal of Work, Environment & Health*.

He was a brilliant, award-winning lecturer and a distinguished tutor of many graduate students. He was also a perfect risk communicator, always combining sound scientific data with an understanding of the general public's need for adequate information.

But Lars Hagmar had much wider views and capacities. Hence he had a never-ending engagement in the protection and well-being of both workers and the general population. This engagement was founded in his deep interest in moral and ethical issues. He was also an expert in literature, history, art, and music, and was always a friend to rely on.

We have lost a great scientist. But, at the same time, through his long-term, systematic work, Lars Hagmar has left behind a research group with the ability to handle and continue his important and successful scientific heritage.

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