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International Federation of Clinical Chemistry
and Laboratory Medicine

Communications and Publications Division (CPD) of the IFCC
IFCC Office, Via C. Farini, 81
20159 Milano, Italy
E-mail: enews@ifcc.org

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IFCC President's Message

March 2025
By Tomris Ozben

Prof. Tomris Ozben
EuSpLM, Ph.D.

Dear Colleagues, Dear Friends,

I hope the year has been going well for all of you so far, and that you are looking forward to the exciting activities the IFCC has planned for the rest of 2025.

The first Executive Board (EB) in-presence meeting, held on January 30-31th at the IFCC office in Milan, was fruitful. We prepared for a virtual/ on-line EB meeting scheduled for March 10th, to discuss the latest key developments and initiatives within IFCC. Since there are many issues arising to be considered by the EB, it was decided to hold the virtual EB meetings every month.

Regarding the upcoming IFCC General Conference on May 16th and 17th, the program has been finalized, and the final speakers are being confirmed in the coming days. We look forward to this exciting event, a true "meeting of minds" where a wide range of topics will be discussed. The conference will also feature speakers from various companies, including an engaging IVD session, along with numerous interactive moments between speakers and attendees.

I would like to share some updates regarding the upcoming EuroMedLab 2025 Congress, which will be held in Brussels from May 18th to 22nd. The registration link has been sent to the IFCC community and registration is open to everyone. We currently have 105 sponsors and exhibitors. Please note that further information can always be found on the congress website, which is continuously updated. I am also proud to announce that this year, we have received a total of 2959 abstracts, reflecting also the strong engagement of young scientists with this event.

In addition to the EuroMedLab 2025 Congress, several satellite meetings are scheduled for May 18th, 2025. One is organized by the Emerging Technologies in Pediatric Laboratory Medicine Committee (C-ETPLM), it will take place from 8:30 AM to 3:00 PM at the Saint-Luc Clinique Universitaire in Brussels, focusing on "Emerging Technologies and Innovations in Pediatric Laboratory Medicine". Another satellite event is organized by the Royal Belgian Society of Laboratory Medicine (RBSLM), which will take place from 10:00 AM to 3:45 PM and focus on "Preventive Diagnostics: The Power of Laboratory Medicine." Another satellite meeting, "Indirect Reference Interval Methods: Educational Course & Hands-on Workshop," will be held from 8:15 AM to 4:30 PM at the Radisson Collection Hotel, Grand Place, Brussels. A fourth satellite event on mass spectrometry will be organized on Thursday, May 22.

On Sunday, May 18th, the fourth edition of the Young Scientist Forum will be held in Brussels. This event provides a good opportunity for young scientists to participate and stay updated. Scholarship recipients will also be attending, offering them valuable opportunities for networking and collaboration, as well as an incredible chance for personal and

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professional growth.

Thanks to the generous support of our sponsors, the IFCC Distinguished Awards will be presented in Brussels. Nominations have been submitted in accordance with the established deadline. These prestigious awards recognize and celebrate exceptional achievements in laboratory medicine. The nominations received are of outstanding quality, and the evaluation process is currently underway.

I am also pleased to announce that the Professional Exchange Programme (PEP) scholarships bursaries have been successfully assigned. The selection process was particularly challenging due to the high number of applications and the impressive level of candidates from various countries.

I am also excited to inform you that the bids for WorldLab 2028 have been received. Four IFCC Member Societies have submitted applications to host the WorldLab Congress in 2028 and the candidate cities are as follows:

- Buenos Aires- Argentina
- Shanghai - China
- Harare – Zimbabwe
- Marrakesh- Marocco

The IFCC's Task Force on Outcome Studies in Laboratory Medicine (TF-OSLM) is in the final stages of selecting winners for research proposals evaluating the impact of laboratory testing on health outcomes. This initiative aims to promote research on the role of laboratory medicine in clinical outcomes and highlight its essential contribution to healthcare. For more information, including access to the IFCC's database, please visit our official website.

