

****PRESS RELEASE****

Paolo Chiesi appointed Honorary Doctor at Karolinska Institutet

Paolo Chiesi receives honorary degree for his long-standing commitment to vital treatment of the lungs of premature babies. The ceremony will take place on 10 May in Stockholm City Hall.

Stockholm. 10 May 2019 – Chiesi Farmaceutici, an international research-focused healthcare Group (Chiesi Group), is proud to announce that **Paolo Chiesi**, Vice President of the Chiesi Group, has been appointed Honorary Doctor at the Karolinska Institutet for his long-standing commitment to vital treatment of the lungs of premature babies. The ceremony will take place today in the Blue Hall (location of the annual Nobel Ceremony) of the Stockholm City Hall. The title of Honorary Doctor at the Karolinska Institutet (KI) is given to a graduate who has done great work for science, humanity or the KI, or supported research and development within KI's sphere of interest but has not received a doctorate.

"I am very honoured to receive this award from one of the world's most prestigious and respected medical universities. This is also a great opportunity to meet again in Stockholm some of the most prominent researchers I worked with in the 80s. Our co-operation has continued over the years and we have become close friends over time," comments Paolo Chiesi.

Paolo Chiesi has been awarded the doctorate for his long-standing commitment to the drug, Curosurf® (poractant alfa). Poractant alfa was developed by two researchers at the KI in the 1980s to prevent lung collapse in premature babies. Most babies are born with a substance in their lungs known as 'surfactant', which lines the lungs and stops them from sticking together and so makes normal breathing possible. Some babies, particularly premature babies, do not have enough of this surfactant when they are born, which causes Respiratory Distress Syndrome (RDS). **Tore Curstedt** and **Bengt Robertson** managed to extract surfactant from pigs' lungs and created 'Curosurf' (**Cu** as in Curstedt, **Ro** as in Robertson and **surf** as in surfactant). Poractant alfa is a natural surfactant, which works in the same way as a baby's own surfactant would have done and, therefore, helps a baby to breathe normally until he or she produces his or her own surfactant. ¹

After the initial proof of principle, where a child with acute breathing problems was quickly restored by the treatment, the researchers sought collaboration with the pharmaceutical industry to continue the production and development on a larger scale, and found in Chiesi Farmaceutici and Paolo Chiesi a committed ally. At the time, Dr Chiesi was the Head of Research and Development in Chiesi Farmaceutici S.p.A and chose to invest in the project. Over the years, more than four million premature babies have been treated with poractant alfa, and is now available in 97 countries.

Continued research has led to new successes. Since the beginning of the 1980s, the collaboration has continued even after the successful launch of poractant alfa, with Chiesi continuing to support research and annual international scientific meetings.

Paolo Chiesi will receive the honorary degree in the famous Blue Hall (location of the annual Nobel Ceremony) in Stockholm City Hall today, May 10, followed by a gala dinner in the Golden Theatre.

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Chiesi Group

Based in Parma, Italy, Chiesi Farmaceutici is an international research-oriented group with over 80 years' experience in the pharmaceutical sector, and is present in 27 countries. The group researches, develops and commercialises innovative medicines in the respiratory disease, special care and rare disease therapeutic areas. The Group's Research & Development centre is based in Parma (Italy) and integrated with 6 other important research and development groups in France, the USA, the UK and Sweden, to promote its pre-clinical, clinical and registration programmes. The Group employs around 5,700 people. For more information, please visit www.chiesi.com. Chiesi Limited is the UK affiliate of the Chiesi Group. For more information visit www.chiesi.uk.com.

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¹ EMC. Curosurf Information Leaflet for Parents or Carers. Available at <https://www.medicines.org.uk/emc/product/6450/pil>. Last Accessed May 2019