

Celebrating Public Health lives



Maria Antonietta Modolo, 1929-2020

At the age of 91, **Maria Antonietta Modolo**, retired Professor of Hygiene at the University of Perugia, passed away on 26 November 2020 and the entire Italian Public Health community mourns her sudden death.

Prof. Modolo graduated in Medicine as a pupil of Alessandro Seppilli, one of the scientific fathers, with Augusto Giovanardi, of the Italian National Health Service and the founder in Italy of the Health Education; and that discipline was the backbone of all her career along the following decades. After the graduation, she obtained a grant from WHO and in 1956-57 attended the courses of the London University for the Master degree of *Contents and Methods of Health Education*. Her teaching and research activities in the field of Health Education in the Sixties and the Seventies contributed decisively to the transformation of Health Education into the modern Health Promotion. At the University of Perugia she became Associate and, later, Full Professor of Hygiene, with teaching responsibilities in the Medical School, in the School of Education and in the Post-graduate School of Public Health. She collaborated with, then directed for decades, the *Experimental Centre for Health Education* of the University of Perugia,

founded by Seppilli and later recognized as a WHO Collaborative Centre, devoted to both research and teaching activities and offering courses for academic Master degrees and advanced courses for Regional and National Health Service workers. She acted also as the Editor in Chief of two scientific journals published by the Centre: *Health Education and Preventive Medicine* and *Human Health*. From 1985 to 1991 she was elected President of the European Bureau of the International Union for Health Promotion and Education, organising in such position the first and the second European Conference of Health Education in Madrid (1987) and Warsaw (1991).

Full member, and later Honorary member, of the Italian Society of Hygiene, Preventive Medicine and Public Health, winner of the *Parisot Medal* of the International Union for Health Promotion and Education, Gold medal of the Italian Republic for merits of Culture and Arts. Elected to the Italian Senate (12th legislature), she contributed with initiatives in the field of National Health Service organizational improvement, birth control, family planning, fight on smoking and cooperation with developing countries.

Well known in the national and international scientific community, Prof. Modolo will remain in the memory of her pupils, colleagues of many universities, and all the researchers and workers of social and health institutions, as a cornerstone of modern health promotion and an example of a valuable researcher and dedicated teacher.

I have known and frequented her for over 50 years, and my memory of her - alongside the merits mentioned above - is of one of the great ladies of the Public Health ever, a cultivated and brilliant mind, and an exquisite host in the fascinating world of her native Umbria Region.

Gaetano Maria Fara
Editor in Chief