I am pleased to announce that the IFCC Global MedLab Week 2025 (GMLW2025) will take place in April 21-27th, 2025, with the theme "Labs Save Lives". This important annual event highlights the crucial role of clinical laboratory professionals in healthcare, public health, and disease diagnosis. We encourage your participation by organizing activities or submitting creative content such as podcasts, videos, or photos that demonstrate the life-saving impact of laboratory work. All relevant guidelines are available on the IFCC website at IFCC Global MedLab Week Information or on the Global MedLab Week webpage at Global MedLab Week Official where you can also upload your contributions. The deadline for submitting audio and video content is March 20th, 2025.

I look forward to a successful collaboration throughout the year and the opportunity to continue working together to advance the field of laboratory medicine.

Warm regards,
Tomris Ozben
IFCC President

IFCC 2050: Cybernetic Horizons

By **Dr Bernard Gouget,** IFCC Task Force on History Co-Chair, ETD EC Secretary, **Prof. Mathias M Müller,** IFCC Task Force on History Co-Chair, IFCC Past President

As clinical chemistry and laboratory medicine advance in response to scientific, technological, and societal shifts, the IFCC must redefine its leadership to navigate the challenges of 21st-century healthcare. This news explores the trajectory of IFCC leadership from 2025 and beyond, shaped by its historical foundations, the exponential growth of laboratory medicine, the transformative power of AI and bioengineering, and the life-altering impact of emerging technologies on global healthcare ecosystems.

Breakthroughs in regenerative medicine, synthetic biology, and AI-powered digital twins, virtual human models capable of predicting and simulating health outcomes will revolutionize disease prevention, treatment customization, and precision medicine. Laboratory professionals must evolve within interdisciplinary ecosystems while sustainability takes center stage. Green chemistry, biodegradable diagnostic tools, and circular bioeconomy models will minimize environmental impact. Cloud-connected, decentralized diagnostics will optimize efficiency, reduce waste, and democratize access to cutting-edge healthcare worldwide.

The metaverse will house AI-driven digital hospitals, where virtual doctors provide instant, personalized medical consultations, backed by quantum-computed clinical models that predict health outcomes with unprecedented accuracy. However, these advancements demand next-generation cybersecurity, integrating blockchain-encrypted health records, quantum-resistant cryptography, and AI-driven cyber fortifications against biometric data breaches and neural manipulation.

Imagine a world where microscopic AI doctors operate inside you. Nanobots patrol your bloodstream, eliminating cancer cells before they multiply. A single drop of sweat triggers quantum biosensors that analyze your health in real time, running trillions of simulations to optimize metabolism, predict lifespan, and enhance cognition. Bio-implants autonomously generate stem cells, rejuvenating organs on demand.

Yet, such power comes with risks. Neuro-hackers lurk in digital shadows, exploiting biometric vulnerabilities to hijack identities, manipulate emotions, and even rewrite human consciousness. Cybersecurity is no longer about protecting data; it's about protecting the mind itself. The strongest firewall isn't software, it's our own neural encryption, an adaptive, self-evolving defense against cyber threats faster than any traditional system.

The role of the patient will shift from passive recipient to autonomous health regulator. Brain-computer interfaces will enable individuals to monitor and optimize their biology in real time. AI-powered personal health assistants, trained on global federated medical data, will refine treatments dynamically, ensuring longevity and enhanced well-being.

Education and workforce development will be revolutionized by immersive AI-driven learning environments, personalized skill development via brain-computer interfaces, and continuous upskilling through AI curated knowledge. Scientific communication and publishing will shift towards open-access models, AI-assisted literature synthesis, and real-time knowledge dissemination. Traditional scientific publishing will become obsolete, giving way to decentralized knowledge-sharing networks and holographic scientific conferences that foster unprecedented interdisciplinary collaboration. The IFCC must evolve into an orchestrator of this new frontier, beyond governance, navigating a world where diagnostics, treatment, and patient empowerment converge into an intelligent, self-regulating intelligent healthcare ecosystem.

