

Slovak Conference Focuses on Quality Control in Lab Diagnostics

Contributed by Marko Kapalla, Slovakian EPMA Representative and Program Committee Chairman

In November 2011, the beautiful city of Poprad, "Capital" of the Slovak High Tatras Mountains greeted the biennial international conference Labkvalita 2011, on quality in clinical laboratory diagnostics of the Slovak Society of Clinical Biochemistry (www.sskb.sk). Since 1993, this conference, accredited to give continuing medical education credits, attracts Slovak and foreign laboratory professionals, practitioners and specialists.

This year the program focused on new trends in predictive, preventive, and personalized medicine (PPPM) not only from the technology and quality points of view but also from those of ethics, law, finance, and politics. Approximately 180 delegates registered, and 19 suppliers and manufacturers provided exhibits to promote new products in the field of clinical laboratory diagnostics.

The Scientific program was divided into 5 sections: Preamalytics; Predictive, Preventive, and Personalized Medicine; Cooperation between the laboratory and the clinicians; Accreditation and quality in medical laboratory; and Quality of healthcare policy, visions, and ethics. Lecturers from Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, United Kingdom, and Slovakia gave the various talks on particular topics. Details of the program are available at www.sskb.sk.

Among invited lecturers, there were also top representatives of European Association for Predictive, Preventive, and Personalized Medicine (EPMA) who kindly accepted the invitation and were delighted by warm welcome and the interest of SSKB in promoting PPPM among clinical laboratory professionals in Slovakia. Implementation of PPPM at different levels has been repeatedly presented as an attribute of increased quality in healthcare.

Highlighted Themes and Debates

The lectures given and the subsequent discussions have emphasized the role of new predictive markers, role of information systems, importance of good cooperation between laboratory and clinicians, essential role of education, interactive communication with health insurance, greater participation of Slovak laboratory professionals on shaping the healthcare policy for the benefit of the patient, and the role of communication with the patient. Among the highlighted themes were also the following:

- PPPM will have impact on laboratory diagnostics and it may substantially improve the quality and complexity of the services in the field of laboratory diagnostics if implemented into daily routine of clinical laboratories.
- Accreditation of the clinical laboratories in Slovakia continues and more laboratories realize that the benefits of accreditation outweigh the troubles, paperwork, and the required energy dedicated to keeping the accreditation once the lab is accredited. On the other hand, accreditation

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Photo: (From left to right) Katarina Danova, president of the Slovak Society of Clinical Biochemistry, Jan Balla, IFCC representative in Slovakia and program committee member, Marko Kapalla, EPMA representative in Slovakia and program committee chairman. Photo by Magdalena Kacaniová

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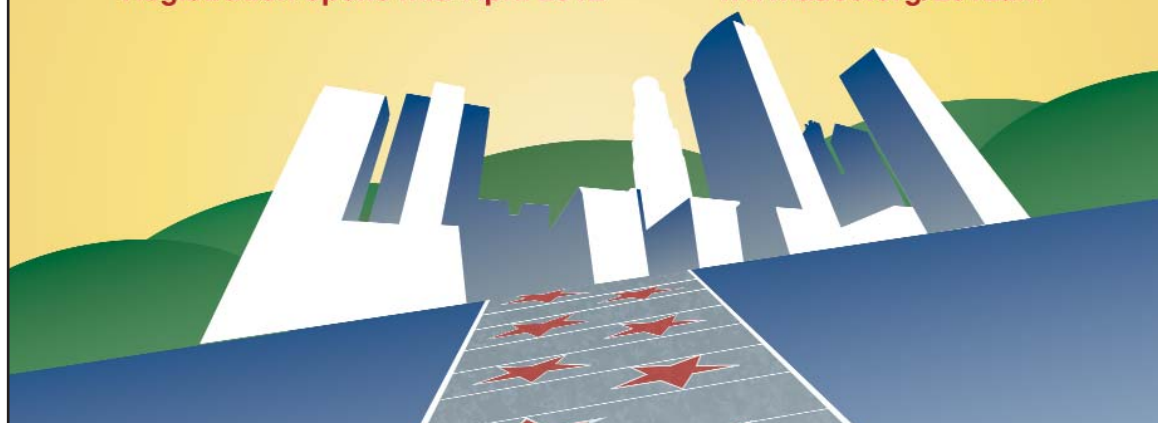
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My IFCC Professional Scientific Exchange Program (PSEP) Experience

