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International Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine





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EDITORIAL

Message from the eNews Editor

by Katherina Psarra
eNews Editor

It is my pleasure and honor to address this editorial to you as the new IFCC eNews Editor and Chair of the WG-IFCC News. I take this opportunity to wish you all a happy and productive New Year in your personal and professional life.

I would like to underline the importance of sharing the IFCC news with you, in order to have a better communication between IFCC and IFCC member societies, as well as with everybody working in a laboratory. A lot of IFCC news come from all over the world and it is probably the only opportunity to come in contact with the achievements and the needs of colleagues in the broader IFCC family.

In this issue you will find information about the future of laboratory medicine as it was presented during the IFCC General Conference in Budapest, as well as at the regional congresses all over the world.

Special attention should be given to our young colleagues, the future of our profession. A special presentation concerns their activities within IFCC member societies, congresses or other scientific organizations.

Dear colleagues, I hope that you will pay special attention to the IFCC eNews and possibly provide your feedback and communications.



Katherina Psarra

News from the IFCC Website



C-CLM Survey

The Committee on Clinical Laboratory Management invites laboratory professionals from the IFCC member national societies to participate in a survey study. This survey examines medical laboratory test utilization management and relevant practices which are country-specific from a laboratory staff perspective. The survey is designed to be completed by the leadership types of medical or clinical laboratory professionals who have direct contact or interaction with physicians and facility administration and whose primary professional work directly affects patient care.

Deadline to complete this survey: February 28, 2019.

Survey website: <http://www.ifcc.org/ifcc-news/2019-29-01-c-clm-survey/>.

THE VOICE OF IFCC

“Predatory conferences”: beware the traps

by Howard Morris

President, IFCC

Maurizio Ferrari

Past-President, IFCC

We often open our email inbox to find something like this from someone unknown:

“Dear Dr.,”

I’m writing to follow-up on my last invitation as below, would you please give me a tentative reply? Thank you very much. I apologize for the inconvenience if the letter disturbed you more than once....

It is our great pleasure and privilege to welcome you to join the 7th Annual World Congress on, which conference will be held during November 13-15, 2018 in Singapore.

*On behalf of the Organizing Committee, we would be honored to invite you to be a chair/speaker while presenting about **Comment on Bristow et al.: Dietary calcium: adverse or beneficial effects of supplements?** at the upcoming conference....”*

This practice is known as “predatory conferences”. It is like “predatory publishing” and is based on the business model of scientific conferences organized by revenue-seeking companies, often exhibiting the following traits:

- low quality academic meetings for the primary aim of making money, not supporting education and science
- no effective peer review, allowing anyone to purchase a speaking slot
- employing deceit, the most common forms being false claims of peer review, hiding the true location of the company headquarters and concealing the for-profit nature of the enterprise.

These companies base their business models on exploiting the need for scientists to build their reputation to enhance opportunities for employment, promotion and successful research grant applications.

Making international conference presentations appear to be highly attractive propositions. Particularly when it is accompanied by a text praising your contribution and often utilising the title of one of your publications.

Unwary researchers fall prey to these seemingly “prestigious” speaking or session chair opportunities. They pay the high registration fee to attend, as well as the high cost of travel and lodging to sometimes find out there are just a small number of early-stage career registrants, or often nothing, at the supposed conference venue.

These types of conferences make money through registration fees that are bundled with charges for hotel stays, meals, program materials, ground transportation and other hidden charges. The use of deceptively similar names to existing reputable conferences and conference locations also contributes to the potential for confusion.

The IFCC, together with our European colleagues from EFLM, have organized the EuroMedlab Congress since 1974. These congresses have developed a reputation as one of the highest quality conferences on clinical laboratory practice internationally. Our next event is EuroMedlab 2019 Barcelona, which will be held between 19-24 May 2019, and which has been published since 2015.

Article continued on next page

It is surprising to see recent advertisements for “MED-LAB Europe Barcelona”. Is this the same conference? Are the organisers the same? Will the quality be equal to EuroMedlab 2017 Athens and EuroMedlab 2015 Paris? The answers are: no, no, no!!!

Similar MEDLAB congresses are being organized around the world, all based on the same strategy but with the only mission to improve the profit for a private company, Informa.

The business model for these predatory conferences is slightly different from the openly fraudulent activities. Their focus is on attracting exhibitors. However, companies paying for expensive exhibition space want customers viewing their exhibits. In laboratory medicine, that means industrial exhibition organizers need to provide at least the semblance of an educational program to attract potential customers for the exhibitors.

Therefore, they create the illusion of high-quality educational programs with an assembly of well-known academic clinical laboratory practitioners listed on the Advisory Board and Scientific Committee for the congress. We know from personal contacts that a number of these individuals have not agreed to support such a congress and have asked that their names be removed, but to no avail.

Finally, the most attractive component of a conference for many practitioners is the ability to accrue Continuing Medical Education credit and so we see the statement that an “application has been made through” the support of an academic society.

Why are these predatory conferences a concern for professional societies? Firstly, we are concerned for the welfare of our members and the status of our profession. Individual members are being defrauded through some of these ventures.

For example, Omics International is presently being sued by the USA Federal Trade Commission for deceptive trade practices, over organizing conferences under at least four other brands, as well as OMICS, including:

Conference Series, Pulsus Group, EuroSciCon and Life Science Events.

Furthermore, all professional societies, whether national, regional or international including IFCC, hold such conferences as part of their continuing education responsibilities for their members and the profession.

These conferences are important for the In Vitro Diagnostic (IVD) industry and professional societies attract income to support their ongoing work for the profession, including scientific and educational programs conducted to develop the profession, providing educational materials independent of the conferences and providing scholarships for young scientists to attend the congresses.

The market for medical science congresses is limited. The IVD industry is already concerned about the number of congresses being organized by professional societies and for which they are receiving requests for sponsorship.

The entry of exclusively ‘for profit’ congresses, such as the copycat MEDLAB group, pose a threat to the sustainability of the educational and scientific programs of all professional societies.

This threat can only be realized if we, the clinical laboratory specialists, provide the academic and educational support critical for attracting registrants.

We ask you to be vigilant regarding invitations to join a scientific or advisory committee; ensure you are volunteering your expertise and time in a way that is worthwhile for the profession.

We need to be vigilant about accepting invitations to speak at conferences and about selecting the conferences that we attend.

In the interest of the profession of laboratory medicine the IFCC urges you to ignore these activities aimed at simply generating a profit for a company and to continue your support for our professional societies and their activities.

Obituary

Jillian Russyll (AKA Jill) Tate

<https://doi.org/10.1515/cclm-2018-2394>



With deep sorrow we announce that on December 4, 2018 we have lost a good friend, a nice colleague, an esteemed scientist and an Associate Editor of *Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine*.

Jill Tate died after a long illness which she faced with courage and endurance. Although the disease did not allow her to work so hard in the last few months as she did throughout her career, she expressed her joy in assisting with the publication of the special issue on “Harmonization in Laboratory Medicine: the Request, the Sample, the Measurement, and the Report” which was conceived, managed and published only thanks to Jill’s enthusiastic and devoted work.

Jill, in fact, was the Chair of the Australasian Association of Clinical Biochemists’ Harmonisation Committee and worked on a wide range of harmonization activities, including common reference intervals, standardized measurement units, terminology and reporting in laboratory medicine, as well as critical results notification, activities which are now universally recognized as “the global picture of harmonization in laboratory medicine”.

Although Jill worked as a Senior Scientist at the Pathology Queensland Department of Chemical Pathology at the Royal Brisbane and Women’s Hospital in Brisbane, her invaluable contribution to the advancement of laboratory medicine needs to be acknowledged.

Jill chaired the International Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (IFCC) Working Group for the Standardization of Cardiac Troponin I (IFCC WG-TNI), and previously participated in the IFCC Committee on Standardization of Markers of Cardiac Damage and the IFCC Working Group on Standardization of Lipoprotein(a).

Along with dozens of other papers in leading journals, she published several seminal papers, including those on interference in immunoassays [1], measurement uncertainty [2], standardization of cardiac troponin I immunoassays [3], reporting of serum protein electrophoresis to clinicians [4], and many other innovative and interesting articles.

We wish to particularly recall that she was, and she will remain, an archetype for many laboratory professionals because, along with her exceptional competency and expertise, she was always humble and supportive during her lifetime devoted to science in the service of humanity. She will be remembered with love, affection and respect by all those who knew her, especially by her friends and colleagues.

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The election of the next IFCC Executive Board: timing and process

by G.H. Beastall

Chair, IFCC Nominations Committee

INTRODUCTION

The current IFCC Executive Board (EB) has commenced its second of three years in office. It will finish its term on 31 December 2020 and a new EB will take over on 1 January 2021. This short article aims to explain the timescale and the process for electing the next EB, and readers may be surprised to learn that the 'starting gun has already been fired'.

COMPOSITION OF THE IFCC EXECUTIVE BOARD

The EB has the following composition:

- IFCC President, who serves one year as President-Elect and then three years as President. He/she is elected by IFCC Full Members
- IFCC Secretary and IFCC Treasurer. These two office bearers serve for three years and are each eligible to serve for a second three-year term. They are elected by IFCC Full Members
- Representatives of the six IFCC Regional Federations. The IFCC Full Members in each Regional Federation elect their representative to serve a three-year term
- Corporate Representative, who is elected by IFCC Corporate Members. He/she serves for three years and is eligible to serve for a second three-year term
- IFCC Past President, who serves for two years after he/she has completed their term as President. He/she does not serve in the final year of the EB when the President-Elect is present.

The IFCC Office supports EB and attends its meetings in a non-voting capacity.

SCHEDULE FOR ELECTION OF THE NEXT IFCC EXECUTIVE BOARD

The schedule is shown in the Figure. It starts with the election of the President, who will serve on the Executive Board as President-Elect from January 2020 and

serve as President from January 2021. The election of the Secretary and Treasurer commences once the nominees for President have been announced. The election of the Regional Federation representatives and the Corporate Representative commences once the nominees for Secretary and Treasurer are known.

The election of each EB member involves four stages:

- A call for nominations lasting three months
- One month for the Nominations Committee to consider the nominations received
- A period to allow the approved nominees to lobby for support
- One month for the electronic ballot by the appropriate electorate

NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

The Nominations Committee (NC) oversees the election of the next EB. It undertakes this role independently from the current EB. The NC has three functions:

- To encourage others to submit nominations. Members of the NC cannot be nominees; do not solicit nominations directly; and cannot sponsor a nominee
- To assess the validity of the nominations received in terms of the IFCC Statutes and Rules. All valid nominations will go forward to the ballot; the NC has no role in shortlisting nominations.
- To oversee each ballot in collaboration with the IFCC Office and to announce the results of each ballot

The membership of the IFCC Nominations Committee for the next EB is:

- Graham Beastall (UK) - a former Past President
- Maurizio Ferrari (IT) - the immediate Past President
- Bernard Gouget (FR) - the Chair of the previous Nominations Committee

Article continued on next page

- Angela Amayo (KE) - representing the African Federation (AFCC)
- Endang Hoyaranda (ID) - representing the Asian Pacific Federation (APFCB)
- Montserrat Blanes (PY) - representing the Latin American Federation (COLABIOCLI)
- Huib Storm (NL) - representing the European Federation (EFLM)
- Nathalie LePage (CA) - representing the North American Federation (NAFCC)
- Osama Najjar (PS) - representing the Arab Federation (AFCB)

ELECTION OF THE NEXT IFCC PRESIDENT

IFCC Full Member societies have been contacted by the NC and invited to submit nominations for the role of the next IFCC President. The call for nominations opened on 1st February and will close on the 30th April, 2019.

Nominations should be made on the appropriate nominations form and must be approved by the Full Member society, which is responsible for submitting the nomination.

Persons wishing to suggest a suitable nominee should discuss the topic with a Full Member society of which they are a member.

Schedule for Election of Next Executive Board 2019												
2019												
	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
President elect	CALL FOR NOMINATIONS			NC	LOBBYING			BALLOT		RESULTS		
Treasurer							CALL FOR NOMINATIONS			NC	LOBBYING c/o NR	
Secretary							CALL FOR NOMINATIONS			NC	LOBBYING c/o NR	
Corp. Member									CALL FOR NOMINATIONS		NC	
6 Regional Reps									CALL FOR NOMINATIONS		NC	

Schedule for Election of Next Executive Board 2020					
2020					
	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	24 MAY: COUNCIL
President elect	President elect term begins				
Treasurer	BALLOT		RESULTS		
Secretary	BALLOT		RESULTS		
Corp. Member	LOBBYING c/o CR		BALLOT	RESULTS	
6 Regional Reps	LOBBYING c/o NR		BALLOT	RESULTS	

LEGEND

CALL	Call for nominations
NC	Nomination Committee evaluate
LOBBYING	Distribution to NR/CR-lobbying
BALLOT	Electronic ballot
RESULTS	Results announced

IFCC Programmes for Personal Support

by G.H. Beastall
IFCC Past President
Chair of WG-PS

IFCC is pleased to announce the operation of the newly created IFCC Working Group for Personal Support (WG-PS), which is part of the Education and Management Division.



The WG-PS brings together two previous IFCC programmes that offer one-to-one support to individual laboratory medicine specialists:

1. The IFCC Register of Experts
2. The IFCC Mentoring Programme

A brief description of each programme is given below together with links to access the services offered by WG-PS.

Further details of WG-PS can be found on the IFCC website by using the following link:

<http://www.ifcc.org/ifcc-education-division/working-groups-special-projects/wg-ps/>.

1. REGISTER OF EXPERTS

IFCC has established a database of experts from around the world who have offered to share their scientific or management expertise with senior

trainees or newly qualified laboratory medicine practitioners. The collaboration will be short-term and will relate to a specific topic raised by the enquirer.

Practitioners wishing to contact an Expert should use the link below. This will take you to the list of available expertise and the experts who are willing to provide information or advice.

To contact an Expert, it is necessary for the enquirer to complete a short form, which is then submitted electronically to the IFCC Office.

The WG-PS will then arrange an introduction to the most appropriate Expert.

- To contact an Expert, go to: <http://www.ifcc.org/ifcc-education-division/experts/>.

IFCC is keen to expand the number of Experts on its database. Therefore, the WG-PS invites senior practitioners with expertise in one or more areas of laboratory medicine to apply to be an Expert.

This process involves completion of a short form, which is submitted to the IFCC Office, for consideration by the WG-PS.

- To apply to be an Expert, go to the WG-PS website page and download the form, available at the following link: http://www.ifcc.org/media/477450/application-form-expert_ifcc_register-of-experts.doc.

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2. MENTORING PROGRAMME

Mentoring is defined as a voluntary process in which an experienced individual helps another person develop his or her goals and skills through a series of time-limited, confidential, one-on-one conversations and other learning activities. Therefore, mentoring is more broadly based and is likely to take longer than contacting an Expert on a specific topic.

The experienced individual in a mentoring relationship is known as the Mentor. The individual seeking support is known as the Associate (or Mentee).

The IFCC Mentoring programme is intended to support Associates who are in the final stages of their training as laboratory medicine specialists, or who are newly appointed clinical laboratory directors who are seeking to improve the quality of their laboratory with the aim of laboratory accreditation.

Typically, Associates are based in developing countries whilst Mentors are experienced, including recently retired, laboratory medicine specialists.

Associates wishing to apply to access the Mentoring programme should use the link below. This will take you to a short registration form, which is submitted to the IFCC Office.

The WG-PS for will evaluate the application and then arrange an introduction to the most appropriate Mentor.