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To lead this transformation, IFCC leadership must adopt a dynamic, forward-thinking approach that prioritizes ethical AI integration, sustainability, and equitable access to cutting-edge diagnostics. By fostering an innovation-driven ecosystem and leveraging disruptive technologies, the IFCC can ensure that laboratory medicine remains at the forefront of scientific progress, transforming patient care and shaping the future of global healthcare transformation.

The IFCC of 2050 will not just oversee laboratory medicine; it will engineer the future of human biology. The real challenge is not whether these transformations will occur but how quickly we will adapt. Are we ready to embrace the future before it embraces us? This is the challenge of the medical biologists and specialists in lab medicine!

Dr Bernard Gouget, IFCC Task Force on History Co-Chair, ETD EC Secretary

Prof. Mathias M Müller, IFCC Task Force on History Co-Chair, IFCC Past President

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IFCC Professional Scientific Exchange Programme, my experience at: Newborn Screening Ontario (NSO) Program, Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO)

By **Dr. Bijaya Mishra,** Medical Biochemist, Associate Professor, Biochemistry, B.P. Koirala Institute of Health Sciences, Nepal

Introduction
As a medical biochemist passionate about newborn screening (NBS), I had the privilege of attending a five-week training program at NSO program as an IFCC-PSEP scholar. The primary objective of my visit was to enhance my knowledge and technical skills in the field, with the ultimate goal of applying these learnings to initiate NBS program in Nepal.

Objectives of the Training
1. To observe and understand the laboratory methodologies used for NBS.
2. To comprehend the workflow of a well-established NBS program, including quality assurance(QA) and quality control(QC) measures.
3. To learn about result processing, reporting, referral, retrieval, and follow-up in a NBS program.
4. To assess potential strategies for designing, developing, implementing a NBS program in my institution upon my return.

Overview of NSO
NSO is Canada's most comprehensive NBS program, based at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario. It screens all newborns in Ontario for over 25 treatable conditions, including metabolic, endocrine, hematologic and genetic disorders. My training at NSO provided insights into:
1. **Pre-analytical Phase:** Sample collection (dried blood spots-DBS) and transport mechanisms.
2. **Analytical Phase:** High-throughput laboratory techniques, including tandem mass spectrometry, enzymatic assays, hormone assays, genetic testing and molecular diagnostics assays. Additionally, I gained knowledge of QA, QC, and proficiency testing.
3. **Post-analytical Phase:** Result interpretation, reporting, referral, retrieval, and follow-up protocols.
4. **Interdisciplinary Collaboration:** Effective communication between laboratory team, clinicians, genetic counselors, and nurses.

Training Activities and Key Learnings
I observed, actively participated and learnt about:-
1. **Laboratory Techniques and Testing Procedures**
- Processing of sample collected in DBS card.
- Enzymatic, immunoassay, genetic, molecular screening and diagnostic assays for screening and confirming various inherited disorders.
- Applications on tandem mass spectrometry in screening, confirmatory and diagnostic testing.
- Reporting and result interpretation using disease algorithms.
- Implication of internal and external QC measures to ensure result accuracy.

2. Data Management and Follow-Up Strategies
- NSO's approach to data integration and digital reporting using Laboratory Information System-OMNI platform.
- Strategies for timely communication of results to healthcare providers.
- Importance of confirmatory testing for screen positive cases and the role of nurses and genetic counselors in referral and retrieval.

I gained a comprehensive understanding about NBS program. I was able to identify the challenges, and outline effective strategies to establish a sustainable NBS program. I now feel equipped to initiate screening (both qualitative and quantitative) for few selected inherited disorders in Nepal.

