Archivi storici della Nefrologia Italiana: Pietro Confortini (1924-1981): un chirurgo che dedicò la propria vita a combattere l'uremia

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Historical Archives of Italian Nephrology:
Pietro Confortini (1924-1981): a surgeon who spent his professional life fighting uremia

In 1953, Pietro Confortini, a surgeon who was born in Ferrara in 1924 and graduated in Padova in 1950, was amongst the first in Italy to treat patients with acute renal failure using an artificial kidney. He did this with his friend and colleague Ferdinando Siracusano with an instrument of Italian design (the "Battezzati-Taddei" kidney).

In 1955, Confortini exhibited the "Battezzati-Taddei" kidney at a medical congress in South Africa, which brought about the introduction of haemodialysis also in that country.

In 1963, Confortini and his co-workers were the first in Italy to perform periodic haemodialysis on patients with chronic renal failure, obtaining by the end of the 1960s a six-year patient survival which was far superior to that recorded in the registry of EDTA (75.5% vs 52.5%).

In November 1968, Confortini performed his first kidney transplant from a cadaveric donor, which was the second operation of its kind ever done in Italy. In subsequent years Confortini's group specialized in kidney transplants from living donors, obtaining again excellent kidney and patient long-term survival.

In 1976, Confortini founded with others the "Nord Italia Transplant Programme", an organization which is still active today and which has been instrumental in expanding the practice of organ transplant in Italy.

For all these reasons Confortini occupies a prominent place in the history of recent Italian nephrology and should be remembered by our profession. (Giorn It Nefrol 2001; 18: 208-15)

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