

IN MEMORIAM
DR JUDY OVERALL
(1947-2024)



Dr Judy Overall, dearest friend and colleague, went to “the undiscovered country, from whose bourn no traveler returns,” but her proper place is in our hearts; she left an indelible mark. She belongs to the generation of our colleagues inspired by scientific and professional values — working in a world where the only constants are rapid changes and challenging times. Dr Overall was not only a colleague but also a lighthouse of knowledge, mentor, and support to countless colleagues.

She discovered the world of public health and law, expanding her knowledge and competencies in working with the community of practice. She quickly found the horizons of international cooperation by improving herself at well-known world universities. In her career, dedicated and driven by the desire to help vulnerable groups... she documented her experiences. She was recognized for mobilizing public health professionals to work devotedly to preventing many legal violations, primarily violations of patient rights. Therefore, we always evaluated her work as extraordinary.

Dr Judy Overall dealt with numerous issues of human rights, especially the international framework and regional and country-specific legal procedures. She led and inspired generations of physicians and lawyers in professional and scientific work. The Belgrade team will always be grateful for the multidisciplinary approach she has passed to us; with Judy, we learned to work together and find a mutual field of understanding between physicians and lawyers. We accepted that real-life case studies are critical, and we collected many examples of compliance with and violations of human rights in patient care. The Belgrade team and Judy have developed the Serbian version of the Human Rights in Patient Care Practitioner Guide, a long-desired and urgently necessary compendium of actual national regulations and case studies, which the Open Society Institute supported. One effective way to make this Guide accessible to a broader audience was by providing practical examples from the courts and government agencies in Serbia. Specifically, the practice of the Agency for Peaceful Settlement of Labor Disputes in cases related to the infringement of the rights of healthcare professionals and patients, including lawsuits for damages caused by medical errors, was helpful. This approach achieves another goal of the Guide, which is to help readers understand the issue of human rights in patient care and to demonstrate the available legal frameworks for resolving disputes and protecting these rights at both national and international levels. Dr. Overall led and inspired academic staff and practitioners to significantly contribute to the permanent improvement of everyday healthcare practice.

Dr Judy Overall was also an evaluator of the Belgrade Roma mentoring project financed by the Open Society Institute for many years. Her excellence has set a standard that will endure as a legacy in the academic community. In addition to the recognition and achievements accompanying her distinguished career, Judy Overall was a friend, advisor and source of inspiration. She possessed a rare ability not only to impart knowledge but also to nurture the intellectual and personal development of those around her. We are grateful for the time we shared and the lessons we learned from the exceptional Dr Judy Overall.

I was fortunate enough to know Judy and work alongside her to enhance the public health sector and improve the healthcare system. Judy is deeply missed every day, especially during these times of rapid change. However, she has left a bright light shining for us to follow, for her family, and for all of us. She has opened new horizons, and we are grateful for her contributions. Thank you and may she rest in peace.

March 2024, in Belgrade

On behalf of the Belgrade team:

Prof. Dr. Vesna Bjegovic-Mikanovic

University of Belgrade, Faculty of Medicine
Centre School of Public Health and Management
Serbia



With great sadness, I received the news that dear Judy passed away. We all who had the privilege to know her will keep in mind her commitment to human rights in patient care, particularly her enthusiasm for spreading these ideas and supporting younger colleagues worldwide. I had the opportunity not only to participate with her in several meetings organized by ASPHER but also to extend our friendship beyond official occasions and enjoy free time activities and traveling after conferences. I appreciate very much the efforts to continue with HRPC activities and to preserve her legacy.

Sincerely, yours,

Professor Jadranka Božikov, MPH, PhD
former director of the Andrija Štampar School of Public Health
School of Medicine, University of Zagreb, Croatia



I had the privilege of collaborating with Judy during a few trainings and convenings over the years, and I was always impressed by Judy's depth of knowledge and mastery of her field, combined with a wonderful sense of humor and most of all an incredible personal warmth. I was always struck by the extent to which Judy genuinely cared for and established deep connections with the Fellows and colleagues she worked with.

Brett Davidson
New York, USA
(Formerly Director of Media and Narratives at the OSF Public Health Program)



I feel so lucky to have had the opportunity to work closely with Judy for over a decade. Working with Judy was a pure joy, planning, dreaming, teaching, and traveling together. We quickly became close friends. There were late nights and lots of laughter amidst cups of strawberry tea and the turtles of the Armada Hotel. Judy is one of the kindest, warmest, most generous, and funniest people I know.