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Reflections and Future Directions
This training significantly broadened my understanding of NBS program. The structured workflow, QC practices, and integrated follow-up strategies at NSO has provided a strong foundation for me.

As I aspire to initiate NBS program in my institute and envision its expansion across Nepal, this training underscored the necessity of:
- Establishing a robust NBS infrastructure.
- Encouraging government and institutional collaboration for program sustainability.
- Spreading awareness about NBS.
- Adopting cost-effective and relevant screening methods suitable for Nepal's healthcare setting.

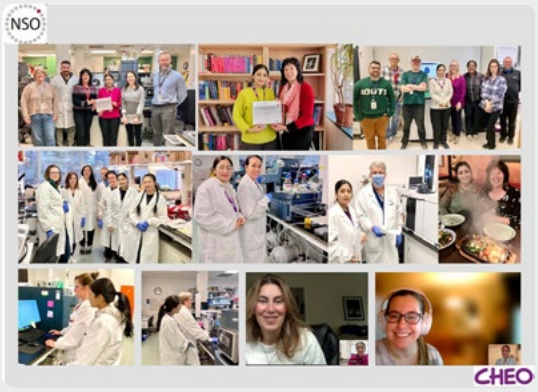
Conclusion
My visit to CHEO and participation in the NSO program was an enlightening and overwhelmingly joyful experience that equipped me with essential knowledge and practical skills to advocate for and contribute to the development of a newborn screening program in Nepal. I am eager to apply these learnings to improve newborn healthcare in my home country.

Acknowledgements
I sincerely thank the **IFCC** for awarding me the PSEP Scholarship. IFCC-PSEP definetely provides an invaluable learning exchange platform for professionals like me and many more from low- and lower-middle-income countries. Before this training, most of my knowledge about NBS came through textbooks, articles and online videos and resources. This was first time in my profession that I closely learned through NBS program.

Deepest appreciation to **Dr.Lepage, Dr.Henderson, Dr.Siu, Dr.Lacaria and the entire team at NSO, CHEO** for their warm hospitality, extensive guidance, and willingness to share their expertise. I am returning home with a wealth of knowledge, experience, and cherished memories.

Extended gratitude towards **Nepalese Association for Clinical Chemistry(NACC)** for endorsing my application, and I am immensely grateful to the **Department of Biochemistry, BPKIHS**, for granting me permission to pursue this training.

Finally, to my family, especially my children, **Aurik and Adwik**, thank you all for your patience and understanding during my time away for this training.



Nice memories from my PSEP at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO)

IFCC: the people

IFCC Calls for Nominations

Participate in IFCC activities and give your contribution! Review the open positions and, if interested, contact your National or Corporate Representative. Currently, the following calls for nominations are open:

Scientific Division (SD)

- **IFCC Committee on Bone Metabolism (C-BM)**
  3 member positions - see here the call for nominations
  Please send nominations for above SD positions to Elisa Fossati (elisa.fossati@ifcc.org) by 15th March 2025

- **IFCC Committee on Nomenclature, Properties and Units (C-NPU)**
  1 member position - see here the call for nominations
  Please send nominations for above SD positions to Elisa Fossati (elisa.fossati@ifcc.org) by 15th March 2025

Education and Management Division (EMD)

- **IFCC Committee on Clinical Laboratory Biology Curriculum (C-CMBC)**
  3 member positions - see here the call for nominations
  Please send nominations for above EMD positions to Silvia Cardinale (cardinale@ifcc.org) by 3rd April 2025

For any further information on nominations, please refer to your National or Corporate Representative - contacts are available here.

CPECS® credits have been applied for at the IFCC-EFLM EuroMedLab Brussels 2025 Congress!