by Dr. Mabel A. Charles-Davies, Immediate Past IFCC National Representative (Nigeria), Department of Chemical Pathology, College of Medicine, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria.

The purpose of spending my sabbatical period in Prof. Maurizio Ferrari's laboratory was to improve my capacity of applying advanced technologies, particularly molecular biology, in the of diagnosis of diseases, and in research in the field of reproductive endocrinology. My exposure to the "state of the art" molecular biology techniques in Prof. Ferrari's Laboratory has allowed me to fulfill my dreams and aspiration. My attendance at the International Federation of Clinical Chemistry and

Laboratory Medicine (IFCC) course in Molecular Biology in Milan (Italy) in 2006 was intended to achieve the above objective but time was short, and facilities were then unavailable in our laboratory to continue with what was learnt.

In the last few months, I have been through various aspects of molecular diagnosis of 21 β -hydroxylase enzyme deficiencies. Southern blotting and hybridization as well as polymerase chain reaction (PCR) and sequencing were applied after having extracted

deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA). Observation and hands-on experience in the various phases of this process have greatly improved my confidence in the use of these techniques. These analyses require top quality controls and laboratory safety, to which the staff strictly adheres. The environment and friendly atmosphere are conducive to the success of the laboratory. I am now applying what I have learned to the molecular diagnosis of azoospermia. I designed the required primers and I am presently setting the conditions for multiplex PCR.

On the social side, hospitality and courtesy are part of the Italian culture. I found everyone friendly and ready to help, even not convenient. My enrolment in an Italian school for foreigners 2 hours a week greatly enhanced my interaction with others, particularly outside the laboratory where English language, my mode of communication, is scarcely understood.

This Professional Scientific Exchange Program was the beginning of a true collaboration between my institution, the University of Ibadan (Nigeria), and the Vita-Salute San Raffaele University, in Milan (Italy).

I recommend the continuation of the IFCC PSEP program in settings with advanced technologies, in particular for individuals from developing countries. This will, beyond courses organized by the IFCC both within and outside their countries, build capacity and increase confidence in the use of advanced technologies in their laboratories. The additional knowledge and experience I have gained in Milan will impact on my colleagues and students, and the Association of Clinical



Photo: (From left to right) Prof. Maurizio Ferrari, Dr. Mabel Charles-Davies

Chemistry of Nigeria (ACCN).

I am very grateful to the IFCC for granting me the PSEP. It was financially very stressful before this aid, because of the relative cost of transportation and accommodation between Nigeria and the EU.

I must extend my wholehearted thanks to Prof. Maurizio Ferrari, who generously opened his doors, and offered his staff and facilities in the development of my career. I am particularly grateful to Dr. Paola Carrera (in charge of my training) and Dr. Mascia Di Marzio (who supervised my hands-on experience in 21 β -hydroxylase enzyme work, including interpretation), and the whole laboratory staff of the Department of Molecular Biology and Cytogenetics for their assistance and friendliness. I am also grateful to Ms. Denise Bottoni (Prof. Ferrari's Secretary) and Dr. Monica Zanusi for their availability that made my stay socially comforting. I cannot thank them enough. I also wish to thank Prof. E.O Agbedan, my Department Head at the College of Medicine, University of Ibadan, for his support and advice.

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itself cannot guarantee the quality under insufficient quality of health-care policy where there are numerous distortions in the field of laboratory diagnostics.

