



CONFERENCES

Lifetime Achievement Award



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What started your interest in science?

My interest in science started a long time ago when I was about 18 and first had the opportunity to visit the University of Umeå and to see what courses they had to offer. By chance, I visited the Department of Radiation Physics, led by Professor Hans Svensson, whom many of you might remember. Computed tomography had just been invented and Professor Svensson explained the principles and showed how useful this could be to visualise the inside of the human body. I was hooked and decided that this was what I wanted to do. Professor Svensson became my mentor and PhD supervisor. He was very active in the European Society for Radiotherapy and Oncology (ESTRO) in the early years and he encouraged me to join.

What have been the highlights of your career?

I have had the privilege to work with radiation therapy during a period in which enormous progress has been made. All through my career, the importance of bringing new findings and innovations into the clinic has been central. A strong driving force for me has been to make, for example, intensity-modulated radiation therapy and breathing-adapted radiotherapy clinical tools to improve treatment. For the last 15 years, I have worked almost entirely with proton therapy, and I have had the privilege to see rapid developments and to be part of the establishment of proton therapy as an accessible treatment modality, particularly for children and young adults.

What has been your involvement within ESTRO?

ESTRO has been (and still is) of fundamental importance for networking, meeting colleagues and making friends. I have been involved in many ESTRO-related activities as a teacher and course director, in the physics committee, the education and training committee, the Board and lately the European particle therapy network collaboration. ESTRO plays a tremendous role in education and it has been a great honour for me to have been part of this important mission.

Participation in ESTRO conferences has been of incredible importance throughout my career. To meet with colleagues and friends again in Copenhagen after the covid years was such a great experience; it reminded me how important it was to interact in person with people, regardless of all the nice qualities of Zoom...

When do you think you will retire, and what would you like to do then?

As a matter of fact, I have already retired, at least partly. However, I sometimes get requests to participate at different levels in new projects because of my experience with proton therapy and the start-up of new proton-therapy facilities. I am happy to do so, since bringing the best possible treatment options into clinics remains a strong driving force for me.