

**Professor Giampaolo Velo 31.4.1943–17.8.2017**

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## Professor GiampaoloVelo 31.4.1943–17.8.2017

K. D. Rainsford<sup>1</sup>

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It is with much sadness that we record the untimely death of Professor Velo at the young age of 74 years. He was a foundation editor of *Inflammopharmacology* specializing in the clinical pharmacology and epidemiology of NSAIDs, especially in relation to adverse drug reactions, of which he was an internationally-recognized and highly regarded expert.

Giampaolo and I organized several international conferences in Verona (IT), Cambridge (UK) and Milano (IT) on “Side Effects of Anti-inflammatory Analgesic Drugs”. (Refer to “Conferences”). It was always a great pleasure to work on organizing these meetings with Giampaolo. He had a great ability to create programmes, liaise with speakers and sponsors and was a great help in organizing the venues in Italy and running the meetings as co-chairman. For this support and help in obtaining highly favourable outcomes that enjoyed wide support and recognition, as well as several successful book publications (Refer “Conference Publications”) and for his encouragement and enthusiastic support, I am immensely grateful.

Conference proceedings



**Giampaolo** Velo showing geniality at a conference in Prague a decade or so ago, surrounded by friends who naturally gravitated to him

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 Conference details and publication of proceedings
 

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1. Side-Effects of Anti-inflammatory/Analgesic Drugs (K.D. Rainsford and G.P. Velo, Organisers), September 1982  
Publication, Book: Side-Effects of Anti-inflammatory/Analgesic Drugs. Advances in inflammation research, 6  
Editors: K.D. Rainsford and G.P. Velo. Raven Press, New York, 1984
  2. Side-Effects of Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (K.D. Rainsford and G.P. Velo, Organisers)  
Venue: University of Cambridge & Queens' College, Cambridge (UK) 31st July to 2nd August. 1985  
Publication, Book: Side-Effects of Anti-Inflammatory Drugs, 2 Part Volumes  
Editors: K.D. Rainsford and G.P. Velo. MTP Press, Lancaster, 1985
  3. Side-Effects of Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (K.D. Rainsford and G.P. Velo, Organisers)  
Venue: University of Verona (Italy), 8th–11 May, 1991  
Publication/Book: Side-Effects of Anti-inflammatory Drugs, 3  
Editors: K.D. Rainsford and G.P. Velo. Kluwer Academic Publishers, Lancaster, 1992
  4. Side-Effects of Anti-Inflammatory Drugs (K.D. Rainsford, Organiser)  
Venue: Sheffield Hallam University, 7th–9th August, 1995  
Publication/Book: Side-Effects of Anti-Inflammatory Drugs, IV  
Editors: K.D. Rainsford and G.P. Velo. Kluwer Academic Publishers, Dordrecht, 1997  
Publication (peer-review papers): *Inflammopharmacology*, Vol 3, pp 137-204 and 311-399, 1996
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One of Giampaolo's many personal attributes was his engaging and charming personality. He had an insightful human understanding, was much admired and literally "loved by all". In these and so many ways he will be very sadly missed. Giampaolo was born in Padova (Italy), and studied medicine and surgery at the University of Bologna from which he graduated in 1967. From 1969, he was appointed to several university posts at professorial assistant level at the Universities of Bologna-Padova (Verona). In 1986 he was appointed full Professor in Pharmacology at the University of Verona and in 1977–1999 was appointed Director of the Institute of Pharmacology of the University of Padova (Verona) and the University of Verona. It was at the beginning of this appointment that I first met Giampaolo, initially at a conference on Anti-inflammatory Drugs in Pisa organized by Professor Bertelli. Following this I frequently visited Giampaolo in his spacious institute. Entering his palatial office was a great experience—tall ceilings, grand photographs of his eminence and other great items among the grand furniture. He was supported by a remarkable secretary and had a busy team of research assistants and colleagues that gave the institute a sense of buzz and productivity. One of his valued research collaborators, was the late Dr. Roberto Milanino (Obituary, in *Inflammopharmacology* 2008;16:103–105), whose work on trace metal influences in inflammation has been regarded as fundamental to the understanding of the association of the effects of copper and zinc in experimentally-induced and clinically-important inflammatory

conditions. Other studies on the anti-inflammatory activity of copper complexes included some novel ligands which were developed by other colleagues (chemists).

During the early 1970s Giampaolo worked at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London, with Professor Derek Willoughby (Obituary, in *Inflammopharmacology* 2005; 12:407–439). Their work involved animal studies of the effects of anti-inflammatory drugs on experimentally-induced inflammatory conditions. For this he received funding from the Wellcome Trust and NATO; later Giampaolo was to receive generous funding from NATO for organizing advanced teaching conferences on the science of inflammation and actions of anti-inflammatory drugs. These conferences were mostly held in Sicily and had wide support.

Giampaolo was a natural networker, an ability he combined with great charm. As he progressed from research on experimental pharmacology of inflammation, Giampaolo recognized the increasing concerns about the safety, or lack of it, of anti-inflammatory analgesics. For this, his involvement with agencies at the national (Veneto Region), Pan-European and WHO-Uppsala levels, led to his recognition as a leading international authority on the occurrence and developments of adverse drug reactions (ADR). Among major appointments, he was an executive member of the European Society of Pharmacovigilance (EOSP; 1998–2000), a founder member and Chairman of the European Association for Clinical Pharmacology and Therapeutics (EACPT; 1999–2003) and President of the International Society of Pharmacovigilance (ISoP; 2003–2006).

These involvements led him to be critical and characteristically conservative about ADR assessments, while managing to avoid political pitfalls especially when in an advisory role. His integrity on these aspects was widely recognized.

In more recent years, Giampaolo became interested in the problems of accumulation of pharmaceuticals and their manufacturing intermediates and metabolites in the environment, especially in surface water supplies.

Thus, in summary the contributions of Professor Giampaolo Velo to pharmacology; are that he started from the basic sciences, and achieved outstanding recognition for his work on pharma-epidemiology and drug safety monitoring. The breadth of his interests and depth of enquiries was very impressive.

He leaves his wife, Giulia, and three children, to whom he was much devoted. He was undoubtedly a very kind, hospitable and generous person to all.

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