- Distortion of professional attitude is repeatedly noticed in the case were competing laboratories, being under pressure from investors, try to gather as many samples as possible, often forgetting that the service they offer is done for the patient and not for the sheer profit of the investor.
- Distortion of laboratory services and decreasing quality is also caused by the attitude of the health insurance companies, which often "reimburse" money according to very questionable policy that frequently ruins any possible and essential progress in clinical laboratory diagnostics. This distortion of the common sense

comes from the utterly underestimated role of the laboratory diagnostics in healthcare by the government and politicians.

- Distortion of fair competition in laboratory diagnostics resulting from the potential conflicts of interests is another problem of clinical laboratory diagnostics in Slovakia, which delegates of the conference perceive as an unacceptable situation.

Although clinical laboratory diagnostics is essential field for medicine, and is recognized by EPMA in the concept of predictive, preventive and personalized medicine, with help and political backing from other experts and international organizations, clinical laboratory professionals must exert substantially more effort to change the unsustainable situation in Slovak clinical laboratory diagnostics in order to increase the quality to the level that can be appreciated by the patient.

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IFCC-Task Force for Young Scientists Holds Educational Workshop in India

Contributed by Pradeep Kumar Dabla, IFCC-TF YS Member & National Representative

Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh, India, December 3, 2011. As a part of efforts of IFCC-Task Force Young Scientists (IFCC-TF YS) to promote networking between young scientists, to involve them in activities of laboratory medicine, and to promote the future of laboratory medicine, the IFCC-TF YS in collaboration with the Association of Clinical Biochemists of India (ACBI) held an Educational Workshop on December 3, 2011. The program was well attended by more than 100 candidates from various streams all over India. The event was hosted by the ACBI Conference (ACBICON) 2011 Organizing Committee under supervision of Dr. Neelima Singh (Organizing Secretary), and held at the ITM University, Gwalior (Madhya Pradesh, India).

IFCC has identified the need for young scientists to participate in Task Force activities and to understand the latest practices in laboratory health-care sector. Therefore, various Educational workshops have been organized during IFCC and Member Societies Congresses under the roof of IFCC-TF YS. The concept of these activities is to encourage interactions between young scientists to face challenges, and to brighten the future

prospects of self and laboratory medicine.

In keeping with these objectives, the Task Force organized Educational Workshop themed "Think The Unthinkable." For the first time, this workshop, second in continuation of the one-day workshop organized during the 37th Conference of the Association of Clinical Biochemists of India in December 2010, brought the laboratory medicine and Industry together, stressing on Various Job Opportunities present in Industry and other sectors related to Laboratory Medicine. This was an important step since it sought to share experiences, scope, and a common platform for both the laboratory personnel and the industry, which will lead to well-thought solutions to bridge the gap.

The workshop was organized with close cooperation with IFCC and ACBI. Addressing the conclave, Mr. J. Lopez (EB-IFCC & Past-President APFCB) praised the Task Force initiative and stressed upon the need to share experiences and challenges around the world. He explained the need of live sessions to demonstrate the laboratory management to build the future leadership. Then, Dr. Sucheta Dandekar (President ACBI) addressed and summarized the ACBI initiatives for the young



Photo: (Left) Dr. Pradeep Kumar Dabla, Head of the Department of Biochemistry, Chacha Nehru Bal Chikitsalya Pediatric Superspecialty Hospital, New Delhi receiving a memento from Mr. Joseph Lopez, IFCC Executive Board Member, representing the President Dr. Graham Beastall.

biochemists. Dr. Pradeep Kumar Dabla, convener, and National Representative IFCC-TF YS discussed the Task Force objectives and commitment of focused trainings to strengthen the future prospects of young laboratorians in absence of Damien Gruson, Chair IFCC-TF YS. The all senior members and EB-ACBI were present to support the cause.