- To request Mentoring, go to the WG-PS website page and download the form
- IFCC is keen to expand the number of Mentors on its database, including those who speak languages other than English. Therefore, the WG-PS invites senior laboratory directors, including recently retired persons, to apply to be a Mentor. This process involves completion of a short form, which is submitted to the IFCC Office for consideration by WG-PS.
- To apply to be a Mentor, go to the WG-PS website page and download the form

Past President Graham Beastall, Chair of WG-PS, offers the following comment on the operation of the Working Group.



Graham Beastall

“One of the strengths of IFCC is its global network of Experts and senior professionals who are willing to support more junior individuals and/or practitioners from developing countries on a one-to-one basis. WG-PS aims to utilise this network.

WG-PS is an unusual IFCC programme because it targets individual laboratory medicine practitioners rather than IFCC Member societies or companies.

To be effective WG-PS needs help to promote its two programmes to individuals and we have asked IFCC members to help us to do this.

In addition, we will be using our Young Scientist network and social media to help spread the word.

Ultimately, the success of WG-PS will depend on our ability to reach the individuals who can benefit from the personal support programmes. Please draw the attention of this article to your colleagues and refer them to:

<http://www.ifcc.org/ifcc-education-division/working-groups-special-projects/wg-ps/>.

Any queries about the WG-PS should be addressed to Silvia Cardinale in the IFCC Office (ifcc@ifcc.org).

IFCC: THE PEOPLE

Welcome and thanks to the Chairs

FAREWELL KHOSROW ADELI



Khosrow Adeli

Khosrow Adeli second term as Chair of the IFCC Communications and Publications Division finished at the end of 2018. He has served two terms as Chair of the Public Relations Committee. During the past ten years his teams have developed IFCC educational materials, career brochures and slides about lab professions in over twelve languages, developed partnerships with many sister organizations to promote Lab Medicine. Under his CPD leadership, the eJournal of the IFCC has gained greater visibility and utility and the e-Academy was developed on the IFCC website to promote worldwide access to IFCC educational material.

Dr. Adeli has an accomplished career as an educator and researcher which is another component of his international contributions. He served (2006-2010) as the first Canadian Chair of COMACC, (Commission on Accreditation in Clinical Chemistry, a North American organization responsible for accreditation of clinical chemistry training programs in the USA and Canada) and has personally provided lectures and workshops across North America, Central and South America, Europe, the Middle East and in Asia.

Dr. Adeli served as the Chair of the Canadian Academy of Clinical Biochemistry for two terms and continues

to serve as the post-doctoral training program director at the University of Toronto. He is a diplomate of the American Board of Clinical Biochemistry. Dr. Adeli's career attests to his international contributions to research. His role as Editor in Chief for the international journal Clinical Biochemistry, in addition to his other roles with other journals as editor or on editorial boards is outstanding. He is currently the Editor-in-Chief of the Critical Reviews in Clinical Laboratory Sciences and an editorial board member of the Clinical Biochemist Reviews. Khosrow's lasting international impact occurs as his students and post-doctoral fellows continues in their careers around the globe.

Dr. Adeli is the head and full professor of Clinical Biochemistry at the Hospital for Sick Children and the Departments of Biochemistry, and Laboratory Medicine & Pathobiology at the University of Toronto in Toronto, Canada. He is the Director of Point of Care Testing program at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto.

Some words from his colleagues within the CPD

Twelve years. This is the time I have had the privilege to work with Khosrow in the context of the CPD-EC, first as Editor of the eNewsLetter and later as Chair of the C-PR and Vice-Chair of the CPD.

I must testify that Khosrow, as well as Ellis Jacobs before him, have created an environment conducive to collaboration and friendship that has fostered the development of an efficient Division with respect to its mandate: Communication and Publication.

During the last twelve years he has spared no effort in completing his numerous tasks, always ready to provide his help to whomever needed it.

On a personal note, I wish to express my gratitude to Khosrow for his constant support and friendship.

Thanks, Khosrow!

Prof. Edgard Delvin (CA)
former C-PR Chair

The IFCC and CPD committee has benefitted greatly from the chairmanship of Khosrow Adeli over the past six years and he has left big shoes to fill.

It was my privilege to serve the CPD and the IFCC under his leadership and so the end of his term is viewed with some poignancy.

During his term, a number of important initiatives were implemented in the overall IFCC communication and publication strategy and he leaves a substantial legacy for us to build and take forward.

We look forward to seeing him again, in another important role in the IFCC in the future.

Prof. Tahir Pillay (ZA)
former IFCC eNews Editor

Khosrow Adeli has a really pleasant personality that makes it very easy to get along with him.

This was the first impression I had about him when we first met in person in Buenos Aires in February 2018.

Previously, we had only exchanged e-mails, but even in those letters he was very stimulating and encouraging.

Since then, I got to know him better and I was happy that he accepted the Honorary membership of the Hungarian Society of Laboratory Medicine and we could share such a joyful and memorable occasion."

Prof. János KAPPELMAYER (HU)
eJIFCC Editor

CPD will miss his wide experience, dedication to work and commitment with IFCC mission.

Khosrow was a true team leader and always had a smart and precise advice for each project or issue.

Sometimes, we had to struggle with some really hard situations, but he always managed to solve them with tons of patience and kindness. These kind manners were a personal learning experience for me. I'm thankful to have met him!

Dr. Eduardo FREGGIARO (AR)
Publications/Distance Learning Coordinator

Khosrow is a kind-hearted and brilliant leader, who leaves a legacy of accomplishments and inspiration to the CPD.

He was a joy to work with, a pleasure to partner with and it was an honor to serve under his leadership.

Thank you, Khosrow, for your long-standing commitment to the CPD and looking forward to seeing you continue to lead success throughout the IFCC, Laboratory Medicine and to Healthcare!

Kind regards and with high respect,

Tricia Ravalico (US)
CPD Corporate Representative

WELCOME TAHIR PILLAY



Tahir Pillay

Tahir Pillay, the new Chair of Communications and Publications Division Executive Committee of the IFCC, is Chief Specialist, Professor and Head of the Department of Chemical Pathology, University of Pretoria and National Health Laboratory service, Steve Biko Academic Hospital and Director of the Division of Clinical Pathology and Clinical Pathology training programme, Pretoria, South Africa.

He graduated MBChB cum laude from the University of Natal, South Africa in the 1980s. He received a PhD in biochemistry from the University of Cambridge and completed his postgraduate training at Hammersmith Hospital, Imperial College, London and postdoctoral training at the University of California San Diego.

He is a Fellow of the Royal College of Pathologists and the College of Pathologists, South Africa.

He is currently discipline editor for the London-based Journal of Clinical Pathology and a member of the International Committee of the Royal College of Pathologists, London as well as being country advisor to the Royal College of Pathologists.

Best wishes for many successful results to the new Chair and many thanks to Khosrow for his contribution to IFCC life!

Open positions within IFCC

Calls for nominations are currently open within the following two Divisions:

SCIENTIFIC DIVISION (SD): Committee on Traceability in Laboratory Medicine (C-TLM)

One position within the C-TLM.

Applications should be sent via e-mail to the IFCC Office (paola.bramati@ifcc.org), no later than 10 February 2019.

EDUCATION AND MANAGEMENT DIVISION (EMD):

Committee on Education in the Use of Biomarkers in Diabetes (C-EUBD)

One position within the C-EUBD.

Applications should be sent via e-mail to the IFCC Office (cardinale@ifcc.org), no later than 17 February 2019.

**Please refer to your National Representative or Corporate Representative
for any information on procedures for nominations**

IFCC: THE YOUNG SCIENTISTS

IFCC-TFYS session reports

16th Panhellenic Congress of Clinical Chemistry

11-13 October 2018 – Alexandroupolis, Greece

by E. Konsta

EuSpLM & YS representative Greek Society

13 October 2018: The 16th Panhellenic Congress of Clinical Chemistry took place in Alexandroupolis, Greece, between 11-13 October, where a round table of IFCC Task Force Young Scientists was held on Saturday, October 13th as follows:

16:00-17:30 Symposium Theme: “Young Scientists in the field of Laboratory Medicine”

Moderators:

E. Konsta, MSc, PhD, EuSpLM, Faculty of Health and Caring Professions, University of West Attica, Greece

L. Louka, Chemist, MSc, Metropolitan Hospital, Athens, Greece.

Young Scientists speakers:

1. Education and application of clinical chemistry in Sweden?

P. Kompogiannis, Biomedical Sciences Student, University of West Attica, Athens, Greece?

2. Discovering the post-transcriptional regulation of HLA class I APM components and its clinical relevance in melanoma as a PhD student in Germany
M. Lazaridou Chemist, PhD Candidate in Institute for medical immunology, Halle (Saale), Germany

3. Succeeding as a young scientist

A. Velts, MSc Gene Technology, Head of Laboratory at West Tallinn Central Hospital, Tallinn, Estonia

P. K. Dabla, Chair IFCC-TFYS, joined the session through Skype and gave brief introduction of IFCC-TFYS. He invited young scientists to join and work together with TFYS vast network.



Young Scientists at the 16th Panhellenic Congress, with (centre) Dr Haliassos, president of the Greek Society of Clinical Chemistry - Clinical Biochemistry (GSCC-CB)

Article continued on next page

Young professionals constitute the future of laboratory medicine. Continuous and proper training in the field of laboratory medicine is necessary.

In addition, such continuous education is needed for advancements as well as competition in the medical field. It may include new practices, research and contact with innovative means; and it undoubtedly offers a huge advantage for those who seek opportunities for professional development.

IFCC is promoting the importance of networking and cooperation with colleagues across the world with

working groups and task forces which bring together people from all over the world.

The Task Force for Young Scientists (TF-YS) was created to facilitate the exchange of knowledge, ideas and experience between young professionals in laboratory medicine and other healthcare practice, and to contribute in the dissemination of the idea of the importance of Laboratory Specialist job and to help them finding their way throughout Europe and build their career by enabling access to many educational tools and to opportunities for mentoring and international exchange.

The 50° National Congress of the Italian Society Clinical Chemistry (SIBioC)

16 October 2018 – Naples, Italy

by Giulia Sancesario

Coordinator of SIBioC Young Scientists Working Group

16 October 2018: A special event was the Skype participation of **Prof. Pradeep Kumar Dabla**, invited by **Prof. Sergio Bernardini**, President SIBioC, and **Dr. Giulia Sancesario**, coordinator of SIBioC Young Scientists Working Group, at the Opening Ceremony of *the 50° National Congress of the Italian Society of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (SIBioC)*.

This event represents an important link between IFCC YS-TF and SIBioC YS WG, demonstrating the continuum between the IFCC YS TF and the YS belonging to the National Societies. The YS of the two groups had already met in Rome during the Conference “Laboratory Medicine: meeting the needs of the Mediterranean Nations” in July 2018, where TF-YS held a session, with the presentations by **Dr. Miljan Savkovic**, **Guilaine Boursier**, **Josep Miquel Bauça**, on “Inter-laboratory exchange of knowledge and technology”, “The mentor – mentee relationship” and “Research Perspective for Young Scientists”. Interestingly, the social dinner in front of the Colosseum was attended by young delegates from different countries and the young winners of the Roche Travel scholarship.

The reinforcement of the relationships between the IFCC-TFYS and national YS groups could be an important tool for disseminating initiatives and promoting the exchange and advancement of young professionals.

CI VEDIAMO A NAPOLI Martedì 16 Ottobre 2018

Non perdere l'inaugurazione del Congresso

Sala Newton
18.00 - 20.30
INAUGURAZIONE DEL CONGRESSO

18.00	Spettacolo "SIBioC Crea Valore" Sandartist Stefania Bruno
18.30	Saluto e Ringraziamenti del Presidente SIBioC Prof. Sergio Bernardini
18.40	Filmato Celebrativo "50 Congressi SIBioC" a cura di Martina Zaninotto
18.50	Saluto delle Autorità
19.30	Firma del Gemellaggio tra la SIBioC e la Kosova Association Clinical Chemistry Prof. Sergio Bernardini, Presidente SIBioC – Medicina di Laboratorio Dr. Shems Veseli, Presidente KACC Dr. Alma Lama, Ambasciatrice del Kosovo in Italia
19.40	Onorificenze SIBioC
20.00	Letture Magistrali "La Longevità, dalla Medicina Predittiva alla Medicina di Laboratorio" Prof. Franco Salvatore
20.45-22.00	Visita Museo* e Welcome Cocktail <i>*I posti sono limitati, ingressi ad esaurimento posti</i>

Congresso Nazionale SIBioC-Medicina di Laboratorio
Società Italiana di Biochimica Clinica e Biologia Molecolare Clinica **50°**

ACBICON

24-27 October 2018 – Kala Academy, Goa, India

by Pradeep K. Dabla
IFCC-TFYS

25 October 2018:

IFCC-TFYS organized an educational symposium, supported by the organizing committee of the 45th National Conference of ACBICON-2018, Kala Academy, Goa, India. The symposium entitled “Next Steps in Lab Medicine of the Future – Young Specialists & Technology” was successful. The session’s chairs were **Prof. Maurizio Ferrari**, IFCC President and **Prof. Abbas Ali Mahdi**, President ACBI.

The healthcare system is undergoing a major transformation worldwide. The clinical laboratory is seeing a rapid introduction of new technologies and rapid progress of science related to new biomarkers for diagnosis, prognosis and response to therapy. Both interpretation of tests and understanding the fastest and most cost effective approaches to testing is becoming a challenge. Thus, duties and responsibilities of laboratory scientists are still

evolving in the diversity of our profession. Laboratory medicine still attracts bright medical and scientific graduates to work in the field. There is an actual need to help young scientists in promoting the essential contributions of laboratory medicine at the centre of healthcare, as they represent the future of laboratory medicine.

The various topics covered were:

- 1) The state of Major Transformations in Healthcare and Medical Laboratory by **Prof. Praveen Sharma**, EB-ACBI, APFCB, IFCC.
- 2) Innovations & Skills – Advancing New Delivery Systems by **Prof. Damien Gruson**, EurSpeLM & Consultant IFCC-TFYS.
- 3) Laboratory Medicine vs. Clinical Medicine - Interface Linking by **Dr. Pradeep K. Dabla**, Chair IFCC-TFYS.



Article continued on next page

4). Education & Training Programmes Opportunities – Preparing Young Scientists by **Dr. Danni**, IFCC-TFYS & Dir Clinical Chemistry, University of Minnesota Medical Center Fairview, USA.

These topics covered a broad range of attributes and through the invaluable skills, capabilities, knowledge, experience and diversity of the speakers a new culture

and a common vision with leaders was developed. At the end, the session was open for discussion so that young scientists and participants could interact with world leaders in order to solve their queries.

IFCC-TFYS is thankful to the ACBICON-2018 organizing committee, to the IFCC & ACBI senior members and especially to the young participants.

IFCC Young Scientists for Task Force Symposium
24-27 October 2018 – CALILAB, Buenos Aires, Argentina

by Santiago Fares Taie
IFCC TF-YS

The IFCC TF-YS symposium took place during the congress **CALILAB in Buenos Aires between 24-27 October 2018**. The Argentinean congress was the perfect setting for a YS meeting, with more than 40 participants from all around Argentina.

The aim of the symposium was to encourage young scientists to participate actively in laboratory medicine, as well as to get them involved in the various activities and committees of their professional organization.

The first talk was conducted by **Santiago Fares Taie**, IFCC TF-YS and consisted on the IFCC TF-YS programs and activities.

The topics discussed were: Free webinars, Research booklet, Mentorship programme, Lab-Surfing.com, Radio El Microscopio and the Professional Scientific Exchange Programme (PSEP). All of these programs are available for YS from all around the world who are willing to communicate, network and improve their expertise in Laboratory Medicine.



