



CLAUDIA SPIES



It is a great honor to write this citation for Professor Claudia Spies, who is being awarded Honorary Membership of the European Society of Intensive Care Medicine (ESICM).

Honorary Membership is granted to individuals that have made an outstanding contribution to the Society and the specialty of Intensive Care Medicine – a feat that Claudia has thoroughly fulfilled.

Claudia Spies has been a member of ESICM since 2007 and went on to be elected Chair of the POIC section, and served as a member of the Council. She has also participated in several ESICM activities, including hosting the ESICM-Fellowships, promoting research collaborations, and mentoring young physicians. With this level of dedication to both the specialty and the Society, she has certainly earned this extraordinary honor.

Born in Bavaria, Claudia studied at the Friedrich-Alexander-University Erlangen Nürnberg and Harvard Medical School, Boston, Massachusetts, USA, and completed her medical studies in 1987, along with her dissertation. Her professional career began that same year, in a local hospital in Nuremberg, and after three years in a small clinic, she started working at the Freie Universität Berlin. There she became a consultant three years later and almost simultaneously finished her habilitation.

In 2004, after a prosperous and admirable career, Claudia became a full-professor and Director of the Department for Anesthesiology and Intensive Care Medicine of the Charité Universitätsmedizin Berlin - one of Europe's most prestigious medical institutions. As head of the Anesthesia and Intensive Care Teams at the Charité Campus Mitte and Campus Virchow-Klinikum, her department is one of the largest in Europe, with over 120 intensive care beds, and performing more than 65,000 anesthesiology procedures every year.

Her research activities have led to more than 600 publications, mainly focusing on patient-centered topics and risk reduction in anesthesia and intensive care. To Claudia, the welfare of her patients is always the priority, and she is well-known as a tenacious advocate for the preservation of functional and cognitive abilities, patient engagement in decision-making and therapeutic management, as well as the long-term improvement of the healthcare-system.

But her devotion does not end with the patients: as Vice Dean, her outstanding educational achievements include the complete reformation and implementation of the new medical curriculum at the Charité University, helping pave the way to thousands of young medical students. Additionally, as a fully licensed medical instructor in anesthesiology and intensive care, Claudia Spies has trained hundreds of residents and fellows throughout her career.

These accomplishments cannot be stressed enough, as one of her many contributions inside and outside the Society is the promotion of young physicians, regardless of gender, nationality, culture, origin, or identity.

With this vision in mind, Claudia Spies has proved to be an exceptional force in the education and training of physicians, improving the quality of medical care, exerting considerable influence on healthcare politics in Germany, and establishing collaborations between medical disciplines and stakeholders – all to help shape the future of intensive care.

From the moment I first met her, she struck me as an extremely modern physician, researcher, and manager, driving innovation and development - often ahead of her time. Today, ESICM recognises her as one of the most remarkable role models in the field of intensive care. In spite of her massive accomplishments and undertakings, I see that she still takes time during her day to help other, hosting fellows for training-weeks, mentoring junior physicians, and promoting students and young researchers – all with an exceptional sense for equality, justice, and fairness.

Claudia is the most dedicated, active, and supporting person I know, and her charisma and influence are priceless in her quest for improvement. Yet she remains realistic and approachable, never too busy to help patients and colleagues, including myself. It is a privilege to work alongside her and to be part of her team.

BJÖRN WEISS

ESICM Chair of the NEXT Committee