We've officially applied to offer CPECS® credits at the IFCC-EFLM EuroMedLab Brussels 2025 Congress!
EFLM CPECS® guarantees high-quality accreditation for continuing education in laboratory medicine and related scientific topics.
(Learn more about the CPECS® system and how to earn credits at the link below:
https://www.euromedlab2025brussels.org/accreditation/)

IFCC: the Young Scientists

Meet a Young Scientist from the IFCC Task Force Young Scientists

Spotlight on: **Shabnam DILDAR**, IFCC Task Force-Young Scientists corresponding member from Pakistan, nominated by The Pakistan Society of chemical Pathology (PSCP)

Could you please introduce yourself?
I am Dr. Shabnam Dildar Ali, a resident of Karachi, the largest city in Pakistan by population and size. With a population of approximately 16 million, Karachi is one of the most populous cities in the world, known for its natural beauty, rich cultural heritage, and vibrant urban life.
I live with my husband, a Chartered Accountant, and our ten-year-old son. In my free time, I enjoy cooking, reading books, and watching movies.

Could you share a bit about your background?
I am currently working as a Consultant Chemical Pathologist and Section Head of the Biochemistry Department at National Medical Center (NMC) in Karachi, Pakistan, a tertiary care hospital. I have completed my MBBS and five-year postgraduate medical education training in Chemical Pathology/Clinical Biochemistry at Aga Khan University Hospital, Karachi, Pakistan, one of the top institutions in the country. I was awarded the FCPS degree in Chemical Pathology from the College of Physicians and Surgeons Pakistan (CPSP). My areas of research are infections, sepsis, biomarkers of disease, and endocrine disorders such as adrenal insufficiency, diabetes mellitus.

What is your current role in the lab/daily activity?
Currently I am working as the Section Head of the Clinical Chemistry Department. My responsibilities include monitoring internal and external quality control, validating and verifying new test methods, and performing clinical correlation of clinical chemistry lab reports. Resolve patient and physician complaints regarding lab reports and other issues, implementing appropriate corrective and preventive actions. Additionally, I evaluate proposals and make decisions for the procurement of analyzers in the Chem-Path Department. My role also involves inventory management, lab staff hiring, training, and development. I undertake clinical research as a principal investigator and have introduced new tests to enhance diagnostic capabilities and improve patient care.

Could you give us a brief introduction to your national society and its main activities?
PSCP is a registered professional organization established to promote knowledge and best practices in the field of Clinical Chemistry (Chemical Pathology) in Pakistan. It is accredited by the Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC) for Continuing Medical Education (CME). The organization holds annual scientific conferences and CME courses on topics related to Chemical Pathology and Endocrinology. PSCP also serves as a forum for scientific publications. The Spectrum, its newsletter, has been regularly published since 2012, with six editions released to date.
PSCP has developed Clinical Practice Guidelines and books, including clinical information and biochemical data, followed by correct diagnosis and a brief description of conditions in Endocrinology. It has also written Clinical Practice Guidelines on Pediatric Inherited Metabolic Disorders, with particular focus on the use of clinical features and routine laboratory facilities that are easily available in our hospitals. A short textbook titled Chemical Pathology for the Beginners has been published for junior students of Chemical Pathology.

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PSCP has international affiliations with the Asia Pacific Federation of Clinical Biochemistry (APFCB), is a member of the Society for the Study of Inborn Errors of Metabolism (SSIEM), and is also a member of the International Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (IFCC)

How can YS from your national society get additional information about the activities of the association and activities with the TF-YS?
Our National Society has a website, WhatsApp group, and Facebook page where we post information. All of our young scientists are part of that group. We also disseminate important information directly to their institutes, as well as to their personal contact numbers and emails

Is there any future collaborative project of IFCC TF-YS that you want to share with readers of IFCC eNews?
I am working on the 'LAB SAVES LIVES' project with the IFCC-PR group, which is planned for April 21-27, 2025. I am a corresponding member, and I have invited many people in our society to participate in this event by sending us videos showcasing their work and how they save the lives of patient.