Young Scientists at CALILAB 2018. In the centre, Santiago Fares Taie, IFCC TF-YS member and, among them, Dr Rosa Sierra-Amor, IFCC EB, Dr Eduardo Freggiaro, IFCC CPD and CALILAB, and Dr Gernard Gouget, IFCC ETD.

The second talk was in charge of **Benjamin Barakian** from CoReBio (Argentinean National Association for Laboratory Medicine Residents).

He explained the advantages of the residency system in Argentina and the different types of residencies available in the country (clinical chemistry, microbiology, immunology, toxicology, genetics).

Moreover, CoReBio coordinates plenty of academic activities (example: congress, symposiums, meetings,

surveys, etc). Every month, all the residents are invited to the Hospital Garrahan to participate in a dynamic symposium where residents from different hospitals share experiences and lectures.

This symposium was possible thanks to **Dr. Rosa Sierra-Amor (IFCC)**, **Dr. Bernard Gouget (IFCC)**, **Dr. Nilda Fink (CALILAB)** and **Dr. Eduardo Freggiaro (CALILAB)** that helped in the approval and organization of this symposium, reassuring coordination with Young Scientists.

2nd Conference of SIBioC – Young Scientists Working Group (YS-WG)

“Laboratory Medicine: Specialists of Tomorrow”

3 December 2018 - Rome, Italy

by Giulia Sancesario

Chair, SIBioC Young Scientist Working Group

Ada Aita, Marco Perrone, Valeria D’Argenio, Massimiliano Ammirabile

Executive Board, SIBioC Young Scientist Working Group

3 December 2018 - University of Tor Vergata, in Rome, hosted the 2nd annual Conference of the Young Scientists Working Group of the Italian Society of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (SIBioC YS-WG) (<https://ys18.werfen-events.com/>).

The conference titled **“Laboratory Medicine: Specialists of Tomorrow”** focused on recent advances in Digital Health, Information Technologies and to the

New Generation of laboratory professionals, with the development of Scientific platforms and International networks.

The Conference was organized by the Chair of the SIBioC YS-WG, Giulia Sancesario, and the Executive Board, Ada Aita, Marco Perrone, Valeria D’Argenio, and Massimiliano Ammirabile, under the auspices of the SIBioC, the European Federation of Clinical



Prof. Bernardini, SIBioC President and Young Scientists attending the 2nd Conference of SIBioC- Young Scientists Working Group (YS-WG): *“Laboratory Medicine: Specialists of Tomorrow”*

Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (EFLM) and the International Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (IFCC).

More than 100 young laboratory specialists and residents attended the conference. After the greetings of the SIBioC President, Prof. Sergio Bernardini, and of the Tor Vergata University Dean, Prof. Giuseppe Novelli, Prof. Plebani opened the Conference with a lecture on “*Laboratory Medicine: the Cinderella of the Health System?*”. He presented a “manifesto” for the new generation of laboratory professionals, encouraging young professionals to build technical, as well as administrative, skills to guarantee health care and patients needs.

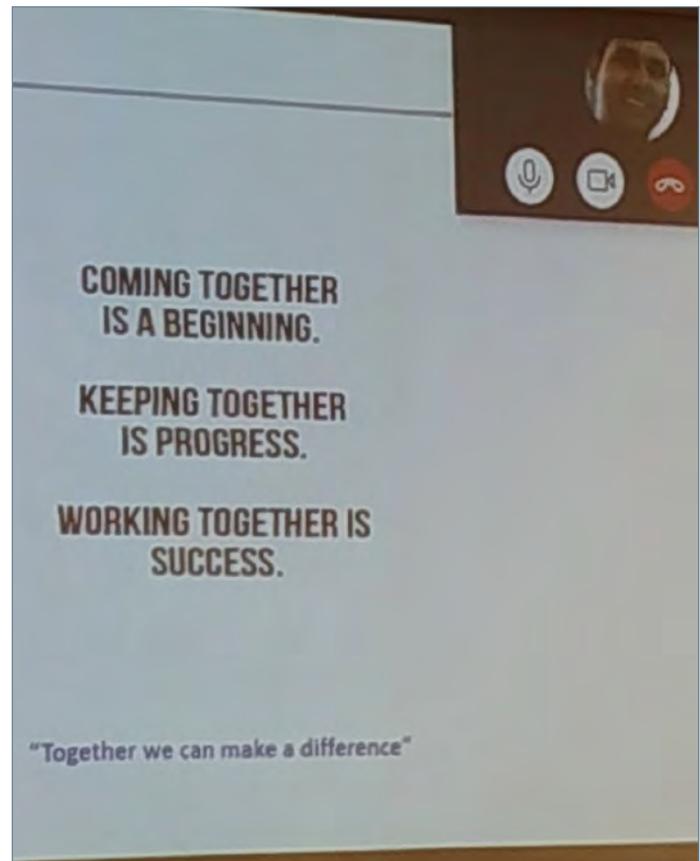
Big data, quality, errors and risk management with a special focus on extra-analytical phases were key topics of scientific sessions. Furthermore, the integration between laboratory professionals and clinicians but also the importance of the Digital Health and of the Information Technologies in management of the total testing process was largely treated during the Conference, especially with the talks of Debora Angeletti, Cristiano Ialongo and Julien Favresse.

The Conference also represented an opportunity to meet international young scientists for a fruitful exchange of scientific ideas and experiences. Prof. Pradeep Kumar Dabla, via Skype from Delhi, as a chair of the IFCC Task Force-Young Scientists in Lab Medicine presented the activities of the task force (webinars, education and networking sessions in conferences, etc...).

The main aims of the IFCC YS-TF are to cross the barriers and to create a strong young scientists support group, which actually involves more than 30 global IFCC member countries covering global regions, including Italy.

The talk of Anna Velts-Lindh, the head of Laboratory of the West Tallinn Central Hospital (Estonia), suggested how to seek to have better chances at succeeding as a young scientist.

Next, Santiago Fares Taie, via Skype from Argentina, presented the LAB SURFING (<https://www.lab-surfing.com>), a platform designed for creating a community



Remark from Prof. Pradeep Kumar Dabla's talk

where lab professionals can find colleagues all over the world, exchange ideas, information and opportunities.

Finally, Wahid Ali, via Skype from India, shared his experience on the Exchange Program of the IFCC (PSEP) at Tor Vergata University Hospital, in Rome, Italy.

SIBioC supported the participation of residents, fellows and young scientists at the conference, furthermore Werfen offered three Travel Grants.

The Annual Conference of SIBioC YS-WG is an excellent scientific initiative, which allows young scientists to expand their cultural and scientific horizons, as well as their professional growth.

SIBioC promotes the education and training for YS through meetings and scientific conferences organized by YS. This is clearly an added value allowing to expand scientific interests and to work in a highly qualified and challenging environment, supported by the Scientific Society.

CONTRIBUTE TO IFCC eNEWS

The European Union *In Vitro* Diagnostic Medical Device Regulation 2017/746 (IVDR): overview and implications for the future of laboratory medicine

by Gary L. Myers

Chair, Joint Committee for Traceability in Laboratory Medicine (JCTLM)

Consultant to IFCC Scientific Division

James Pierson-Perry

Siemens Healthcare Diagnostics and Corporate Member

Representative to IFCC Scientific Division

Graham H. Beastall

Chair, JCTLM WG for Traceability, Education and Promotion

INTRODUCTION

In 1998 the European Community implemented the *In Vitro* Diagnostic Directive 98/79/EC (IVDD). This Directive addressed the safety, quality and performance of *in vitro* diagnostic medical devices (IVDs). The aim of the Directive was to ensure that IVDs do not compromise the health and safety of patients, users and third parties and attain the performance levels specified by the manufacturer. IVDs that are compliant with the IVDD are awarded the respected Conformité Européenne (CE) mark. Compliance with the IVDD became mandatory in the European Community in December 2003, since when it became established as a global standard for IVDs.

One essential requirement of the IVDD had particular relevance for IFCC: *“The traceability of values assigned to calibrators and/or control materials must be assured through available reference measurement procedures and/or available reference materials of a higher order”*. This requirement led to the formation in 2002 of the Joint Committee for Traceability in Laboratory Medicine (JCTLM), bringing together the sciences of metrology, laboratory medicine and laboratory quality management to help the IVD industry meet traceability requirements of the IVDD. JCTLM now maintains a global database of reference materials, reference methods and reference laboratory services, which are widely used by IVD manufacturers.

The database is accessible at the following link:

<http://www.bipm.org/jctlm/>.

PUBLICATION OF THE IVDR

Experience gained from the operation of the IVDD, coupled with the changing nature of IVDs and laboratory medicine practice led to calls for a revision of the IVDD. After extensive consultation the revision took the form of a legally binding Regulation rather than a Directive. Accordingly, the European Union *In Vitro* Diagnostic Medical Device Regulation 2017/746 (IVDR) was published on 5 May 2017 [1]. The Regulation is the most direct form of EU law and is immediately applicable and enforceable in all Member States. Furthermore, Member States must ensure their national law does not define the subject matter of the Regulation any further. This is more stringent than the earlier IVDD, which allowed for some degree of customization by each individual EU country. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that the IVDR will become the new global standard for IVDs.

TIMESCALE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE IVDR

There is a five-year implementation period for the IVDR. This means that until 26 May 2022 IVD manufacturers can comply with, and make application for compliance with, either the IVDD or the IVDR. Thereafter, no CE marks based on the IVDD may be issued and there is a two-year period of grace for exiting

compliance with the IVDD and obtaining compliance with the IVDR.

KEY CHANGES INCORPORATED INTO THE IVDR

The new regulation clarifies and expands the scope of regulated IVDs to include:

- Tests providing information about the pre-disposition of a medical condition or disease, for example genetic tests
- Tests providing information to predict treatment response to medicines, for example companion diagnostics
- Medical software, which is explicitly mentioned in the definition of IVDs
- Lab developed tests (LDTs) used within health institutions, which are also required to meet safety and performance requirements

Key changes in the IVDR compared to the IVDD include:

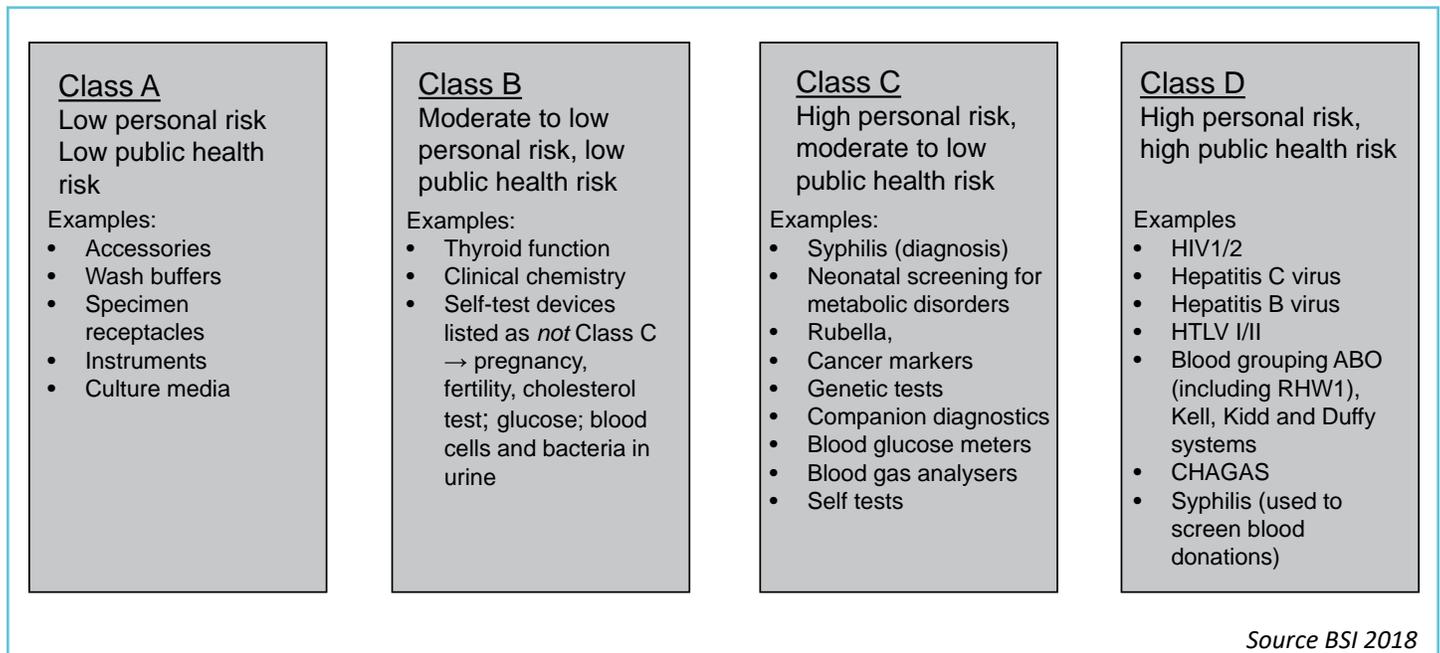
- Risk categories:
 - There is a move from a list-based approach to a risk-based approach (following the Global Harmonization Task Force rules for classification) focusing on impact on the patient

- The implementation of four risk categories – A (low risk) to D (high risk)
- The introduction of a new Notified Body Organizational Group (NBOG) codes for the Notified Bodies (NB) designated to assess conformity with the IVDR

Examples of the risk categories are shown in Figure 1.

- Conformity assessment routes:
 - These have been amended to reflect new classification rules
 - More manufacturers will need to use a NB
 - Approximately 20% of IVDs are currently subject to NB approval
 - The number of IVDs requiring certification by a NB is estimated to increase 4-fold under new IVDR
- Post-market reporting and transparency
 - Post-market performance follow-up (PMPF) is a new requirement
 - An electronic portal will be introduced where manufacturers can report:
 - serious incidents and safety corrective actions
 - field safety notices and summary reports
 - Devices must be fitted with a unique device identification

Figure 1 Examples of the risk categories



Source BSI 2018

IMPLICATIONS OF THE IVDR FOR IVD MANUFACTURERS

The implications of compliance with the IVDR have raised major concerns with the IVD manufacturers. These include:

- Effort and cost to update and maintain Technical Files
 - There is no 'grandfathering' ~80% of manufacturers' products will require NB involvement to put on the market (formal submissions)
 - Many new standardized documents and requirements
 - Difficulty in finding relevant data for old products that will require new work to meet the IVDR requirements
 - Burdensome lifecycle management (some Technical Files need annual updates)
 - Estimates of GBP25-50K per product, then ongoing NB fees and post-commercial lifecycle management costs
 - Creation of a major drain on internal resources and competition for external consultants
- More rigorous clinical evidence is required
 - Manufacturers must provide evidence of safety and performance according to a device's assigned risk class
 - If performance data are missing, the Intended Purpose will need to be limited or additional studies will need to be performed
- Many literature searches will be required to support claims of:
 - Clinical performance
 - Scientific validity
- New labeling requirements
 - Lot-to-lot variation criteria are not yet defined, but may impact on registrations worldwide
 - No agreement yet for the uniform device interface (UDI) symbol
 - A requirement to submit labeling in all languages where the product is sold in the EU
- Notified Bodies

- The IVDR increases the workload and scope of NBs
- NB must be designated before they can certify the site or register products to the IVDR
- Many NB are not yet IVDR designated and are unlikely to be so until mid-2019 or later
- No consulting services. NB won't answer questions or give guidance due to fear of being considered 'consultants'
- Agreement between Notified NB and the EU Commission
 - Groupings are not finalized for sampling of Class B and C devices
 - The Intended Purpose has more requirements that need to be added to the instructions for use (IFU), which may impact on registrations worldwide
- European Databank on Medical Devices (EUDAMED)
 - The implementation date has not yet been communicated
 - The functionality of the Post-Market Surveillance and Vigilance module of EUDAMED database has not yet been defined
- Impact of BREXIT
 - ~45% of medical devices CE marked in Europe utilize UK NBs [2]
 - ~70% of non-EU based manufacturers use UK NB as European Authorized Representatives (EAR) [2]
 - UK-based EAR will need to move or need new offices in a EU country
 - A change in the EAR address will require updates to the NB address on product labeling

IMPLICATIONS OF THE IVDR FOR SOCIETIES AND LABORATORY MEDICINE SPECIALISTS

The implications of the IVDR for users of IVDs may not be as profound as for the IVD manufacturers but users should be aware of the need for compliance with the IVDR when selecting their analytical platforms and systems. The IVDR is a complex piece of legislation

and it is unreasonable to expect individual laboratory medicine specialists to have a detailed knowledge. Therefore, support mechanisms are required. These may include:

- A role for national and international organizations (including IFCC):
 - In providing education and information about the IVDR
 - In monitoring and collating experience following IVDR roll out
 - In working with IVD manufacturers to better understand IVDR implementation

The users of IVDs will have several concerns about the impact of the IVDR on the service that they are able to provide. Those concerns may include:

- Knowing how to find out if an IVD is IVDR compliant
- The withdrawal of current IVDs because of the cost or complexity of IVDR compliance
- The cost of current and future IVDs
- A delay in new IVDs reaching the market
- The advent of non-compliant IVDs with consequent negative impact on the harmonization of clinical laboratory results

CONCLUSIONS

We are now 18 months into the five-year implementation phase of the IVDR. The IVD manufacturers are aware of the implications and have concerns about the additional documentation and information

they will be required to provide. Those concerns are heightened by the absence of specific details about the practical implementation of the IVDR. Users of IVDs are largely ignorant of the IVDR and its implications for them, meaning that support mechanisms are required to ensure that they can make informed future decisions.