Dr. Dabla stressed, "With a robust general economy and with extraordinary advances being made in biotechnology and biopharmaceuticals, excellent positions are available in a wide variety of fields for current and future college graduates." While discussing various fields he emphasized on making a decision about what type of career and exactly what field will be best for you and the importance of dual proficiency of management training. Dr. Elizabeth Frank (Chair of the Clinical Lab Management Committee of the IFCC & elected Secretary APFCB) explained the work strategies related to jobs vs. careers. Then she discussed about Entrepreneurship and how to start and managing your own business. Dr. Gurumukh Advani (Sales President Transasia) gave the view on how India is emerging as leading player in business and economy. He pointed out, "Healthcare delivery is growing as a largest service sector with excellent 15% growth per annum in India," and explained the role of biochemists in lab industry. In this blend of excellent professionals, Mr. Shankar Haveri, (Head Healthcare Learning Academy, Siemens Healthcare) discussed the learning academy programs and opportunities in various less known areas of IVD Industry. In row, Dr. Rajesh Bendre (Consultant Pathologist & HOD Immunochemistry, Metropolis Healthcare) explained the concept of Clinical Reference laboratories, the role of laboratory professionals and the job profiles and career opportunities. He emphasized on the need of multi-tasking behaviour and flexibility. Dr. Dabla, ended by giving Dr. Gruson's view about the young scientists and laboratory medicine.

To summarize, the workshop has provided tangible results for the young laboratory professionals to select the right path after completing their studies. It has provided the vision about the various techniques and essentials to reach the right destination.



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AACB News: Looking Back to Look Ahead

Contributed by Sandra Klingberg, Chair AACB Media and Communications Committee; Editor, Clinical Biochemist Newsletter

The year 2011 has been a year of milestones for The Australasian Association of Clinical Biochemists (AACB), the most notable of these being the celebration of 50 years since the formation of the AACB in May 1961.

Our Golden Jubilee was celebrated throughout the year with special events held in each of the Branches including the Roman Lecture tour featuring one of our founding fathers, Prof. Geoffrey Kellerman. The Golden Jubilee was also the key focus of our annual scientific meeting in October celebrating "Laboratory Medicine - Past, Present & Future."

Other significant milestones for the AACB include the induction of a new President Dr. Andrew St John and a new Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Mr. Peter Graham.

Prof. Leslie Burnett vacated the office of president at the annual general meeting of the Association in October with Dr. Andrew St John taking the helm. In articles recently published

in the Clinical Biochemists Newsletter, both Prof. Burnett and Dr. St John reflected on things past, present, and future.

Key issues and highlights noted in these two reports included:

- Development of international collaborations and cooperation with sister Associations such as the APFCB, IFCC, AACC, and ACB
- Forging new links with the EFCC and emerging Associations in South-East Asia
- Progression of workforce issues through the reactivation of Pathology Associations Council
- Initiation and participation in a number of major new scientific initiatives, including the introduction of reporting of the eGFR, international standardization and dual reporting of HbA1c, standardization of pathology and terminology, and most recently, pathology harmonization
- Relocation of the AACB Head Office from Perth to Sydney with



Photo: Celebrating the AACB's 50th Birthday: Prof Geoffrey Kellerman (2nd from the left), 2011 AACB Roman Lecturer, with the Victorian AACB Branch Committee.

co-location and strategic alliance with the Human Genetics Society of Australia (HGSA) to better position the AACB for the genomic revolution

The relocation of the Office has also brought about another of the significant changes to the "face" of the AACB in 2011 with the recent retirement of our CEO, Mr. Tony Prior. The AACB is indebted to Tony's dedicated

service over the last ten years, which was recognized with the presentation of an outstanding service medallion at the annual scientific meeting. The good news is that we have a new CEO in Mr. Peter Graham who brings a wealth of laboratory and management experience with him. The AACB looks forward to long and productive working relationship with Peter as we move forward into our next 50 years!

IFCC Welcomes New Corporate Members

Mindray

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Mindray, founded in 1991 with the goal of delivering high quality, competitively priced medical devices to make healthcare more accessible and affordable around the world was listed on the New York Stock Exchange in 2006. The company has three well-established business segments: Patient Monitoring and Life Support Products, In Vitro Diagnostic Products, and Medical Imaging Systems. Health care facilities equipped with Mindray's products can be found in over 190 countries and regions. IVD Mindray has a global R&D network with research centers in Shenzhen (China), Beijing (China), Nanjing (China), Seattle (USA), New Jersey (USA), and Stockholm (Sweden).

