

# DR. FRANCISCO GALLEGO ROJO

On 29 July 2024 we woke up to the tragic and unexpected news of the passing of Dr. Francisco Javier Gallego Rojo, head of the Digestive Unit at the Poniente Hospital, whose passion and dedication to gastroenterology left an indelible mark on colleagues and patients.

Born in Melilla in 1964, although from Almeria at heart, he graduated in Medicine at the University of Granada and later completed his residency in Digestive Medicine at the Clinical Hospital in that city. Since 1996, practically since its inauguration, he has been uninterruptedly linked to the Poniente hospital to which he dedicated himself body and soul until the last day of his life.

I met Paco Gallego just over 20 years ago, when I was finishing my residency and facing the dreaded world of work. He was a young and enthusiastic specialist whose dream was to develop the Digestive Service and the endoscopy unit at the centre in El Ejido. In almost three decades of tireless work, he managed to create a high level service, developing the most complex endoscopic techniques and turning it into a regional and national reference.

Passionate about his family, endoscopy, the sea and cycling, I have never met a more enthusiastic, energetic and tenacious person than Paco Gallego. Whatever he set his mind to, he achieved. His capacity for work, his passion for learning and sharing knowledge were admirable. His natural vehemence, and in a perfect balance, prudence, were enviable. And his respect for the patient, or as he used to say, the sick person, whom he always kept at the centre of his actions and decisions, a mirror in which to look at himself.

We are not aware, or actually we are, of how lucky we have been to have him in this hospital, his home for 28 years. Paco Gallego was Poniente, and Poniente cannot be understood without him. The patients have lost an exceptional doctor, endoscopy a true master and with his departure we have lost a boss, a mentor and a friend. We will try our best to honour his exceptional legacy as he would have wished.

Farewell Paco. Rest in peace.

**Dr. Francisco Gallardo Sánchez**

Assistant Physician at the Digestive Unit of Poniente Hospital

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