The next two years provide an important window of time for the key stakeholders to collaborate and share information and experience. Such collaboration is essential if the overall aim of the IVDR on improving patient safety is to be realized.

REFERENCES

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2. UK Notified Body BSI Sets Out Clear Post-Brexit Paths As It Goes Dutch. (2018, 10 Dec). Retrieved 10 Dec 2018 from <https://pharmaintelligence.informa.com/resources/product-content/uk-notified-body-bsi-sets-out-clear-post-brexit-paths-as-it-goes-dutch>

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors thank Andrea Tomko of Siemens Healthcare Diagnostics, Inc. for her assistance in bringing together the IVD manufacturer background input.

News from the IFCC Website



eJIFCC Vol 29 n°4 - December 2018

The fourth issue of eJIFCC for 2018 is now available. This issue incorporates the second part of a series of manuscripts that were presented at the conference entitled “Laboratory medicine: meeting the needs of the Mediterranean nations”, held in Rome, between July 2-4, 2018, with professor Sergio Bernardini as the Conference President. Articles address the following topics: • Improving efficiency in laboratory medicine; • Perinatal and pregnancy laboratory medicine; • Mediterranean diet and the area’s specific diseases.

[Read more](#)

e-Cardiology in Moscow

– Connecting clinicians and technology to implement eHealth in daily practice –



by Bernard Guget
Chair, IFCC-MHBLM

Damien Gruson
EC-member IFCC-ETD

Sergio Bernardini
Chair, IFCC-ETD

Digital Health will have a great impact on the way specialists in Lab Medicine, and medical professionals work and interact between themselves and with their patients. New tools and data will change our daily professional activities.

Sergio Bernardini, Chair IFCC-Emerging Technology Division (ETD), D. Gruson, Member EC-ETD and Bernard Guget chair, Committee on Mobile Health and Bioengineering in Lab Medicine (C-MHBLM), were invited by Prof. Enrico G Caiani, PhD, Chairman ESC WG on e-Cardiology, Istituto di Elettronica e Ingegneria del l'Informazione e delle Telecomunicazioni (IEIIT-CNR) Milano (IT), to participate at "the 5th European congress on e-Cardiology and e-health" in Moscow (RU), on October 29-30th 2018", chaired by Professor Philipp Kopylov, Sechenov University-Moscow, Head of Institute of personalized medicine and Prof. Hugo Saner, Swiss Cardiovascular Centre, University Hospital Bern (CH).

The congress center was located at the Ivan Sechenov University, in Moscow, one of the most prestigious largest research medical university in Russia. Today, the university has many partnerships with different foreign universities and organizations. Its main areas of research are molecular medicine, personalized, regenerative and translational medicine. The Sechenov University is the leader in medical education and a platform for the development and implementation in clinical practice on e-health and e-cardiology.

This medical congress had the aim to contribute to a successful translation from research and development to clinical applications of digital health by bringing the various stakeholders together: clinicians, mathematicians, IT specialists, bioengineers, academics, economists and many others.

The scientific program was officially endorsed by the International Society for Telemedicine and eHealth (ISfTeH), the European Health Telematics association (EHTEL), and the Russian Societies of cardiology, heart failure, arterial hypertension, and Clinical electrophysiology and cardio-stimulation.

This event provided multilateral dialogue clinically oriented on the development and implementation of modern and digital technologies. For the first time, IFCC gave its auspices at a medical event on e-cardiology contributing to build a stronger bridge connecting with clinicians, other key stakeholders and representatives of the major Cardio device Companies.

It was interesting to discover at the exhibition, the miniaturization trends with cardiology devices, as the new leadless pacemakers, the novel design of stents, the new heart-monitoring and wireless devices. Cardiology remains the second-biggest medical device area.

It was also surprising to see that many bio-medical companies are moving from strictly being a manufacturer to a service provider helping health systems to better manage populations (i.e., instead of being a device maker, biomedical companies are becoming a management company targeting chronic diseases)

The e-Cardiology congress covered a wide area of specialized computer methods in cardiovascular image processing, computational knowledge discovery, artificial intelligence, intelligent data analysis, bio-signal processing, signal modelling, databases, intra- and inter-hospital communication, e-health and mobile applications, and predictive models development.

It was really the perfect infrastructure for the IFCC-ETD team to interact on the topic "Smartphone as a lab".

Article continued on next page

Prof. Bernardini presented an update on POCT for cardiac biomarkers, Dr. Gouget paved the way for e-laboratory medicine and Prof. Gruson discussed the smart digital lab and new applications in cardiology.

The interdisciplinary nature of this conference provided a niche to discuss up-to-date technological applications representing an added value on the EDT actions. It allowed to establish productive collaborations with clinical and bioengineering associations.

It was also an opportunity to reinforce our knowledge on the emerging field of e-Health, including patient management and monitoring of «implanted» devices, telehealth and telepresence, mobile apps development and evaluation, patient empowerment and digital health literacy, and big data analytics.

The IFCC team enjoyed Moscow after the session. It was impossible to miss the beautiful historic Metro

and the Red Square, heart and soul of Russia and the most famous landmark of the city with its fantastic sights such as the St Basil's Cathedral as well as the symbolic Great Bell Tower and the Lenin Mausoleum. We strolled around the Kremlin to appreciate its fantastic sights such as the Assumption Cathedral which held the ceremonies of Tsars and Emperors; also visited the Bosco Café inside the historic shopping mall GUM, totally illuminated during the winter festivities!

Before departing, a social dinner has hosted at the Caucasian restaurant "Sherwood" with Prof. Oleg Medvedev from the Lomonosov Moscow State University, allowing us to force the boundaries of cardiovascular science discovering the values of Vodka such as preventing clots, strokes and other heart diseases, ..., if consumed with moderation!



IFCC participants to the 5th European Congress on e-Cardiology and e-health
L-R: Dr D. Gruson (BE) ETD EC member, Dr B. Gouget (FR), C-MHBLM Chair, Prof. S. Bernardini (IT), ETD Chair

University of Zimbabwe - external examiners

by Tomris Ozben

*IFCC Executive Board Member, Treasurer
IFCC Foundation for Emerging Nations,
Member of the Board of Directors*

Several International Universities are appointing International Academicians as External Examiners, Lecturers and Supervisors for all programs including undergraduate (BA's and B.Sc.) and Post-graduate (M.Sc. and Ph.D.) degree programs. One of them is the University of Zimbabwe (UZ) in Harare.

The University of Zimbabwe (UZ) Senate approved and appointed me as the External Examiner for the Post-Graduate programs upon the proposal of the Department of Chemical Pathology, College of Health Sciences on October 17th, 2017 for the M.Sc. and on October 31, 2018 for the Ph.D. students.

According to the term of reference, the first year, I reviewed the exam questions of the M.Sc. students and in 2018, I attended the Departmental Panel of the Examiners' meeting held on November 20th, 2018 for the dissertation of four M.Sc. students. In addition, I reviewed the thesis of a Ph.D. student and submitted my written report prepared according to the regulations.

During my visit to the University of Zimbabwe, I participated in several events and delivered my talks on the related topics. One of them was the launch of a campaign on CANCER NUTRIETICS organized by the Zimbabwe Association of Clinical Biochemistry (ZACB) with the honorable presence of Zimbabwe Minister of Health.

The campaign received a great interest by the media including interviews with me and the ZACB President for several Newspapers and a TV program named "Good Morning Zimbabwe". In addition, I delivered a guest lecture on "Liquid Profiling" at the Zimbabwe University.

On this occasion, I would like to give you some information about the Zimbabwe University and external examiners.

UNIVERSITY OF ZIMBABWE

The University of Zimbabwe (UZ) in Harare, is the oldest and top ranked university in Zimbabwe. It was founded through a special relationship with the University of London and it opened its doors to its first students in 1952. The university has ten faculties (Agriculture, Arts, Commerce, Education, Engineering, Law, Science, Social Studies, Veterinary Sciences and College of Health Sciences) offering a wide variety of degree programs in many specialized research centers and institutes. The university is accredited through the National Council for Higher Education, under the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education. English is the language of teaching.

UNIVERSITY OF ZIMBABWE COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES

The College of Health Sciences, commonly known as the Medical School, was initially established in 1963, under the auspices of the University of Birmingham, United Kingdom. The College of Health Sciences has undergone significant growth and expansion. It is the leading training institution for health professionals in Zimbabwe. It currently offers degree programs in Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy, Nursing, Medical Laboratory Sciences, Rehabilitation, Radiology and Health Education & Health Promotion.

The College is home to 21 teaching departments, one School and one Institute of Continuing Health Education offering a wide variety of educational, research and career options within the context of health care.

The Institute of Continuing Health Education in the College caters for the special postgraduate training and continuing health education needs for all the health professionals.

Article continued on next page



Prof. T. Ozben, External Examiner, Harare University of Zimbabwe, along with some students

The College of Health Sciences is committed to the training of Health Care Delivery personnel to meet the health needs of the people of Zimbabwe. Training is geared towards primary health care with emphasis on a preventive rather than curative approach.

As an institute of higher learning, the College takes academic excellence as the hallmark of its existence. To that extent, the College encourages the promotion and enhancement of science through relevant research.

Vision statement

- To be a reference and international leader for teaching, training, research in Africa and beyond in evidence-based training, innovative student learning and health care delivery.

Mission statement

- To provide an environment for evidence based, high quality, community oriented and community driven training and learning of health professionals. To be a clinical and research center

of excellence and source of high-quality health consultancy services.

Postgraduate programs

- The University of Zimbabwe offers postgraduate honors degrees; master’s degree and doctoral degrees.
- Postgraduate honors programs, also known as special honors programs incorporate coursework, examinations and a compulsory project module.
- Master’s degrees by coursework and project are designated M.Sc. and are of one to two years duration. They incorporate coursework and project modules.
- Master’s degrees by research thesis are designated M.Phil. and require a minimum of two years study.
- The doctoral program, D.Phil., is by research thesis. Students who are carrying out an M.Phil. study, but have not yet submitted their thesis,

may apply to their faculty to upgrade their study to the D.Phil. program.

Purposes and functions of external examiners

- The General Academic Regulations of the University provide appointment of External Examiners to moderate all formal examinations for all programs including undergraduate (BA's and BSc) and postgraduate degree (MSc and PhD) programs.
- The University normally appoints External Examiners for a three-year cycle during which the External Examiners moderate examination papers every year, but visit the institution every other year to participate in the examination process.
- Appointment of External Examiners is made by the Senate on the recommendations of the Departmental Boards based on the high academic standing and CV.

Selection, appointment and period of service of external examiners

- Nominations from Departmental Boards should be accompanied by an outline of the proposed External Examiner's credentials. Nominations should be made only after the Chairperson of Department has secured the agreement of the proposed External Examiner.
- Only persons of sufficient seniority and experience to be able to command authority and offer the expertise required should be appointed.
- An External Examiner should not normally be appointed from a department or University or institution where a member of the inviting department is serving as an examiner.
- Normally, there is only one visiting External Examiner for a Department.
- External Examiners from outside the country will be invited to visit the Departments during the sessional examinations every other year during their period of appointment.

The functions of external examiners

- to ensure that the assessment system is fair and fairly operated in classification of students in line with international practice;

- to act as an independent source of assessment in subjects not only confirming or amending the internal marks, but also commenting and giving advice on course content, balance and structure of the degree programs and assessment procedures;
- to moderate borderline cases between 'pass' and 'fail' and between different grades within the marking scheme and to help adjudicate in cases of conflicting marking;
- to confer with the panels of Internal Examiners and assist the panels in preparing recommendations for appropriate Boards of Examiners. The External Examiner with the concurrence of the Chief Examiner (normally the Chairperson of Department), may call students for a viva voce examination;
- to attend, whenever possible, and advise the appropriate Board(s) of Examiners;
- The above functions must be carried out with regard to the University's General Academic Regulations and Regulations for Specific Programs.

The main duties of an external examiners

- to evaluate all forms of assessment which contribute to the students' degree results;
- to evaluate, and to ensure fairness and consistency in the assessment process;
- to moderate assessed work at module and program level;



Panel of the Examiners' meeting held on November 20, 2018 for the dissertation of four M.Sc. students.

- to comment on draft examination papers and assessment tasks as appropriate;
- to report on the structure, content, academic standards and teaching of programs;
- to comment on any alleged cases of assessment irregularities.

Review of question papers

- The External Examiner shall be asked to review the draft questions to check if they are appropriate for the examinations for which they are prepared.
- The External Examiner may propose amendments to any examination questions and return his comments to the Chairperson of Department under strict confidential cover through a courier within two weeks of having received the draft questions.

- The department concerned shall make proposed amendments in the question papers before they are printed, packaged and sealed.

Report from external examiners

- Each External Examiner is requested to provide a confidential written report at the end of his examining duties to the Vice Chancellor via e-mail and not to the Chairpersons of Departments or anyone else.
- External Examiners are encouraged to make any comments they wish, including observations on teaching, course structure and course content, as well as the examinations themselves.

Travel and accommodation arrangements

The Examinations Office will make all travel and accommodation bookings for External Examiners. The visits should not exceed a maximum of four days.



Prof. T. Ozben, External Examiner, Harare University of Zimbabwe, with examiners colleagues and authorities

NEWS FROM REGIONAL FEDERATIONS AND MEMBER SOCIETIES



News from the Argentine Biochemistry Foundation (FBA)

The X CALILAB 2018 Congress

by Rosa Sierra-Amor

eNews Member

Regional Representative, IFCC EB

Nilda Fink

Chair, Scientific Committee - CALILAB 2018

The X CALILAB 2018 Congress organized by the Argentine Biochemistry Foundation, (FBA in Spanish) had the auspices of CUBRA, IFCC National society, and took place in the city of Buenos Aires on October 24-27, 2018, at the recently opened Convention Centre. The success of this 10th edition was the result of a highly scientific program and academic level.