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European Funding: A Financial Windfall to Seize for Innovative Projects

by Dr. Bernard Gouget

SFBC-EFLM Representative; IFCC Treasure;
Secretary General, International Francophone Federation
of Clinical Biology and Laboratory Medicine (FIFBCLM)

Public health, research, and continuing education are fields in which the European Commission awards financial aid. This community funding exists to implement projects or activities related to European Union policy. This funding can be awarded to companies, associations, and healthcare facilities, in the form of subsidies or investment grants. European policies are divided into thematic programs such as the 2007-2013 health program (the one for 2014-2019 is being negotiated) or the Program of the European Community for research, technological development, and demonstration activities. Next, these programs are subdivided into projects and then funding means. Brussels regularly issues calls for projects, open to all interested candidates. To respond, candidates must submit proposals with a European dimension and involving, in principle, at least three Member States. Beyond this requirement, the conditions to fulfill for participation vary. The list of calls for proposals is available on the Commission Website (http://ec.europa.eu/index_en.htm under the section "Public Contracts and Funding," subsection "Grants").

An innovative e-learning experience was led by Prof. Corberand, hematology, at the Rangueil Toulouse University Hospital, which coordinated the e-HEMATImage interactive multilingual project as part of the Leonardo da Vinci Program in the field of education and continuing training. The goal was to create online continuing-education programs on the topic of hematology. The programs are available in eight languages and accessible to medical biology professionals. In 2009, this successful operation generated a second, e-MEDICINImage (www.e-hematimage.eu/index.jsp?Langue=en&Pays=GB), with the goal of improving knowledge and know-how, in the fields of hematology, mycology, and parasitology for all medical biology laboratory profes-

sionals (doctors, scientists and technicians) concerned with performing and interpreting hematological, mycological, and parasitological exams. The site offers real cases taken from laboratory experience, with access in the user's native language, records validated by scientific societies, supervision by recognized specialists, and from of personal projects.

The European Commission also funded research on the genome, cancer, and even Alzheimer's disease. If they are not the leader of a European project, health facilities and laboratories or services can work with a private company, a medical research unit, such as INSERM in France, or a research center that received an EU grant. Between 2003 and 2009, for example, the European Commission supported 50% of the cost of the MyHeart project for developing intelligent systems for preventing and detecting cardiovascular disease. This equaled sixteen million euros. Among the forty partners and beneficiaries of the project are the San Carlos Hospital of Madrid (Spain), and the Coimbra (Portugal) and Aix-la-Chapelle (Germany) University Hospitals. The Commission never funds a project 100%; however, the sums paid can be substantial. Most often, the allocated budgets are managed by a public authority, with its partners to be clearly identified before its project is designed. Setting up projects is difficult, but European associations such as the European Hospital and Healthcare Federation (HOPE) can provide valuable and effective assistance.

The e-MEDICINImage project is a good example of the generalization of e-learning in our education and training systems. Connectivity and equipment are no longer central questions, and the focus is now on problems of pedagogy, content, and quality assurance and standards, training of teachers and



trainers, and of continuous development, organizational change and transformation processes of education and training. E-learning has entered adulthood and we are in the process of evolving from preparation to practice and from pilot e-learning projects to lasting education and training programs. The European Federation has demonstrated its clear understanding by establishing a WG on distance learning. Moreover, its newly named "European Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine" will undoubtedly factor in creativity in e-learning on many subjects!

New Acronym for EFCC



The Executive Board of the European Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine has become aware that the abbreviation EFCC is often misidentified as IFCC by other international organizations, National Societies and other stakeholders as well as by individuals from the profession. In the past, this has caused confusion and sometimes has undermined the identity of the Federation.