Spotlight on: **Michelle VAN DER HELM,** IFCC Task Force-Young Scientists corresponding member from the Netherlands, nominated by The Nederlandse Vereniging voor Klinische Chemie en Laboratoriumgeneeskunde (Netherlands Society of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine) (NVKC)

Could you please introduce yourself?
I am Michelle van der Helm and I am the corresponding member of the IFCC Task Force-Young Scientists from the Netherlands Society of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (Nederlandse Vereniging voor Klinische Chemie en Laboratoriumgeneeskunde (NVKC)). I am 30 years old and I live in Delft (the Netherlands) together with my husband and son (of almost 1 year old). When I am not working, I like to spend time with my family and friends or cook or practice sports, like soccer or running.

Could you share a bit about your background?
I studied Molecular Science & Technology at Delft University of Technology and Leiden University in the Netherlands. Afterwards, I did my PhD on "Signal transduction in organic materials" also at Delft University of Technology. Hence, I would consider myself a Chemist or Chemical Engineer.

What is your current role in the lab?
Currently, I am a resident in Clinical Chemistry at the Leiden University Medical Center (the Netherlands), nearing the end of my residency period. After that, I will become Clinical Chemist/ Laboratory Specialist. Next to daily operational tasks for patient diagnostics (such as authorization of laboratory results, quality control evaluation, MD consultations), I am working on different research projects in the research group of professor Cobbaert: 1) Global PT-INR standardization (member of the IFCC/SSC-ISTH working group on Development of a Reference Measurement System for sustainable PT/ INR Standardization), 2) Kidney injury biomarkers and 3) Antithrombin precision diagnostics. I am highly motivated to apply biochemical expertise and advances in technology and metrology into the diagnostic sector, set up refined research lines related to precision medicine and molecular testing, with a parallel focus on standardization and metrology.

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Could you give us a brief introduction to your national society and its main activities?
The Nederlandse Vereniging voor Klinische Chemie en Laboratoriumgeneeskunde (Netherlands Society of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine) (NVKC) is the scientific professional association of Clinical Chemists in the Netherlands. The entire four years education of residents and the final registration of Clinical Chemists after the residency period is organized and regulated by the NVKC. Next to that, they also organize each year two conferences and many other extra education days. Within the NVKC there are many different task forces that you can join. I joined for example: working group Vision 2025 and working group on clinical mass spectrometry.

Can you highlight some of the key activities that you had with the IFCC Task Force-Young Scientists?
I joined the IFCC Task Force-Young Scientists in 2024 as corresponding member for the NVKC. My first contribution was to help with the organization of an IFCC-Satellite symposium on mass spectrometry which will be held in Brussels on Thursday, May 22nd, 2025, following EuroMedLab 2025. In the future, I hope to participate in more collaborative projects and make valuable contacts via the IFCC Task Force worldwide.

Did you participate on an exchange programme in your career?
During my graduate studies I spent some time for my final research project at the Silesian University of Technology in Gliwice (Poland). This was a collaborative research project on enzyme reactions in microreactors.

How can YS from your national society get additional information about the activities of the association and activities with the TF-YS?
This would be mostly via email correspondence from our association.

Is there anything else you would like to share with readers of IFCC eNews?
I would like to take the opportunity to encourage the readers to disseminate the vision of precision diagnostics in order to take into account diversity among patients and meanwhile enable precision oncology, precision nephrology and cardiovascular precision medicine, among others. I am convinced that precision diagnostics with molecular defined measurands holds great promise for laboratory medicine. Wider adoption of precision diagnostics (and molecular methods, such as mass spectrometry) is in my opinion highly needed to improve laboratory results worldwide.

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Spotlight on: **Katarzyna BERGMANN**, IFCC Task Force-Young Scientists corresponding member from the Poland, nominated by The Polish Society of Laboratory Diagnostics (PTDL)

Could you please introduce yourself?
My name is Katarzyna Bergmann, I'm 38 years old and live in a beautiful city of Bydgoszcz, the capital of the Kuyavian-Pomeranian region in the north-central Poland. Privately I am a mother of two boys, 4-year old Michal and 8-year old Jakub. Outside of the laboratory I like to travel and watch volleyball games.