The attendance of 2,000 participants, 660 professionals registered for the courses, a record of 275 abstracts submitted and the participation of 30 diagnostic companies in the Lab Expo as sponsors was so well received. The activities proposed by the industry offered several alternatives for participants attending to an enriching experience on four days of the Congress.

The opening ceremony was attended by numerous colleagues, and various institutions as the IFCC, COLABIOCLI, Foundation José Luis Castaño, and Unified Confederation of Biochemistry of the Republic Argentina (CUBRA), among others. (Photo)

Dr. Nilda Fink highlighted the team work carried out by members of the Scientific Committee, among whom 18 invited from different countries, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Paraguay and Uruguay. It should be noted that through the IFCC-Abbott VLP Program three leading experts, Dr. Rosa Sierra-Amor, Prof. Maurizio Ferrari and Dr. Bernard Gouget participated this year. Also, with the economic support of the Foundation

José Luis Castaño from Spain, the participation of Dr. Yayhoui and Dr. Queraltó Compañó became possible as well.

Dr. Claudio Duymovich, President FBA and the Organizing Committee of the Congress stressed the fact that professionals were very committed to quality and noted that CALILAB was for all, laboratories of urban centers up to those far away in Argentina, a unique opportunity to be updated in a world of technological changes.

The Congress Opening Lecture was given by Dr. Khosrow Adeli, a renowned Canadian specialist, Chairman of the Committee of Communications and Publications of the IFCC, and Professor of Clinical Biochemistry at "The Hospital for Sick Children", University of Toronto, Canada: "*Value and impact of the clinical laboratory in health care*".

In addition, the scientific program included two plenary lectures, 18 simultaneous conferences and 18 symposia. As part of the Educational program, there were 6 pre-Congress courses, 3 courses intra-congress and 9 workshops. An important number of approved abstracts were presented in the program as free communications.

During the closing ceremony, the following awards were given:

Article continued on next page



Opening Ceremony CALILAB 2018.

L-R: Prof. Maurizio Ferrari, Past-President IFCC; Rosa Sierra-Amor, IFCC Regional Representative COLABIOCLI; Nilda Fink, Chair, Scientific Committee; Claudio Duymovich, President FBA; Stella Raymondo, President COLABIOCLI; Alejandra Arias, President CUBRA

1st Place: Towards harmonization of molecular diagnostic methods: burden of Epstein-Barr virus in Argentina II-first international standard WHO-EBV calibration strategies.

By Fellner, MD, Durand KA, Rodriguez MA, Irazu L, Picconi MA. Grupo de estudio diagnóstico de EBV en Argentina- Laboratorio Nacional de Referencia de EBV-ANLIS "Carlos G. Malbrán".

2nd Place: Development and preliminary validation of a method of inmunotransparencia applicable to the diagnosis of Multiple sclerosis.

By Facio ML, García M, Alejandro M, Yasuda E, Bresciani P. Facultad de Farmacia y Bioquímica de la Universidad de Buenos Aires.

3rd Place: Reference intervals of new parameters in blood of a pediatric population.

By Benavides C, García RV, Goedelmann CJ, González Cid MP, Sala MC, Chaler EA, Durando MC. Hospital de Pediatría Garrahan.

As well, seven honorary diplomas were given to very high-quality abstract presentations. And the COCERBIN award was given to:

Towards harmonization of molecular diagnostic methods. Load of Epstein - Barr virus in Argentina IV, new approaches to the performance of multicenter.

By Rodríguez MA, Irazu L, Fellner MD, Durand KA, Picconi MA, Laboratorio Nacional de Referencia, EBV-ANLIS "Carlos G. Malbrán".



News from Pakistan: "Promoting research in the area of vitamin D"

A course held under the auspices of the IFCC

by Sibtain Ahmed

*Consultant Chemical Pathologist,
Aga Khan University (AKU), Karachi, Pakistan*

Vitamin D (25OHD) deficiency affects over one billion people worldwide. For decades, adequate circulating 25OHD levels are considered essential for maintenance of bone health and the discovery of vitamin D receptor (VDR) on almost every tissue of the body has broadened the horizon for conducting research in this area. In the literature there is evidence of high rates of vitamin D deficiency in Pakistan despite appreciable levels of sunshine. Despite adequate research activities in the diverse fields of vitamin D study in Pakistan, large knowledge gaps and wide unexplored areas with unanswered questions for the passionate researchers persist.

In order to address the growing need of research in this multifaceted area the Research Group of our institute 'Bone and Mineral Diseases Research Group' in collaboration with the departments of Community Health Sciences and Pathology & Laboratory Medicine, AKU, Karachi, Pakistan held a course titled "Promoting Research in the Area of Vitamin D" on November 14-16,

2018. The course took place at the main AKU campus under the auspices of IFCC and Pakistan Society of Chemical Pathologists (PSCP). The course was promoted through electronic and social media platforms as well as flyers distributed to various institutes and hospitals to ensure maximum participation.

The course was organized by Dr. Romaina Iqbal (Associate Professor Community Health Sciences AKU) in collaboration with Dr. Aysha Habib Khan (Associate Professor & section head Clinical Chemistry AKU). The course faculty and the 16 pre-registered participants of the course came from a variety of background including clinicians, public health professionals, representatives from the ministry of health and basic biological scientists. The course was designed as a full day course spread over a period of 3 days and 13 CME credit hours were awarded. The program was based on talks by eminent experts of the country, group activity sessions followed by group presentations, debates and discussions among the participants and



Participants of the course busy in taking the pre test



Computer session: online libraries for literature search

Article continued on next page

faculty on various research related issues and brain storming of ideas how to address the knowledge gaps.

Day 1 of the course was held in the tutorial rooms of the beautiful Jumma Building at AKU main campus in Karachi. There was a formal inaugural session with the welcome note by Dr. Romaina Iqbal followed by a formal introductory session of all participants and faculty. In the beginning a pre-test was given by participants followed by the first talk of the day from Dr. Lena Jafri (Assistant Professor Clinical Chemistry AKU). She discussed the physiology of vitamin D focusing on production, sources, metabolism, mechanism of action as well as the pathological consequences. Her session was interactive, and the participants worked in pairs. Dr. Aysha Habib Khan followed and gave an Insight on a Pakistani perspective of research in the area of vitamin D. She emphasized on the still existing gaps that and the neglected areas. The course attendees were then taken to the computer lab where Mr. Khawaja Mustafa (Faculty of Health Sciences Library) taught them about the use of various online libraries including PubMed and Pakmedinet etc., to strengthen their literature search. The lunch break was followed by a highly informative session on food fortification with Vitamin D Program in Pakistan presented

by Dr. Abid Sheikh (Provincial Program Manager-Food Fortification Program Nutrition International). The highlights of the final hours of the day were a talk by Dr. Romaina Iqbal on how to formulate a research question and participants worked in groups to come up with a research question of their own. The group sessions were chaired by Dr. Sibtain Ahmed (Senior Instructor and Consultant Clinical Chemistry AKU), Dr. Hafsa Majid (Senior Instructor and Consultant Clinical Chemistry AKU) and Dr. Lena Jafri.

The next morning began with a talk on Integrated Management of Neonatal and Childhood Illness (IM-NCI) program in Pakistan and its linkage with Vitamin D deficiency by Dr. Khadija Humayun (Associate professor Pediatrics AKU). The next hour was based on a presentation addressing Vitamin D related outcomes and its influence on fracture management due to osteoporosis by Dr. Shahryar Noordin (Associate professor Orthopedic surgery AKU). These two sessions produced a variety of ideas by the participants for potential research questions. The following lecture was by Dr. Fazal Arain (Assistant Professor Basic Biological Sciences AKU) who taught about various methods that can be utilized for in-vivo and in-vitro biochemical testing of vitamin D and potential research topics



Group photograph of course participants and faculty

were discussed. The attendees learned about the various study designs and specific population-based studies by Dr. Romaina Iqbal. Lunch was followed by a talk by Dr. Hafsa Majid about the cutoffs used for interpretation of biochemical levels of vitamin D. She discussed various guidelines followed by a debate regarding development of cutoffs in Pakistani population and the formation of taskforces and working groups to fill the gaps. The participants were then taught by Dr. Romaina Iqbal how to translate their research questions. The participants then assembled in their previously set up groups; and resumed work on their overnight research questions and developed their own theories.

The final day initiated with a dialogue on surrogates of vitamin D and enigmas of Vitamin D deficiency in Pakistan by Dr. Aysha Habib Khan. With the shifting paradigms of deficiency to vitamin D toxicity and its consequences, the next talk by Dr. Qamar Masood (Associate Professor and Consultant Endocrinologist

AKU) addressed this issue. As budget and finances are an integral part of any research study the next session was focused on the budget plan development by Mr. Yaser Arafat (Assistant Manager Community Health Sciences AKU). Following lunch, the participants disseminated in clusters and were given an hour to refine their research proposals with the addition of budget and timelines.

Each group then presented their proposal and the faculty and fellow participants were asked to criticize and present their mistakes aimed at fine-tuning of proposals. The purpose of this group activity was to promote collaboration and sharing of ideas which can be further pursued as potential research projects. The course was concluded with thanks and appreciation by the chief guest Dr. Imran Siddiqui (Professor Clinical Chemistry AKU) and participants were awarded certificates. Feedback was also recorded from participants after each session which will lead to constructive planning of more similar courses in the future.

The 3rd Regional Workshop ISO 15189 for Latin America and the Caribbean

Quito, Ecuador
26-28 September 2018



Speakers of the Regional Workshop in Latin America and the Caribbean – Ecuador 2018.

L-R: Leonardo Aguirre (Chile), Klever Saenz (Ecuador), Roberto Carboni (Chile), Rosa Sierra-Amor (Mexico), Thamara Andrade (Ecuador), Manfred Kindler (Germany), and Sandra Quintana (Mexico)

*by Rosa Sierra-Amor
eNews Member
Regional Representative, IFCC EB
Thamara Andrade
Workshop Coordinator, President SEBIOCLI*

The 3rd Regional Workshop of Latin American and the Caribbean: interpretation of critical requirements of ISO 15189:2012 took place In Quito – Ecuador, on 26, 27 and 28 September 2018 with the participation of speakers from Chile, Mexico, Germany and Ecuador. This event was broadcasted from the Simon Bolivar Andean University – Ecuador branch, which was the host venue, to the National University Network for Research and Education (REUNA) from the University in Santiago de Chile, and then to the countries connected: Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Chile, Honduras, Guatemala, Mexico, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela.

This event was organized in conjunction with the Chilean Society of Clinical Chemistry, the Ecuadorian Society of Clinical Biochemistry, and the Ecuadorian Society of Clinical Pathology. Auspices were provided by the Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt (PTB) in Germany, and the International Cooperation Agency of Germany. The academic Aval was from the University of San Francisco in Quito.

The three symposia organized and transmitted by Live Stream to Latin American and the Caribbean were:

“Management of the uncertainty of measurement, mandatory requirement of ISO 15189:2012” in which the application and usefulness of the estimation of the uncertainty of measurement, the models proposed to estimate uncertainty, the calculation of the uncertainty and total analytical error permissible and acceptable uncertainty for different measurements intervals. were raised Recommendation on this was the use of the NORDEST model for the estimation of the uncertainty, obtaining the source data in the intermediate precision of long term and the calculation of the ‘bias’ using data from the inter-comparison.

“Traceability and uncertainty of the reference material; responsibility of manufacturers and suppliers of in vitro diagnostic reagents”. In this symposium, the following was discussed: the use of reference materials, their availability and characteristics; the responsibility of the laboratories in the selection of suppliers; and, the responsibility of providers of diagnostic reagents and external quality assessment programs. Recommendation regarding this issue, was the use of reagents where the uncertainty of the reference and material was included in the kit insert of each reagent; with respect to external quality assessment schemes, it was recommended to accompany the supplier during the implementation of the service, evaluating the competence of the staff, and programs that are accredited or aligned to the standard ISO 17043.

“Committee ISO TC 212, membership of countries in the region, committees ISO TC 212, procedures of approval and revision of standards ISO mirror” The experience of Chile and Mexico was presented in this third symposium. The recommendation was to ensure the participation of the largest number of countries in the region in ISO TC 212 or its counterpart



Venues participating at the 3rd Regional Workshop ISO 15189 for Latin America and the Caribbean. Ecuador 2018, that included professional societies, accrediting bodies and institutes of metrology in the region.

ad hoc committee in the country, also that the accrediting agency was settled by representatives of scientific and professional societies in clinical laboratory sciences and laboratory medicine within the respective technical committee.

The topic “**Competency requirements for leaders, assessors, and peer and technical experts in accreditation based on ISO /IEC 17011:2017**” was also discussed. In this case, the importance of having a profile that should be designed and implemented by the accrediting agencies was discussed. In this regard, the Chilean society of Clinical Chemistry (SChQC) presented an example of profile for the assessor that was put it into consideration for the scientific societies in the region. The need of assessors having sufficient experience in the clinical laboratory, and not only limited to search non-conformities with respect to the list of standard’s requirements was mentioned; stating that, they must identify critical points according to a new mentality of thinking *on risk*.

Finally, the results of three surveys that were sent to non-accredited clinical laboratories in the region, as

well as accredited clinical laboratories and national accreditation bodies were discussed. Upon request of all the participating countries, it was decided to prolong until the end of this year the deadline to deliver the surveys, so the final result and analysis remain pending.

In the workshop, there were 137 people participating actively and interacting with the speakers. This event was available to the general public who had free access, so they could connect and follow the event from any computer; in addition, this event was transmitted in Facebook. After the symposia, the forum was open for questions.

We believe that we have fulfilled the objective of this workshop, making progress on the harmonization of the criteria for the interpretation of the technical requirements of ISO 15189:2012 in the region, thus improving the competence of medical laboratories. Surely, we will meet in a next workshop, where space will be given to training, discussion and agreements in order to advance on this regard.



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News from the Japanese Society of Clinical Chemistry (JSCC)

Academic Award of JSCC 2018

by Hideo Sakamoto

International Exchange Committee of JSCC

The Academic Award of Japan Society of Clinical Chemistry (JSCC) is given to a person who has made outstanding academic research in clinical chemistry. In 2018, Mikio Watanabe MD, PhD is the awardee of this award. The award presentation ceremony was held at the 58th Annual Meeting of JSCC in Nagoya, Japan, on August 24-26, 2018. There, Dr. Watanabe was congratulated by Dr. Masato Maekawa, President of JSCC, for his outstanding work in clinical chemistry.

In this issue, we would like to briefly introduce Dr. Watanabe and his outstanding work.

Mikio Watanabe, MD, PhD works at the Department of Biomedical Informatics and Center for Twin Research, Osaka University Graduate School of Medicine. The title of his awarded study is “Clinical application of genetic and epigenetic information for laboratory medicine”.

Almost all the phenotypes or clinical valuables including the value of clinical laboratory tests will be affected by both genetic and epigenetic factors. Many genetic differences such as gene polymorphisms have been reported as important factors associating with the susceptibility and prognosis of diseases. However, genetic factors do not always explain phenotypes fully.

Dr. Watanabe found that some identical twins are discordant for the development of thyroid-specific autoantibody such as anti-thyroglobulin antibody (TgAb). The methylation levels at particular DNA sites in these identical twins were associated with their TgAb development. This indicates that the development of TgAb (and, possibly, other autoantibodies also) will be affected by both specific epigenetic factors and specific genetic backgrounds.