After consultation with National Representatives and Presidents of our Member Societies, the Executive Board has agreed to adopt EFLM to replace EFCC as the acronym to describe our Federation. The full name of the Federation remains unchanged: European Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine.

We take this occasion to thank all our National Society Members for supporting the Executive Board in this important decision for the future "branding" of our Federation

Yours sincerely, Ian Watson, EFLM President

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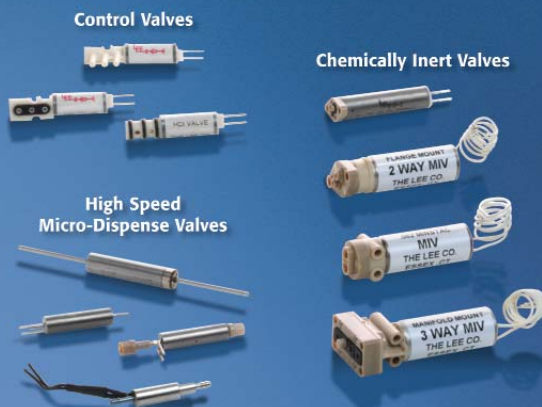
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14th Berkes Annual Scientific Conference Held in Belgrade

by Dr. Snezana Jovicic,
Member of the IFCC eNews Working Group

The 2011 Annual Scientific Conference "Professor Ivan Berkes" was held on December 1, at Military Medical Academy in Belgrade (Serbia). As it is customary, the lecturers were clinical laboratory professionals who have defended their doctoral thesis in the course of the past year at the Faculty of Pharmacy and Faculty of Medicine. This year, they were Dr. Janko Pejovic (Military Medical Academy, Belgrade), Dr. Marijana Dajak (Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Belgrade), Dr. Jasenka Lalos-Miljus (Faculty of Medicine, University of Banja Luka, Republic of Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina) and Dr. Jelena Popovic (Faculty of Medicine, University of Nis, Serbia).

This Annual Scientific Conference and Fund "Professor Ivan Berkes" was established to honor life and work of Prof. Ivan Berkes, one of the founders of medical biochemistry in former Yugoslavia. He taught medical biochemistry at Universities in Zagreb,

Skopje, and Belgrade. His work at the Faculty of Pharmacy of the University of Belgrade was in great part directed towards the definition and foundation of the specialist studies program. In addition, Prof. Berkes introduced Clinical Enzymology as an independent discipline. With over 200 publications, mentoring of 150 specialists in medical biochemistry and several tens of doctoral candidates, Prof. Berkes left an indelible mark in clinical laboratory profession in Serbia. After his death in 1997, the Society of Medical Biochemists of Yugoslavia and the Faculty of Pharmacy of the University of Belgrade founded the Scientific Fund and Annual Scientific Conference named after him, as a sign of appreciation and respect for this remarkable teacher and eminent expert.

Awards from the Scientific Fund "Professor Ivan Berkes" are given yearly to the two best graduate students from the Faculty of Pharmacy of the University of Belgrade, one gradu-



Photo: (From left to right) Awarded students with the Dean and Professors of Faculty of Pharmacy; Milena Anđelković, Prof. Nada Majkic-Singh, Prof. Nada Kovacevic, Sanela Dordevic, Ana Milojevic, Prof. Svetlana Ignjatovic

ate in pharmacy, and the other in medical biochemistry. However, 2011 called for a special event as the first students graduated according to the new syllabus harmonized with the Bologna declaration. Hence, this year the Fund gave four diplomas and monetary awards; two to students graduated according to previous school system - Mladen Milovic (pharmacy graduate) and Milena Anđelković (pharmacy-medical biochemistry graduate), and two to "Bologna graduates" - Sanela Dordevic (Master of Pharmacy) and Ana

Milojevic (Master of Pharmacy-medical biochemistry).

After the traditional welcoming address of Colonel Prof. Marijan Novakovic, Head of Military Medical Academy, and of Prof. Nada Kovacevic, Dean of Faculty of Pharmacy, and Chair of the event, Prof. Majkic-Singh, presented awards.