Could you share a bit about your background?
I am a Laboratory Diagnostician. I graduated from Laboratory Medicine (MSc) in 2010. In 2015 I received PhD in medical sciences in the field of medical biology. In 2018 I completed postgraduate training, passed the state exam and received the title of specialist in Medical Laboratory Diagnostics. Since 2012 I work in the Department of Laboratory Medicine, NCU Collegium Medicum in Bydgoszcz, Poland. Additionally, in 2012 I completed a MSc in Cosmetology. In the years 2012-2017 I worked at the Department of Laboratory Medicine of the University Hospital No. 1 in Bydgoszcz, Poland, where I completed an internship for postgraduate training. Previously, from 2016 to 2022, I was a member (Full Member-Young Scientists) of the EFLM Working Group on Congresses and Postgraduate Education (WG-CPE).

What is your current role in the lab?
I work as an assistant professor. My job is both as a researcher and an academic teacher. I teach students of laboratory medicine, medicine (including English Division students), pharmacy and dietetics. My research focuses on diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, metabolic syndrome and their complications. Recently, I have been evaluating new biomarkers and new diagnostic algorithms for liver fibrosis in subjects with metabolic dysfunction-associated steatotic liver disease (MASLD). I am also a coordinator of summer internships for Laboratory Medicine students. I am a member of the board of the Faculty of Pharmacy of our university and a member of the program committees for Laboratory Medicine and Cosmetology.

Could you give us a brief introduction to your national society and its main activities?
Since 2010 I am a member of Polish Society of Laboratory Diagnostics (PTDL). PTDL was established 60 years ago, in October 1964, from the transformation of the Medical Analytics Section of the Polish Medical Association. It is the largest scientific society in Poland for scientists and medical laboratory workers. Today the society has approximately 4,000 members in 17 local branches. The task of PTDL is to co-create a common platform for activities and cooperation in the field of laboratory medicine with other scientific societies and European and global organizations, including EFLM and IFCC. The aim of PTDL is also to develop diagnostic and clinical recommendations, standards of education and training in laboratory medicine, as well as close cooperation with the professional self-government of diagnosticians - the National Chamber of Laboratory Diagnosticians. I actively participate in local and national training courses and conferences organized by PSLD, presenting the results of my research in the form of lectures and posters.

Can you highlight some of the activities that you have undertaken for young scientists through your involvement in scientific societies?
I am a corresponding member of IFCC TF-YS since June 2023. I participate in all the group's online meetings. I also take part in IFCC and EFLM webinars dedicated to young scientists. As a former member of EFLM WG-CPE I actively participated in online and face-to-face meetings of the group,

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representing the point of view of young scientists - the result of our work was, among others, the development of the EFLMLabX program, concerning the exchange between employees of medical laboratories in Europe.

How can YS from your national society get additional information about the activities of the association and activities with the TF-YS?
Both during my work at the university and during meetings and conferences I share my experiences from working in EFLM and IFCC groups with students and young scientists. I will be happy to answer questions from people interested in the activities of TF-YS: bergmann@cm.umk.pl

Task Force on Ethics Survey on "Laboratory Test Results Access in an Ambulatory Setting"