Dr. Mikio Watanabe

Similarly, some healthy identical twins show different HbA1c values. This can be explained at least partially by the different DNA methylation levels at particular DNA sites under the specific genetic backgrounds. Thus, again, both genetic and epigenetic factors affect the HbA1c level, whereas the life style should contribute to the HbA1c level significantly. Dr. Watanabe says that prediction of the future level of HbA1c or other laboratory tests of a person can be possible when epigenetic differences are taken into consideration.

Dr. Watanabe's valuable work will contribute to the development of new laboratory tests based on epigenetic research.



News from the Société Française de Biologie Clinique (SFBC)

SFBC - Change of the guard

*by Bernard Gouget
International Relations SFBC-TF*

PRESIDENT: Prof. Vincent SAPIN

He is Head of “Biochemistry and Molecular Genetics” Laboratory and “Medical Biology and Pathology” Department at the CHU of Clermont-Ferrand (Auvergne Rhône-Alpes Region). Among all his scientific activities focused on biomarkers research and development, he is responsible for several studies on the S100 protein and more precisely for the study concerning S100 interests on the concussions of the French Rugby Federation (FFR) and the National Rugby League (LNR). There is a global research agenda on the subject. The concussion, and its consequences on the health of the players, has become a major problem in rugby, as in many other collective and individual sports. The challenge is to protect the health and physical integrity of players, and in case of sports injury to determine the conditions for returning to play after a concussion. As Head of a university research team called “Translational Approach of Epithelial Injury and Repair”, he also develops pathophysiological strategies based on the Receptor of Advanced Glycation End Products (RAGE) in order to improve diagnosis, prognosis and therapeutics of frequent human diseases as Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome or Premature Rupture of Membranes.

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News from the Royal Belgian Society of Laboratory Medicine (RBSLM)

A new President to lead the Interdisciplinary Annual Meeting

by Etienne Cavalier

President, Royal Belgian Society of Laboratory Medicine

This annual meeting was the first one of the new board of the Royal Belgian Society Laboratory Medicine and of its new President, Prof. Etienne Cavalier, and welcomed more than a hundred twenty participants from the whole country. Prof. Cavalier, from the C.H.U de Liège, is a worldwide expert in bone and mineral metabolism



The meeting took place in the heart of Brussels



Prof. Etienne Cavalier opening the meeting

and leading the related committee on standardization and harmonization of the IFCC.

Prof. Cavalier will pursue the work on interactions with clinicians initiated by the former presidents Prof. M. Langlois and P. Vermeersch. This year, the annual meeting was focusing on thyroid and the opportunity of interdisciplinary exchanges with the Belgian Thyroid Club (<http://www.thyroidclub.be/>) coordinated by Prof. Rodrigo Moreno. Thyroid tests are highly prescribed in Belgium with more than 6 million TSH tests and 4 million Free T4 tests each year and their performances impact directly clinical decisions. A strong collaboration between clinical biologists and clinicians allow defining the most appropriated decision limits and to anticipate interferences matters and prevent misdiagnosis.

The morning session therefore reviewed multiple trends such as the evolution of thyroid function tests by Prof. Kathleen van

Article continued on next page

Uytfanghe, the decision limits and reference intervals by Prof. Bernard Corvilain, interferences and thyroid testing by Prof. Fleur Wolff and the relationship between thyroid autoimmunity and infertility presented by Prof. David Unuane.

The afternoon session focused on current trends for rapid testing with lectures from Prof. Erna Lenters-Westra about the evolution and challenges of point of care testing for HbA1c measurement, Dr. Arnaud Capron

for the evolution of the quality of POCT in Belgium. Prof. Christophe Stove, Prof. Nathalie De Vos and Prof. Marie-Pierre Hayette conclude this annual meeting by presenting perspectives for patient self-testing and the evolution of the legal frame in Belgium.

The meeting was also the opportunity to award the young scientists Caroline Le Goff (CHU Liège), Pieter De Kesel (UGent) and Yannick Wouters (KU Leuven) for best abstracts prizes.



Clinicians and lab specialists for the round table on Thyroid function tests



The RBSLM awarded 4 young trainees for the best proposed abstracts



News from the Macedonian Society of Medical Biochemistry and Laboratory Medicine (MSMBLM)

26th Congress of Balkan Clinical Laboratory Federation (BCLF) and 6th National Congress of MSMBLM

*by Danica Labudovic
President, MSMBLM*

President, Organizing Committee for the 26th BCLF Congress

The 26th Congress of the Balkan Clinical Laboratory Federation (BCLF) and the 6th National Congress of the Macedonian Society of Medical Biochemistry and Laboratory Medicine (MSMBLM) was held from 3rd to 5th of October 2018 in Skopje and it was organized by MSMBLM. This Association organizes the Congress of BCLF for the fourth time.

The Congress was organized under the auspices of the International Federation of Clinical Chemistry (IFCC), European Federation of Laboratory Medicine (EFLM)

as well as Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje and Medical Faculty in Skopje.

Thirteen invited plenary speakers from Norway, Italy, France, USA, Slovenia, Montenegro, Bulgaria, Greece, and R. Macedonia presented their lectures at the Congress as well as 32 lecturers with their 15-minute oral presentations from all Balkan countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Greece, Serbia, Romania, Turkey, Montenegro, and the host country R. Macedonia. Sixty-nine participants from the Balkan

Article continued on next page

countries and from other European countries and Canada presented their e-posters. A total of 260 participants attended the Congress.

At the Opening ceremony, on 3rd of October, Prof. Dr. Danica Labudovic, President of MSMBLM and President of the Organizing Committee of the 26th BCLF Congress and Prof. Dr. Jozo Choric, BCLF President had their opening speeches. The guests and participants of the Congress were welcomed by the Rector of the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje, Prof. Dr. Nikola Jankulovski, the Dean of the Medical Faculty in Skopje, Prof. Dr. Sonja Topuzovska, the Dean of the Faculty of Pharmacy in Skopje, Prof. Dr. Svetlana Kulevanova, and the Minister of Health of R. Macedonia, Prof. Dr. Venko Filipche.

This BCLF Congress was traditionally enriched with a short music program. The Harflea quartet played a remix of Macedonian traditional folk songs. The Opening ceremony continued with the exceptionally interesting 45-minute scientific lecture of Prof. Dr. Sverre Sandberg from Norway, EFLM representative. His lecture was entitled "The challenging of POC Testing".

Both working days of the Congress (Thursday and Friday) were characterized by a very tight schedule of lectures, beginning from 8.30 am and finishing at 6.30 pm on Thursday and at 6.00 pm on Friday.

The first morning session on Thursday (4th Oct), entitled **Harmonization and standardization in laboratory working** was opened by Prof. Giuseppe Lippi from Italy who spoke about EFLM strategy for harmonization of the preanalytical phase. This lecture was followed by presentations on: causes of analytical errors and mechanisms for their detection (Dr. Vera Lukic from Serbia), standardization and harmonization of laboratory diagnostics in chronic kidney diseases (Dr. Vanja Radishik Biljak, Croatia), accreditation of medical laboratories (Irina Leimoni, Greece) and clinical chemistry in R. Macedonia (Prof. Dr. Jasna Bogdabnska from R. Macedonia).

After the coffee break, one-hour lecture entitled "**Six Sigma QC Design and Risk assessment for QC Frequency**" was given by Prof. Sten Westgard (USA) where he spoke about the control of laboratory working quality.

Then professional presentations followed suggested by the firms – sponsors of the Congress.

The afternoon session began with the lecture on the pathophysiology of protein carbamylation (Prof. Philippe Gillery from France), followed by the lecture on biomarkers in macular degeneration (Christos Kropis from Greece), ST2 – a novel biomarker in ESRD (Prof. Evgenija Homshak from Slovenia), association of resistin and CKD (Jelena Munjas from Serbia), urinary nephrin – a biomarker in detection of diabetic nephropathy (Assist. Prof. Irena Kostovska from Macedonia), the effect of NaF on the expression genes in renal cell line (Assist. Prof. Semiha Dede from Turkey), and determination of methyl-glyoxal with UPLC (Assist. Prof. Abdullah Sivirkaya from Turkey).

Endocrinology was the topic of Session 3 on Thursday, and the first lecturer Assist. Prof. Milena Velizarova from Bulgaria spoke about thrombocytopenia in pregnancy; then, Prof. Sonja Kuzmanovska from R. Macedonia spoke about thyroid tests in pregnancy; Dr. Nela Rasheta from Bosnia and Hercegovina presented her lecture on PTH and BMD in hyperparathyroidism; Dr. Sci. Aleksandara Atanasova Bosku from R. Macedonia had a presentation on adipokine and insulin resistance in women with POS, and Tamer Bego from Bosnia and Herzegovina on genetic variants in the BIH population with diabetes mellitus.

The morning session on Friday (4th Oct.) was reserved for presentations related to markers in malignant diseases and started with the plenary lecture by Prof. Tomris Ozben from Turkey on the use of circulating free DNA (cfDNA) in the diagnosis of different diseases, among which cancer diseases (liquid biopsy). Another plenary lecture was given by Prof. Dr. Diana Plasheska-Karanfilska from R. Macedonia, where she spoke about the high-risk genes in onset of breast carcinoma. This was followed by 15-minute-oral presentations on the elevated IMA in patients with breast cancer (Ali Unlu, Turkey), telomerase targeted therapies in carcinomas (Zeliha Gunnur Dikmen, Turkey), activity of LCAT and POX-1 in patients with colorectal cancer (MS Pharm. Marija Mihajlovic, Serbia), and the benefit of multi-marker panels in diagnosis of ovarian carcinoma (Veselina Koleva, Bulgaria).



Speakers and Congress Committee members of the 26th Congress of the Balkan Clinical Laboratory Federation, and the 6th National Congress of the Macedonian Society of Medical Biochemistry and Laboratory Medicine

Session 5 consisted of various presentations and lectures. The first two plenary lectures were given by Dr. Nevena Terzic Stanic (Montenegro) on laboratory disorders in patients with SLE, and the second given by Prof. Sanja Stankovic on pharmacokinetics in cardiovascular diseases. Fifteen-minute-oral presentations followed on: DEXA and bone biomarkers in the evaluation of bone diseases in patients with thalassemia and hemoglobinopathies (Prof. Etleva Refatlari, Albania), evaluation of SP-A and SP-D as biomarkers of COPD (Regina Hasa, Albania), and blood proficiency testing study (Prof. Dr. Tanja Makarovska, R. Macedonia). The session continued with the professional presentations suggested by the sponsors of the Congress and presented by Assist. Prof. Aleksandar Petlichkovski from R. Macedonia, Dr. Dubravka Antova from R. Macedonia and Panagiota Evangelakou from Greece.

The afternoon session was reserved for topics related to enhancing precision in medical diagnostics by using mass spectrometry (Prof. Dobrin Svinarov, Bulgaria), the future in the application of mass spectrometry in the

clinical laboratory diagnostics (Fehime Benli Aksungar, Turkey), and the application of liquid chromatography – tandem mass spectrometry in determination of serum arginine in pregnant patients (Sedat Abusoglu, Turkey).

The final, 7th session of the Congress was reserved for presentations related to seasonal variability of VD in Bilecik province (Dr. Saadet Celik, Turkey), EF of hemoglobin in thalassemia patients (Selma Dyca, Albania), alterations in bone metabolism of obese patients (Prof. Dr. Aylin Sepichi Dincel, Turkey), risk management in biochemical laboratories (Prof. Dr. Katerina Tosheska-Trajkovska, R. Macedonia), and food intolerance (Dr. Pecko Desoski).

The Congress was declared closed by Prof. Dr. Danica Labudovic by expressing her gratitude to all lecturers and poster presenters as well as to the sponsors, who all together contributed in creating an excellent environment for exchange of scientific results, ideas, experiences and in building a professional net among the participants.



News from the Greek Society of Clinical Chemistry - Clinical Biochemistry (GSCC-CB)

16th Congress of the GSCC-CB

<http://www.eekx-kb.gr>

by *Andriani Grigoratou*
Editor-in-chief, GSCC-CB eNewsletter

The 16th Congress of the Greek Society of Clinical Chemistry - Clinical Biochemistry (GSCC-CB) with international participation was held on October 11-13, 2018, in Alexandroupolis, an important port and commercial center of Evros Region, Thrace (NE Greece). The Congress was organized under the auspices of IFCC and EFLM.

The round table on the Emerging Technologies Division of IFCC (Chair: Dr. Alexander Haliassos) opened the congress. It included two lectures "Introducing the Emerging Technologies Division of IFCC" by S. Bernardini (Prof. of Internal Medicine and Clinical Biochemistry, University Hospital Tor Vergata, Laboratory of Clinical Biochemistry, Rome, Italy) and "Mobile Health and Clinical Laboratory: an introduction" by Bernard Gouget (Conseiller Santé Publique-Fédération Hospitalière de France, France).

The second round table referred to Flow Cytometry (Chairs: Dr. Katerina Psarra, Dr. George Martinis) and included two lectures "Flow Cytometry and cell sorting" by Dr. Katerina Psarra (Past President of ESCCA "European Society for Clinical Cell Analysis", Evangelismos Hospital, Athens) and "Intraoperative flow cytometry in cancer management" by Dr. George Vartolomatos (Neurosurgical Institute of the University of Ioannina).

On the second Congress day the very interesting round table on "Pharmacogenomics and Personalized Medicine" (Chairs: Vangelis G. Manolopoulos, George Kolios) included the lectures of Prof. Vangelis G. Manolopoulos on "Clinical Applications in Cardiovascular Pharmacogenomics" and Prof. Georgia Ragia on "Pharmacogenomics in Psychopharmacology" (both from the Laboratory of Pharmacology, Medical School of Democritus University of Thrace, DUTH).

16° Πανελλήνιο Συνέδριο
Κλινικής Χημείας

11-13
Οκτωβρίου 2018
ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥΠΟΛΗ
Ξενοδοχείο Astir Egnatia

Υπό την αιγίδα των:

IFCC International Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine
EFLM European Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine

Οργανωτικό - Συσχετιστικό Γραφείο/Γραμματεία:
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It was followed by Dr. Ioannis Papatotiriou's (Head of Clin. Biochemistry Dept. Aghia Sophia Children's Hospital, Athens) invited lecture on "Clinical significance of Glycated Hemoglobin in patients with Hemoglobinopathies".

Dr. Alexander Haliassos (President of GSCC-CB, Director of Quality at ESEAP, Greek Proficiency Testing Scheme for Clinical Laboratories, Greece) presented "The new ESEAP program of Proficiency Testing of EGFR mutations".

Article continued on next page

In the Leriva Satellite Symposium Dr. George Kolios (Laboratory of Clinical Chemistry, University of Ioannina) referred to the “Timeline of prostate cancer detection biomarkers”.

“The guidelines for the diagnosis and treatment of Osteoporosis in Greece 2017” were presented by P. Makras (Department of Endocrinology and Diabetes, 251 Hellenic Air-Force and VA General Hospital, Athens).

A very interesting round table on “Diabetes” (Chair: Nikolaos Papanas) included lectures by Assistant Prof. Christina Tsigalou (Medical-Molecular Microbiology, Democritus University of Thrace) on “Emerging biomarkers in serum and urine for early diabetes diagnosis”, by Prof. Eleni Bairaktari (Laboratory of Clinical Chemistry, University of Ioannina) on “Metabonomics: Metabolite Profiles in Diabetes” and by Prof. Christina Tsigalou on “Human intestinal microbiome and chronic adipose tissue inflammation in obesity”.