With this successful conference, we remembered once again, the legacy of Prof. Ivan Berkes, whose students represent the core of science of medical biochemistry and clinical laboratory practice in Serbia today.

2nd EFCC-UEMS European Joint Congress: Laboratory Medicine at the Clinical Interface

We take this opportunity to inform you that the Scientific Program of the 2nd EFCC-UEMS European Joint Congress has been finalized and is now available at www.dubrovnik2012.com. The Scientific Committee has done a great job in gathering the recognized international experts in the field who will be presenting the latest news and findings in their field. The Scientific Program will encompass 3 plenary sessions, 15 scientific symposia, 4 highly interactive pro- and contra- sessions, as well as a series of specialized industry sponsored workshops.

We would like to draw your particular attention to the S10 Session (Friday, October 12, 2012, 14:00-15:30h) on Education of Specialists in Laboratory Medicine in Europe within which most recent advances in the

recognition of the profession at the European level will be presented and discussed.

Abstract Submission is also now available at the Congress web site. Best posters will be awarded with Poster awards.

Dates to remember are:

- Abstract Submission Deadline:
May 15, 2012
- Early Registration Deadline:
May 1, 2012

We proudly announce that EFLM (formerly EFCC) Travel grants are available for Young Congress participants. For more details, please visit: www.efclm.eu.

We look forward to see you in Dubrovnik!

2nd EFCC-UEMS European Joint Congress

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EFLM Reaches Collaboration Agreement with the European Society for Pharmacogenomics and Theranostics (ESPT)

A Memorandum of Understanding has been prepared to define a collaborative working relationship between EFLM and ESPT, the European Society for Pharmacogenomics and Theranostics, to foster the cooperation and to advance Clinical Laboratory Medicine. The European Society of Pharmacogenomics and Theranostics (ESPT) is a nonprofit organization, whose aims are to promote the education and research in pharmacogenomics and theranostics, to ensure the high standards in their application to clinical practice for improving the delivery of medicines, to provide a scientific basis for official recommendations and to provide education materials for patients, clinicians and all health workers. For further information, the document is downloadable at the following link: <http://efcclm.eu/downloads/> (section: Agreement)

EFLM Presence at National Society Meetings

The Executive Board appreciates the support it receives from National Societies and individual members of these societies in the various past and current EFLM activities. To foster this relationship, EFLM officers' attendance, and their active participation

as invited speakers has been arranged during the following National Congresses:

- 11th Baltic Congress of Laboratory Medicine - Vilnius (LT), May 10-12, 2012
- Congress of the Slovak Society of Clinical Biochemistry (NC SSCB) - Banská Bystrica (SK), May 27-29, 2012
- XXXIII Nordic Congress in Clinical Chemistry - Reykjavik (IS), June 12-15, 2012
- National Days for Russian Laboratory Medicine - InterLabDiagnostics 2012 - Moscow (RU), October 2-4, 2012
- 7th Conference of the Romanian Association of Medical Laboratories (RAML) with International Participation - Sinaia, Romania (RO), June 20-23, 2012

New Type of Membership: Young Membership

The EFLM Executive Board to strengthen the role of Young Scientists inside its Working Groups invited National Societies to send nominations. The number of Full Members' positions inside each EFLM Working Group has been enlarged to enable Young Scientists to take part in

the WG activities.

A large number of nominations was received and the selected candidates are as follows:

Cardiac Markers (WG-CM): Christopher DUFF (UK); Biological Variation (WG-BV): Federica Braga (IT); Guidelines (WG-G): Shivani Misra (UK); Test Evaluation (WG-TE): Philip Monaghan (UK); Preeanalytical Phase (WG-PA): Michael Cornes (UK); Congresses and Postgraduate Education (WG-CPE): Andjelo Beletic (SRB); Distance Education and e-Learning (WG-DE): Darya Kisilichina (RU); Accreditation and ISO/CEN (WG-A/ISO): Kanella Konstantinakou (GR)

**Working Group:
Preanalytical Phase (WG-PA)**

The pre- and post-analytical phases of the laboratory testing process are now widely recognized as the major source of laboratory errors. Preanalytical errors are the most common and account for up to 2/3 of the total number of errors. The risk for errors in the laboratory testing process quite is underestimated in the everyday clinical practice. To reduce the error risk, important steps are to increase the awareness of the importance of the preanalytical phase in the total testing process and recommend guidelines for the best preanalytical practices. Efficient indicators and educational tools should be provided in order to implement the best preanalytical practices.

