

## John Kellett



### Formerly Consultant Psychiatrist, St George's Hospital, London, UK

John Kellett was born on 2 March 1938. He graduated in 1961 from King's College, University of Cambridge, following his clinical studies at University College Hospital, London. Following house jobs there in respiratory medicine and general surgery, he was single-minded in his intention to become an academic

psychiatrist. He was a senior house officer and then a registrar at Fulford Hospital, where he started a therapeutic community in a rehabilitation ward. He then moved to the North Middlesex Hospital, where he was registrar in psychiatry, gaining his Diploma in Psychological Medicine in 1964. Keen to become a good general physician as well, he then worked in general medicine and became Member of the Royal College of Physicians in 1968.

John returned to psychiatry as a registrar at the Maudsley Hospital, gaining experience in the metabolic unit, the professorial unit and the children's department, later moving to Cane Hill Hospital, London. In 1972, he became Member of the Royal College of Psychiatrists.

Presaging his later commitment to close interdisciplinary working, John co-authored a paper 'Reasons against referral to the psychiatrist' (1971), making the case for psychiatry to be located in the general hospital rather than in isolated institutions. He was keen to decrease the stigma associated with large mental hospitals and to improve the relationship between psychiatrists and other specialties, so that referral practice could better meet the needs of the patient.

In 1974, John joined St George's Hospital Medical School, where he remained until 1998, and was consultant in psychiatry at Atkinson Morley and Springfield hospitals. Working within the academic department of psychiatry, he continued with his research and was active and innovative in developing and organising teaching programmes and associated assessment procedures for medical students.

During the 1980s, he pioneered links between the academic departments of geriatrics and psychiatry at St George's. Clinically, he worked with colleagues from different disciplines to build a comprehensive geriatric and psychiatric hospital-based service for older people in the London boroughs of Merton and Wandsworth. He collaborated with Merton Social Services and Merton Mind to develop a comprehensive domiciliary service, with carer support, day hospital care and a linked in-patient service for elderly people with dementia. Later, in cooperation with the Institute of Psychiatry, King's College London, he set up a dementia research service, linking together the results of systematic in-patient assessment in life with the findings at post-mortem examination. He also contributed greatly to the work of the European Union research project into dementia care. In addition, in collaboration with others, he established courses for the training of sexual/marital therapists, setting up the St George's Hospital Medical School diploma course in human sexuality. His achievements were recognised by the award of Fellowship of the Royal College of Psychiatrists in 1981 and of the Royal College of Physicians in 1984.

John Kellett made an immense contribution to the development of specialist services for frail elderly people with mental health problems, to the development of research into dementia and to teaching at undergraduate and postgraduate level. Under his leadership, St George's gained a Europe-wide reputation for the standard of its research and scholarship in the field of dementia. After retiring from the National Health Service, John continued to work with the mental health review tribunal until he retired in 2007.

John's patients and their carers will always remember him as a caring and compassionate doctor who did everything he could to lighten their burden. His colleagues will remember him as a great enthusiast, always searching for answers, and always asking new questions. Although diagnosed with diabetes when he was 21, he was never deterred from doing anything that he had set his mind to and he retained an infectious zest for life until he became frail himself.

In 2000, John married Antonia Young and together they enjoyed his retirement. He died on 21 July 2010, leaving two children from his first marriage and three grandchildren. He will be greatly missed by his family and friends.

**Peter Millard and Hamid Ghodse**

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