The ABBOTT- THERMO FISHER Satellite Symposium focused on “Procalcitonin levels in response to systemic inflammation and on guidance to antibiotic therapy” by Pan. Evangelakou and “Management of vitamin D deficiency: Guidelines of the Hellenic Endocrine Society” by Assistant Prof. Kal. Kotsa (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece).

The next round table analyzed interesting issues on infertility (Chair: Demetrios Rizos, ex. President of GSCC-CB) and consisted of four lectures: “Introduction to infertility” by N. Koutlaki-Kourti (Associate Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Democritus University of Thrace, Alexandroupolis), “The role of the laboratory in female infertility” by Demetrios Rizos (Associate Professor of Clinical Chemistry, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens), “Male infertility testing” by clinical embryologist Desp. Tzanakaki (Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens) and “Infertility treatments” by N. Koutlaki-Kourti.

Then Ioannis Iliopoulos, Prof. of Neurology at the Democritus University of Thrace gave a lecture on “Antibody profiles in Paraneoplastic Neurological Syndromes (PNS)”.

On the last Congress day the first round table covered the recent advances on “Laboratory biomarkers in dementias” (Chairs: S. Bernardini, C. Kroupis, A. Haliasos) and included the lectures by Prof. S. Bernardini on “Standardization of CSF biomarker assays - pre-analytical and analytical aspects of CSF biomarker assays” and by assistant Prof. Christos Kroupis, (Clinical Biochemistry and Molecular Diagnostics Department, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens) on “Genetic Biomarkers in dementia”.



16th Congress of the Greek Society of Clinical Chemistry - Clinical Biochemistry in Alexandroupolis

Then in the round table on “Potential role of biomarkers in stroke: from early diagnosis to guidance of therapy” we attended the lectures on “Use of biomarkers in clinical practice and research” by Joan Montaner (Neurovascular Research Laboratory Stroke Unit Vall d’Hebron Hospital Barcelona, Spain) and on “Stroke biomarkers: Analytical and pre-analytical issues-the need for standardization” by Dr. K. Makris (KAT General Hospital, Athens, Kifissia).

Prof. Konstantinos Vadikolias (Dept. of Neurology, Democritus University of Thrace, Alexandroupolis) spoke on “Diagnosis of mental disorders - differential diagnosis of dementia” and Assistant Prof. Aikaterini Terzoudi (Dept. of Neurology, Democritus University of Thrace) referred to “Epileptic seizure and epilepsy diagnosis”.

The Roche Satellite Symposium was dedicated to “Coping with personality and behavior changes in Alzheimer’s disease” and to “CSF Automated biomarker assays and their implication for Alzheimer disease management”.

The IFCC Task Force – Young Scientists (Moderator: E. Konsta, University of West Attica), presented the “Young Scientists in the field of Laboratory Medicine” Symposium.

Our three-day Congress was attended by many participants, health professionals and students of the School of Health Sciences, Faculty of Medicine and Department of Molecular Biology & Genetics of Democritus University of Thrace and other Universities all over Greece.

Thanks to the organizing committee (President Konstantinos Anagnostopoulos, Associate Professor of Biochemistry, Department of Medicine of the Democritus University of Thrace), the scientific committee (President Ioannis Tentis, Associate Professor of Biochemistry, Department of Medicine of the Democritus University of Thrace), all speakers and participants, it was a successful Congress. It had a high quality and wide range innovative scientific program, which covered a variety of topics and deepened our knowledge (especially for our young colleagues) on the emerging fields of clinical chemistry.



News from the Society of Medical Biochemists of Serbia (SMBS)

The Twenty First Annual 'Professor Ivan Berkeš' Scientific Conference

by Snežana Jovičić

Liaison Member, IFCC eNews Working Group

Scientific Conference dedicated to the life and work of the esteemed Prof. Dr. Ivan Berkeš, one of the founders of medical biochemistry in former Yugoslavia, is organized for twenty-one years now under the auspices of the Society of Medical Biochemists of Serbia (SMBS), and Scientific Foundation “Professor Ivan Berkeš”. The Conference is the occasion when the best graduate students of the Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Belgrade are awarded by the Scientific Foundation “Professor Ivan Berkeš”.

The 2018 Annual Scientific Conference “Professor Ivan Berkeš” is the second co-organized and hosted

by the Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Belgrade. It gathered over 200 participants – students, older colleagues who were the students of Professor Berkeš, young graduated medical biochemists, and teachers of the Faculty of Pharmacy. Traditional guests were the family members of Professor Berkeš – his son and grandson, with their families. This traditional meeting of students and professors of the Faculty of Pharmacy, honoring the legacy of one of its most distinguished professors was held on December 6, 2018. After the opening words of the organizer, Prof. Nada Majkić-Singh, the musical band of pharmacy students performed, adding the festivity to the event.

Following the welcoming address of the Dean, Prof. Dr. Slađana Šobajić, Prof. Majkić-Singh, together with the President of the SMBS, Dr. Zorica Šumarac, presented the awards of the Foundation.

This year's recipients were Jelena Pavlović, Master of Pharmacy-Medical Biochemist, and Natalija Arsić, Master of Pharmacy.

During the scientific part of the program, chaired by Prof. Dr. Svetlana Ignjatović, Prof. Dr. Vesna Spasojević-Kalimanovska, and Dr. Zorica Šumarac, this year's defended doctoral thesis at the Faculty of Pharmacy of the University of Belgrade, were presented.

This year, their doctoral theses were also presented by colleagues from the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Banja Luka, Republic of Srpska – Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The first speaker was Dr. Dragana Bačković, with her thesis on the influence of CYP2C19*2 gene variant on therapeutic response during clopidogrel treatment in patients with carotid artery stenosis.

Dr. Dragana Puhalo Sladoje's thesis was about the concentration of appetite regulators and adipocytokines in blood plasma adolescents with obesity and/or metabolic syndrome.

Oxidative stress status in blood and lipoprotein fractions in patients with chronic kidney disease was the topic of the lecture of Dr. Milica Miljković.

The lecture on risk factors for the occurrence and development of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease associated with oxidative stress in Serbian population by Dr. Živka Malić followed.

Redox disbalance and inflammation influence on PON1 activity and distribution at the HDL lipoprotein particles in polycystic ovary syndrome was presented by Dr. Iva Perović-Blagojević.

The conference closed the doctorate of Dr. Vanja Todorović on antioxidant and antimicrobial potential of cocoa powder and its impact on mice behavior after short-term and long-term supplementation.



This year's laureates, Jelena Pavlović and Natalija Arsić, with Prof. Dr. Nada Majkić-Singh and Dr. Zorica Šumarac



Chairs and lecturers, from left to right: Dr. Milica Miljković, Dr. Iva Perović-Blagojević, Prof. Vesna Spasojević-Kalimanovska, Prof. Nada Majkić-Singh, Dr. Živka Malić, Prof. Svetlana Ignjatović, Dr. Dragana Bačković, Dr. Dragana Puhalo-Sladoje, and Dr. Zorica Šumarac



Pharmacy students' musical band opening the conference



News from the Spanish Society of Laboratory Medicine (SEQC^{ML})

Promoting the integration of laboratory medicine into the healthcare process

SEQC^{ML}

Sociedad Española de Medicina de Laboratorio

The first meeting of the Spanish Society of Laboratory Medicine (SEQC^{ML}) with Scientific Societies was organized with the aim of promoting the integration of Laboratory Medicine into the healthcare process, highlighting its impact on patients, healthcare professionals, health systems, and society in general, and strengthening the lines of collaboration:

- The clinical laboratory faces new challenges, such as increased demand and costs, the development of 4P medicine, technological innovation, and growing patient empowerment
- Technological innovation, molecular diagnosis, and information systems and big data (which influence connectivity and the interpretation of results), are factors that are leading the change in Laboratory Medicine
- Cooperation is necessary to improve the appropriateness of laboratory tests, given the high number of unnecessary tests requested that generate over-diagnoses and over-treatment

Barcelona, November 08, 2018. It is estimated that 1.3 requests for clinical laboratory tests per inhabitant are requested every year, tests that represent 4% of hospital costs. In 2015 alone, according to data from the Ministry of Health, more than 60 million requests and more than 604 million tests were carried out in Spain.

Various published studies indicate that more than 70% of the clinical decisions made every day are based on Laboratory results, which is why it is the largest generator of information on healthcare activity.

Nevertheless, and despite the transversal nature of Laboratory Medicine, its contribution to health care is undervalued. For this reason, it is necessary to re-define the role of Laboratory Medicine specialists as experts at consulting work and collaboration with clinicians, since these professionals are dedicated to generating information and knowledge that help in clinical decision-making.

Therefore, with the aim of assuming the leadership that falls to it as a scientific society to situate Laboratory Medicine in a wider context that benefits everyone, especially the public, the Spanish Society of Laboratory Medicine (SEQC^{ML}) has created The Committee on the Value of the Clinical Laboratory, which it has introduced to representatives of different medical-scientific societies in a conference.

Specifically, together with representatives of the SEQC^{ML}, the meeting benefited from the presence of the following representatives of Scientific Societies: Javier García (AEDP, Spanish Association of Prenatal Diagnosis), Leticia Moreira (AEGASTRO, Spanish Association of Gastroenterology), Angel Cequier (SEC, Spanish Society of Cardiology), Anna Rodríguez (SEDISA, Spanish Society of Health Managers), Irene Bretón (SEEN, Spanish Society of Endocrinology and Nutrition), M. Luisa López-Teijón (SEGO, Spanish Society of Gynecology and Obstetrics), Gilberto Alonso (SEMES, Spanish Society of Urgent and Emergency Medicine), Manuel Jiménez de la Cruz (SEMERGEN, Spanish Society of Primary Care Physicians), Alberto Hernández (SEMYCIUC, Spanish Society of Intensive Medicine and Coronary Units), Héctor Boix (SENEO, Spanish Society of Neonatology), Miguel Ángel Seguí (SEOM, Spanish Society of Medical Oncology), Paula Peleteiro (SEOR, Spanish Society of Radiation Oncology) and Carolina Malagelada (SEPD, Spanish Society of Digestive Pathology).

INTEGRATION OF LABORATORY MEDICINE IN THE CARE PROCESS

“The Committee on the Value of the Clinical Laboratory has been created with the objective of enhancing the integration of Laboratory Medicine into the care process, emphasizing its impact on patients, health-care professionals, health systems, and society in general,” says Ana Quinteiro, Chair of the Committee.

“In this sense,” he adds, “both the creation of the Committee and the organization of the conference respond to a profound process of reflection within our Society at a time of change: we have laboratories of the highest quality; laboratory professionals have invested a lot of effort in the optimization of internal processes, in quality assurance systems and in the improvement of efficiency, all with the aim of providing quality results at reasonable costs”.

For Fernando Cava, member of the Clinical Value Committee of the SEQC^{ML}, the laboratory specialties have been pioneers in qualitative changes, in the introduction of quality systems, and management involvement.

“However, the real engine of change is a cultural change, a vision of what our role is -- in short, of who we are,” he says.

For this expert, a medical laboratory creates value when it acts as a strategic core concept within the decision-making processes. In this context, it affects the production of clinical information far beyond the report (for example, detection of admitted patients with critical values and candidates for a potential admission to the ICU, etc.) as an example of generating value from the laboratory.

On the other hand, there are several factors that are leading, to a greater extent, the change in Laboratory Medicine, points out Ana Quinteiro, among which are technological innovation, molecular diagnosis (which affects practically all laboratory disciplines and is modifying the focus of clinical decisions: personalized and predictive medicine), and information systems and big data (which influence connectivity and interpretation of results).



Participants to the Scientific Societies Meeting, hosted by SEQC^{ML}

IMPORTANCE OF THE CLINICAL LABORATORY IN THE CURRENT HEALTHCARE MODEL

The clinical laboratory faces new challenges, such as increasing demand and costs, the development of 4P medicine, technological innovation, and growing patient empowerment.

Because of this, Isabel Llompart, member of the Committee of the SEQC^{ML}, puts the focus on the need to work together for a better appropriateness of tests. “There is an increase in demand for laboratory tests that is not commensurate with the increase in medical activity. A high number of the determinations requested are unnecessary and not only do they not add value to the patient but they generate over-diagnosis and over-treatment. Five of the main causes that lead to diagnostic errors are related to not asking for the correct laboratory tests or asking for inadequate tests, for which initiatives such as ‘Not to do’ or ‘DianaSalud’ [Target Health] are very important. Making the test requests appropriate is not aimed at trying to reduce tests, but to ensure that what is requested is correct”.

“For all this, it is important that we work together at the level of scientific societies,” she notes.

“There is a change in the laboratory model, from a model centered on samples and technology to a model centered on the patient and on participation in clinical decision-making. We want to be the engine of change so that by guaranteeing quality of results and the sustainability of the system we can provide the value that the patient and society need,” he concluded.

STRENGTHEN LINES OF COLLABORATION

The SEQC^{ML}, as explained at the opening of the Conference by its president, Dr. Imma Caballé, has a total of 2,709 members (15% of whom are medical residents) and has various committees: Committee on the Value of the Clinical Laboratory, Committee on Congresses, Committee on Education, Committee on Communication, Committee on External Quality Programs, and the Scientific Committee, comprising 25 Commissions and 3 Working Groups. Likewise, the Society has 40 international representatives in international organizations: IFCC, EFLM, FESTEM, ICSH and CLSI.

Among the services it offers are Continuing Training Courses, online courses and training webinars, and External Quality Guarantee Programs certified according to ISO 9001: 2015, with the participation of 700 centers. In addition, it has the JL Castaño-SEQC Foundation, and grants various scholarships, prizes, and travel funds (assistance for Congresses in Latin America).

Likewise, the Society works on activities and consensus documents with other scientific societies. Specifically, strengthening the lines of collaboration between societies has been one of the priority objectives of the Conference, as outlined by Dr. Antonio Buño, member of the board of directors of the SEQC^{ML}, who emphasized the different activities that could be carried out jointly, such as joint consensus documents, specific monographs, “cross” participation in congresses, creation of specific work groups within a society, organization of joint scientific conferences, multi-center projects, endorsement of international guides in areas of interest, common strategies for communication and disclosure to the patient, etc.

“The Spanish Society of Laboratory Medicine is committed to working together with other scientific societies, so we hope that this first day will start a path of collaboration and contribute towards a greater interconnection between these societies in order to move towards better quality of healthcare “; concludes the president of the SEQC^{ML}.

The SEQC^{ML}

The Spanish Society of Laboratory Medicine (SEQC^{ML}) -founded in 1976- currently includes more than 2,500 professionals, and its main objective is to bring together all scientists interested in the field of Laboratory Medicine, to promote the dissemination of scientific and technical publications, to organize meetings, courses and congresses of a national and international nature, to cooperate with other Scientific Societies, and to defend and promote the specialties within Laboratory Medicine as well as its associates. Likewise, the Society wishes to contribute to the study and recommendation of standardized methods and the establishment of guidelines and recommendations for training in the field of Laboratory Medicine. For more information: www.seqc.es.

EFLMLabX: How far we are and what is new?

by *Evgenija Homšak*
Chair, EFLM WG-CPE

We would like to remind you the **EFLMLabX** project which offers the great opportunity for **exchanging practical knowledge and skills in Laboratory Medicine and creating links between the medical laboratories and European Specialists in Laboratory Medicine.**

The EFLMLabX platform is accessible from the homepage of the EFLM website (www.eflm.eu) or directly at <https://efmlabx.eflm.eu/en>. The programme offers the possibility to search with dropdown menu by country, institution, type of practice, field of diagnostics, period of time, methods, sub-methods and to apply to different training opportunities establishing direct links between users and providers.