For this reason, a new EFLM WG was created under the Chairmanship of Prof. Ana-Maria Simundic (Croatia).

This WG will focus their work on the following:

- 1) To promote the importance of the

quality of the preanalytical phase
of laboratory medicine:

- 2) To define the best practices and provide recommendations for some critical activities in the pre-analytical phase;
- 3) To design and validate questionnaires for assessing the current practices related to some pre-analytical variables;
- 4) To conduct surveys using validated questionnaires with the aim to assess the current pre-analytical practices;
- 5) Organize symposia, workshops, webinars, or training courses on preanalytical phase issues.

One of the main future activities of this WG will be to organize the 2nd EFLM-BD Conference on pre-analytical phase, during March 1-2, 2013, in Zagreb, Croatia.

**EFLM-AACB Agreement on the
Joint Task-and-Finish Working
Group on Critical Values (TFG-CV)**

EFLM and AACB (Australasian Association of Clinical Biochemists) recognize the added value of working together to foster cooperation and to advance Laboratory Medicine. To formalize this cooperation a joint Task-and-Finish Working Group on Critical Values (TFG-CV) has been established for a 2-year period.

Action points that are of mutual interest to both parties are:

- 1) To expand the recent Australasian survey on critical values management to Europe.
- 2) To publish results of the European survey of critical value management jointly with AACB
- 3) Develop joint recommendations on best laboratory practice for communicating critical results.

News from the Belgian Society

by Prof. J.P. Chapelle, Centre Hospitalier Universitaire de Liège,
Chef du Service de Chimie médicale

During the year 2011, the Royal Belgian Society of Clinical Chemistry (RBSCC) organized a National Symposium (Brussels, April 7, 2011) on the topic "New and sensitive testing: improving healthcare?" and, in collaboration with the Belgian Society of Clinical Biology, a national meeting (Liège, October 15, 2011) dealing with "The added value of clinical-laboratory interaction and The future of Clinical Biology"

Education is also a main objective of the RSBC. During the RRBSCC National Symposium (April 7, 2011), two trainees in Laboratory Medicine received the Young Investigators Award in Clinical Chemistry 2010-2011 for an outstanding publication in the field of applied clinical chemistry and in the field of fundamental research. During the

BSCB/RBSCC joint National Symposium (October 15, 2011), three prizes were awarded to young investigators for a recently published article relating to clinical biology.

In 2012, the National Symposium of our society will be devoted to "Medical quality beyond operational quality in the lab: the role of Clinical Biologist." The meeting will be held in Groot-Bijgaarden (Brussels) on May 3, 2012. (Information: joris.penders@zol.be). The joint National Symposium of the Belgian Society of Clinical Biology will be organized in Ghent on October 20, 2012.

On the international level, preliminary contacts have been made with the organizers of the 2015 EFCC Euro-MedLab Congress to be held in Paris (France), in order to organize a satellite meeting in Brussels.

DMBS
SMBS

Balkan
Clinical
Laboratory
Federation

EFCC
EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF CLINICAL CHEMISTRY
AND LABORATORY MEDICINE

ifcc
International Federation
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and Laboratory Medicine

BCLF 2012 BELGRADE MEETINGS

20th Meeting of the Balkan
Clinical Laboratory Federation

8th EFCC Symposium for Balkan Region

18th Congress of Medical Biochemists of Serbia

www.bclf2012.org



September 18–22, 2012

Best Western Hotel M, Belgrade, Serbia