Judy was dedicated to making health care truly healing and protective of rights for both patients and providers. She was the heart of the HRPC project. This work was a labor of love for Judy, and her enthusiasm was infectious. She left an amazing legacy: practical materials

and scholarship produced, a field defined, fellows and scholars mentored. But more than all of that, she had an amazing ability to connect people, weaving us all together from different parts of the world into a family.

Judy, your legacy continues in the many lives you enriched. You have made the world a better, kinder, and more beautiful place. Thank you!

Tamar Ezer

Faculty Director Human Rights Program, University of Miami School of Law, USA

I'm sorry to hear the news about Judy. What a wonderful person - and such a rich amazing life. I really, really enjoyed the experience of working with her, with all of you and getting to know the human rights lawyers of Eastern Europe. Such amazing and inspiring work. Judy? She really cared when the human rights lawyers were doing well and she always wanted more of them, expected their best. She wore her heart on her sleeve. I look back at those moments - and she made it feel like a family. We were all in this together. We were all supporting each other and looking after each other, listening, helping. Someone always needs to hold together the emotional core of a project - and that was Judy.

John Kennedy, USA



Please find attached my favorite pic with Judy taken by Yulia Gorshkova.

I have it on my FB. This pic is a greatest memory of my dearest teacher and friend Judy Overall.

Wishing you all the best, Anna Kryukova, Russia

Judy was for many years an essential element in our professional life!

Ulrich

Prof. Dr. med. Ulrich Laaser DTM&H, MPH

Past President ASPHER and WFPHA

Faculty of Health Sciences, Bielefeld University, Germany



Judy was a wonderful person. Creative, knowledgeable, and kind. I just talked with Robert about her and the Salzburg HRPC project.

A big hug to you all!
Maya

Dr. Adv. Maya Peled Raz
Head of the Bioethics Division, The School of Public Health, University of Haifa
Head of the Institutional and Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Sciences Research Ethics Committees, Israel

Dear colleagues!
I am deeply saddened by the news that Judy has left this world and would like to say a few words about her.

I was fortunate to have met Judy back in 2009 during the development of the Law and Health Practice Guide.



Judy then invited me to several HRPC events (workshops and summer schools) in Armenia, Croatia, Kyrgyzstan, Macedonia, Austria. She was always the "heart" and driving force behind these events. Judy was a professional of the highest caliber, she always practiced a human rights-based approach to health issues and put human rights at the center of her work. She had a way of "lighting us all on fire". Thanks to her charisma, charm, responsiveness

and kindness, each of our meetings, both at working sessions and in informal settings, was very warm.

My sincere condolences to Judy's family and friends and to the entire HRPC family.

Rest in peace, Judy. I am blessed to have known you and will always hold the fondest memories in my heart.

Sincerely,
Nadejda Prigoda, Kyrgyz Republic

It was a great pain in my heart to know that our dear Judy is no longer with us. Always fun, positive, sometimes overcoming physical pain in the legs, she was the center of all seminars. She knew a lot about each of us, was interested in our successes and projects. It seemed to

me that she would be always with us. And it will be so! Because while memory is alive, person is also alive.

I express my sincere condolences to Judy's family, all colleagues for whom she has been a generator of many ideas and a direct realizer.

May the bright name of our dear Judy live in our hearts and memory. Rest in peace!

Almira Zhapparova, Kazakhstan

A Better Place with Judy

(Adapted from Rachel Platten's *A Better Place* by Tamar Ezer)

Around the world, we sing this song
It's a better place since you came along
Since you came along
Your teaching-- sunlight through the trees
Your presence is the ocean breeze
You made us a family

And ah, the mentorship you bring
Your humor and kindness, patience and love
Inspired to open our eyes with you
And the colors are golden and bright with you
There's a song in our hearts, we know we belong
It's a better place since you came along
It's a better place since you came along

Thank you for spreading human rights
To doctors, patients, and the like
You made the world more just
There's compassion in all you do
We are filled with gratitude
You made the world more kind

And ah, the mentorship you bring
Your humor and kindness, patience and love
Inspired to open our eyes with you
And the colors are golden and bright with you
And the sun paints the skies
And the wind sings your song
It's a better place since you came along
It's a better place since you came along

Touched all our lives, you're in our hearts
We'll be alright

We're inspired to open our eyes with you
And the colors are golden and bright with you
There's a song in our hearts, we know we belong
It's a better place since you came along
It's a better place since you came along