Who should apply as user and why:

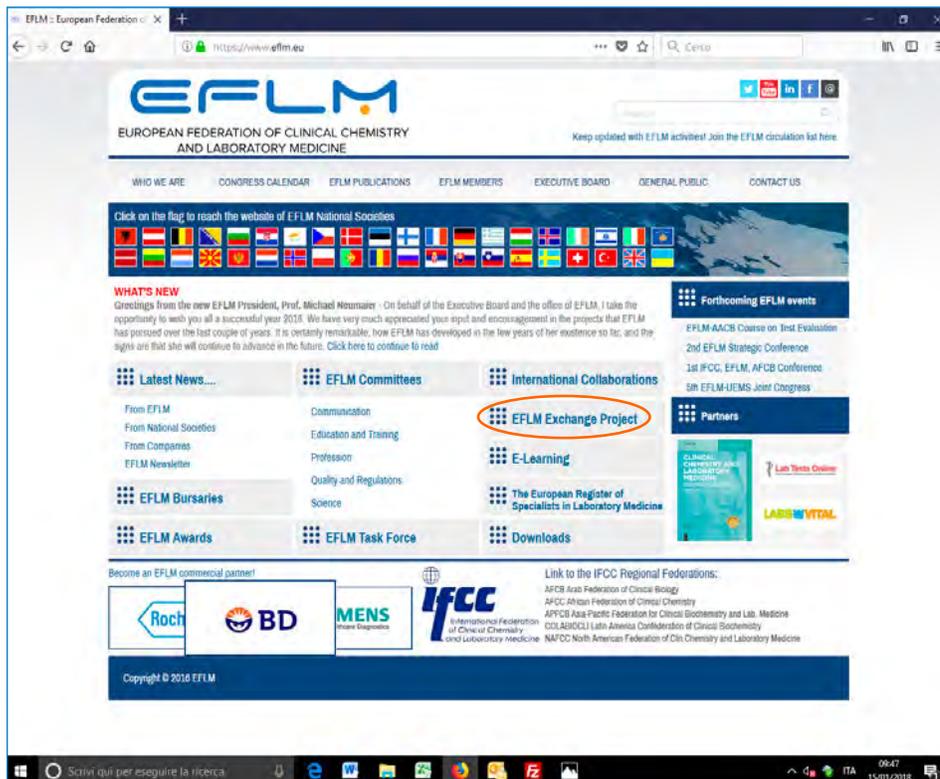
Trainee fellows, young specialists and any Specialists in Laboratory Medicine from any EFLM country to gain new skills, to be potential co-workers, to get more knowledge and experience about different methods, IVD products/systems not present in their labs, to make new experiences and establish new contacts and opportunity for research work.

Who should host as offerer and why:

National institutions and any medical laboratories in any EFLM country providing a good level of practice to share with other Specialists in Laboratory Medicine good models of achieved lab practice and expose these models to a wide audience in Europe.

After one year from the pilot project, we already have 15 laboratories from 11 different EFLM countries (France, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, Poland Netherlands, Slovenia, Croatia, Czech Republic, UK, and lately also Germany) participating as offerers/providers in this project.

We also already had very successful training experiences which obtained a very positive feedback from the participants. The training was held in **Slovenia** (at the University Clinic for Respiratory and Allergic Diseases in Golnik – on Accreditation and quality in LM), **Czech Republic** (at the Institute of Medical Biochemistry and Laboratory Diagnostics in Prague – on different field and technique of LM) and in **Poland** (at the Medical University of Bialystok - on Cerebrospinal / body cavities fluids diagnostics).



During 2019, we are expecting new providers offering new training opportunities (from Germany, Netherlands, France), including the Institute for Clinical Chemistry, University Medicine Mannheim, Germany.

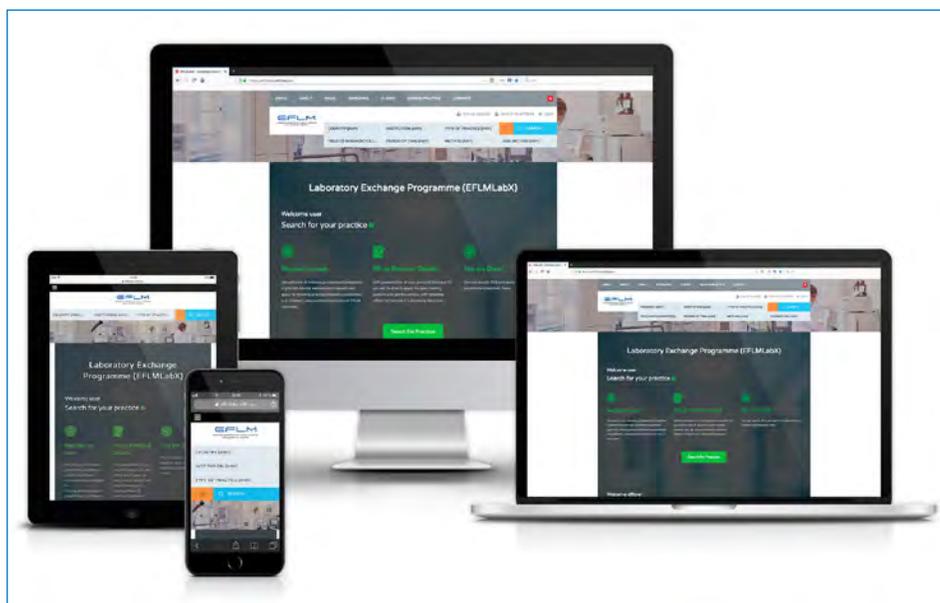
To support this important exchange of knowledge and skills in LM, especially for young trainees, EFLM would like to establish a dedicated bursary programme financially supported by IVD companies to cover travelling and accommodation expenses for participants. That way, we would be able to stimulate the exchange of knowledge between different professionals, laboratories and institutions in EFLM countries.

We now **invite** further specialists in laboratory medicine, trainees and especially laboratories and institutions in Europe **to choose this possibility** and **apply** to become a user or provider in this very important EFLM educational initiative.

Detailed information about this project can be found at the following link:

<https://efmlabx.eflm.eu/en>

Join the project and take the opportunity to improve your expertise!



EFLMLabX website for searching practices in laboratory medicine

NEW IFCC MEMBERS



IFCC welcomes new affiliate member from Serbia: SCLM

Serbian Society for Clinical Laboratory Medicine and Science (SCLM)

by Sanja Stankovic
SCLM President

Serbian Society for Clinical Laboratory Medicine and Science (SCLM) was formed to advance the laboratory medicine practice and science in Serbia, fulfilling the expectations of healthcare professionals and patients' needs. Serbia needed this kind of society for a long time. Different professionals involved in laboratory medicine field in Serbia belonged to different societies according to their basic university education or postgraduate specialization.

The basic idea of forming SCLM is the gathering and association of all health professionals from diverse backgrounds in Serbia, from public or private sector involved in laboratory medicine field: masters of pharmacy-medical biochemists, pharmacists and medicine doctors specialists in medical/clinical biochemistry, medicine doctors specialists in microbiology, transfusion, histopathology, molecular biologists, biologists, chemists, as well as those involved in scientific or in basic research with the aim of translating research into clinical practice. For the first time in Serbia, they got an opportunity to network, collaborate, and connect in one joint association, ready to respond to contemporary trends.

SCLM was established in May 2018, and now it has more than 500 members. The members of our executive Board are well recognized healthcare professionals and scientists with serious experience in different national and international societies.

Within the next few years, SCLM plans to engage a broader community, to extend its network with laboratories and lab professionals, healthcare professionals, researchers, biotech and pharmaceutical

SCLM

Serbian Society for Clinical Laboratory Medicine and Science

industries, the politics and the public. Also, it will improve cooperation with Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development, Public Health Institutes, Academic institutions, Chambers of health workers, professional and scientific associations of the relevant activities in the country.

SCLM will continuously promote principles and codes of the profession, giving professional, advisory and educational support to clinical laboratories and supporting quality improvement in laboratory medicine in Serbia.

The goal of this society is to motivate all members to present national interests of the profession, inform the domestic and international professional public with the situation in the profession, to be involved and to be heard.

SCLM would also like to work to increase its visibility through interregional cooperation. The key focus is to encourage more engagement with other national societies or groups and to encourage SCLM members to be more proactive in the IFCC's activities. SCLM will actively support the relations between professional medical associations and the healthcare industry, concerning scientific communication and continuing medical education.

Article continued on next page

Providing key resources and interactive information for full members and end-user groups could be of great importance. SCLM likes to contribute in strengthening the relationships with healthcare professionals, nurses/technicians, representatives of patient societies, etc. And SCLM will also try to develop more partnerships with global non-profit organizations, government, and community leaders to participate in our programs. SCLM's special focus are young people. It is devoted to intrigue, attract and motivate young talents, laboratory professionals and researchers for IFCC networking activities.

SCLM's main mission is education. Every year SCLM organizes international symposium SERBIS (Serbian Biomarker Symposium), and international conference CLAQ (Conference on Medical Laboratory Accreditation and Quality Systems), and continuous medical education seminars, roundtable discussions, etc.

Also, SCLM is an active supporter of and participant at IFCC events and meetings.

SCLM as new wave society is honored to be named as affiliate member of IFCC and will contribute to the continuous success of the IFCC.

IFCC'S CALENDAR OF CONGRESSES, CONFERENCES & EVENTS

Calendar of IFCC Congresses/Conferences and Regional Federations' Congresses

May 19 - 23, 2019		<i>XXIII IFCC - EFLM EuroMedLab Barcelona 2019</i>	Barcelona, ES
Sep 10 - 13, 2019		<i>COLABIOCLI Regional Congress 2019</i>	Panama, PA
Nov 17 - 20, 2019		<i>APFCB Regional Congress 2019</i>	Jaipur, IN
May 24 - 28, 2020		<i>XXIV IFCC WorldLab Seoul 2020</i>	Seoul, KR

Calendar continued on next page

May 16 - 20, 2021		XXIV IFCC - EFLM EuroMedLab Munich 2021	Munich, DE
May 21 - 25, 2023		XXV IFCC - EFLM WorldLab EuroMedLab - Rome 2023	Rome, IT

Calendar of events with IFCC auspices

Feb 20 - 22, 2019	<i>IV Turkish in vitro Diagnostic (IVD) Symposium "Biosensors"</i>	Izmir, TR
Feb 21 - 23, 2019	<i>14th Annual Meeting of Quality Assurance and Update on Obesity and Diabetes Topics</i>	San Luis Potosì, MX
Mar 2 - 3, 2019	<i>3rd Annual Conference of Nepalese Association for Clinical Chemistry (3rd NACCON 2019)</i>	Pokhara, NP
Mar 14 - 16, 2019	<i>VIIIth Congress of the Syndicate of Clinical Biologists of Lebanon, VIIIth Days of the International Francophone Federation of Clinical Biology and Laboratory Medicine</i>	Beirut, LB
Mar 21 - 23, 2019	<i>Annual academic sessions for doctors and workshop on medical laboratory science</i>	Colombo, LK
Mar 22 - 23, 2019	<i>5th EFLM European Conference on Preanalytical Phase "Preanalytical Challenges - time for solutions"</i>	Zagreb, HR
Mar 28 - 29, 2019	<i>XVII Meeting of the SEQCML Scientific Committee</i>	Madrid
Apr 4 - 5, 2019	<i>10th European Symposium on Clinical Laboratory and In Vitro Diagnostic Industry: 'The Clinical Laboratory in the Pregnancy Monitoring'</i>	Barcelona, ES
Apr 5, 2019	<i>Cardiac Marker Dialogues</i>	Glasgow, UK
Apr 11 - 12, 2019	<i>The 15th Belgrade Symposium for Balkan Region</i>	Belgrade, SRB
Apr 18 - 21, 2019	<i>The 12th International & 17th National Congress on Quality Improvement in Clinical Laboratories</i>	Tehran, IR
May 1 - 3, 2019	<i>Focus 2019 – Annual Meeting of the ACB</i>	Glasgow, UK
May 18, 2019	<i>VII International Symposium Laboratory Medicine and Quality - Satellite Meeting IFCC-EFLM EUROMEDLAB 2019</i>	Barcelona, ES

Calendar continued on next page

May 19, 2019	<i>International Symposium: Standardization and Recommendations in the Laboratory of Haematology - Satellite Meeting IFCC-EFLM EUROMEDLAB 2019</i>	Barcelona, ES
May 19, 2019	<i>International Symposium : Breast Cancer and Environment - Satellite Meeting IFCC-EFLM EUROMEDLAB 2019</i>	Barcelona, ES
Jun 2 - 5, 2019	<i>CSCC 2019 Annual Conference</i>	Saint John, CA
Jun 5 - 7, 2019	<i>The 3rd Conference of Romanian Association of Laboratory Medicine (RALM)</i>	Iasi, RO
Jun 29 - Jul 3, 2019	<i>The 23rd International Conference on Laboratory Medicine and Pathobiology: An expert forum in clinical and laboratory sciences</i>	Chios Island, GR
Sep 10 - 13, 2019	<i>XXIV Congreso Latinoamericano de Bioquímica Clínica (COLABIOCLI) and XIV Congreso Nacional de Laboratoristas Clínicos de Panamá</i>	Panama City, PA
Sep 25 - 27, 2019	<i>Congreso Nacional Bioquímico CUBRA XV 2019</i>	Chaco, AR
Oct 16 - 18, 2019	<i>5th ESPT Congress – Precision Medicine and Personalized Health</i>	Seville, ES
Oct 23, 2019	<i>From Bench to Diagnostic-Therapeutic Pathways - Symposium Dedicated to the Memory of Professor Angelo Burlina</i>	Padua, IT
Jun 9 - 12, 2020	<i>XXXVII Nordic Congress in Medical Biochemistry</i>	Trondheim, NO



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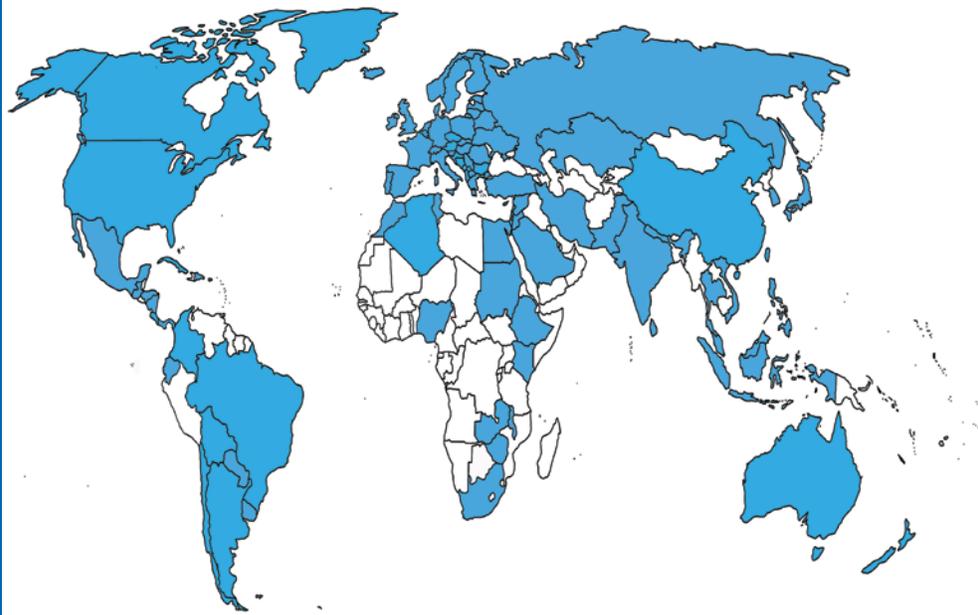
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