

In Memoriam

Dr. Chesney, pediatric nephrology pioneer



Dr. Chesney

A distinguished pediatric nephrologist dedicated to slowing the progression of kidney disease in children, **Russell W. Chesney, M.D., A.B., FAAP**, of Memphis, Tenn., died April 2 at age 72.

Dr. Chesney received the Henry L. Barnett Award in 2004 from the AAP Section on Nephrology for lifetime achievement and the Nutrition Award from the Committee on Nutrition in 1996 for research on taurine in human and animal nutrition. A strong child health advocate, Dr. Chesney also was a key AAP ally in promoting the Best Pharmaceuticals for Children Act, which was passed into law in 2002.

Dr. Chesney was among the first group to sit for the pediatric nephrology subspecialty examination in 1974. Extensive research in the field ensued. He was interested in investigating the transport of amino acids, particularly taurine, by the kidney. He also published studies on vitamin D's role in preventing kidney failure and heart complications and provided evidence for pediatric nephrology therapies now used worldwide.

He was president of the American Pediatric Society, Society for Pediatric Research, Association of Medical School Pediatric Department Chairs and the American Society of Pediatric Nephrology. He also was chair of the American Board of Pediatrics Board of Directors and served on numerous other boards and committees.

Within the Academy, Dr. Chesney was vice chair of the task force of the Future of Pediatric Education

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Among honors, he received the American Pediatric Society's John Howland Award, the Federation of Pediatric Organizations' Joseph W. St. Geme Jr. Leadership Award, Society for Pediatric Research E. Mead Johnson Award, American Society of Pediatric Nephrology Founder's Award, the International Pediatric Nephrology Association's Ira Greifer Award and the Tennessee Chapter's Lifetime Achievement Award. In 2012, the University of Tennessee Health Science Center established the annual Russell W. Chesney Excellence in Pediatrics Award to honor the top graduating student.

Dr. Chesney earned his medical degree from the University of Rochester (1968), completed his internship and residency at The Harriet Lane Service at Johns Hopkins University, and fellowships in nephrology and biochemical genetics at McGill University in Montreal. A founder of the LeBonheur's Children's Foundation Research Center, he was chair, pediatrics, at University of Tennessee and LeBonheur Children's Hospital for more than 23 years. Most recently, he served as professor of pediatrics and physiology.

He is survived by his wife, P. Joan Chesney, M.D., FAAP, three children and two grandchildren.

— *Trisha Koriath*