

Christian Körner

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Professor of inherited endocrine and metabolic diseases, University of Heidelberg—Center for Child and Adolescent Medicine, Germany (b Bad Pyrmont, Germany, 4th December 1964; 1994 University of Göttingen, PhD; 2004, University of Heidelberg, Professor; d 2nd February 2015).

The scientific community has lost a leader in the field of glycosylation deficiencies, Professor Dr. Christian Körner, who passed away at the age of only 50. Although he was interested in all facets of biochemistry, his main focus was on glycobiology and associated defects leading to the severe human diseases known as ‘Congenital Disorders of Glycosylation’ (CDG). Only some years after Körner started working on CDG in 1995, he identified the molecular cause of several unknown CDG defects and was also involved in the development of therapies and therapeutic concepts. When the leading

European CDG research groups enhanced their collaboration in 1999, Körner was one of the founding members of this network running under the names EUROGLYCAN, then EUROGLYCANET and latest EURO-CDG, which all were supported by consecutive EU grants. Following his move from the University of Göttingen to the University of Heidelberg in 2004, the ‘Center for Child and Adolescent Medicine Heidelberg’ became established as one of the major centres for the investigation of glycosylation defects in Germany and Europe. Since the CDG patients and their families were very near and dear to him, Körner tirelessly promoted the work of the German CDG organization ‘GlycoKids e.V.’ for more than 15 years, by helping with words and deeds. For his outstanding efforts in his scientific work Körner was honoured by several prizes including the ‘SmithKline Beecham Award for Clinical Investigation’, the ‘State Doctorate Prize of the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Göttingen’ and the ‘Lecturer Prize of the “Study Group for Paediatric Metabolic Diseases” of the German Society for Paediatrics and Metabolic Diseases’. As well as his professorship in the Faculty of Medicine, Körner was also co-opted professor at the Faculty of Biology and a member of the “The Hartmut-Hoffmann-Berling International School of Molecular and Cellular Biology” at the University of Heidelberg. He was an enlightening teacher for his students and an inspiring leader for all of his co-workers. He will be remembered as a brilliant biochemist and sadly missed by his colleagues and friends. Our sympathy goes out to his family, especially his son and daughter.

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