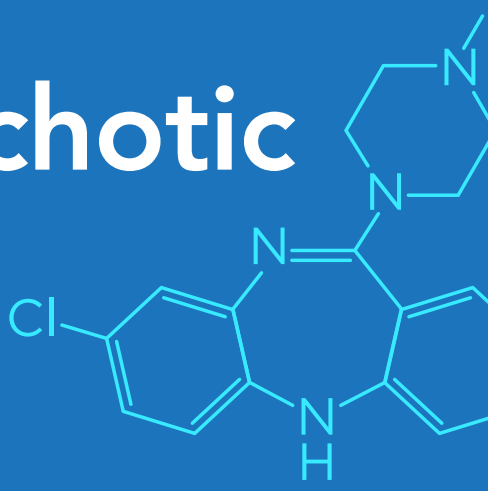
As laboratory professionals play a central role in the generation and management of test results, their perspectives on immediate electronic patient access (ie without delay) to laboratory data are vital to understanding the broader implications of these technologies.
This survey seeks to gather insights from laboratory medicine professionals across the globe regarding their attitudes towards the real-time disclosure of test results in the ambulatory care settings following auto-verification.
By exploring these professional opinions, we aim to identify common practices, ethical challenges, and areas for improvement in the universal delivery and access of laboratory results.
https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/X9C8BD7

Respondents may translate the questions in their own language using recent advances in Artificial Intelligence https://translate.google.com/, or by seeking out help from colleagues to interpret.

If you have any questions about the survey, please contact Dr. Joe Wiencek (joe.wiencek@vumc.org), Chair of the IFCC Task Force on Ethics.

The IFCC Task Force on Ethics appreciates your insights and contributions to this important survey.
Thank you very much for your cooperation!

Redefining Antipsychotic Therapeutic Drug Monitoring



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The Kansas Two-Step: Simplifying the diagnosis of clostridioides difficile at an academic medical center

Infectious diseases remain an important cause of morbidity and mortality globally, with additional concerns related to overuse of antibiotics and antimicrobial resistance. Clostridioides difficile (C. diff) is a highly infectious pathogen that causes severe diarrhea that can lead to life threatening dehydration. C. Diff infections are particularly concerning for elderly patients, those in the hospital and those who have been recently discharged. Due to its highly infectious nature and severe outcomes, many health networks closely monitor and track C. Diff rates, with countries like the United States even linking infection rates to reimbursements associated with the Centers for Medicaid & Medicare Services (CMS).

Pictured (from left to right): Matthew Loeb, Sarah Mester, Maggie Reavis, Matt Humphrey

At the University of Kansas Health System, the Infection Control team recognized an opportunity to improve C.Diff care, while also improving their 19% C.Diff reportable rate, which directly affected their reimbursement rates. Specifically, they recognized that improvements in the reliability and efficiency associated with differentiating between active toxigenic infections from non-toxigenic scenarios, such as colonization, could accurately and effectively decrease their elevated rate of C. Diff. Thus, an integrated clinical care team involving laboratory medicine, pharmacy and infection control, introduced a 2-step methodology for C. diff detection and differentiation.

This novel testing approached involves a testing algorithm using polymerase chain reaction (PCR) and enzyme immunoassay (EIA) to ensure all C. Diff positive stool samples, as detected by PCR test, are reflexed to a toxin EIA. All C. Diff PCR positive/EIA negative specimens are classified as colonization, whereas C. diff PCR positive/EIA positive specimens were classified as active C. diff infection.

Following implementation of the 2-step process, there was a 50% reduction in inappropriate C. diff infections (CDI) classification with a corresponding 76% reduction in reportable C. diff infections. This corresponded to a 25% reduction in antimicrobial usage across 39 patients, resulting in $73,866 USD in mitigated costs directly attributable to mitigated antibiotic use.

Notably, C. Diff infection positivity reportable rates to Centers for Medicaid & Medicare Services (CMS) decreased from 15-25% per month to 2-5% per month. This change has a significant impact on health system reimbursement given that for every mitigated C. diff infection reportable, there is reduced risk for penalty of $13,173 USD/ patient.

For their measurable improvements in C. Diff testing and management, this team was awarded a 2024 UNIVANTS of Healthcare Excellence award, recognition of Achievement. Congratulations to Matthew Loeb, Microbiology Manager, The University of Kansas Health System, Matt Humphrey, Supervisor, Microbiology, Sarah Mester, Assistant Director, Pharmacy, Matt Shoemaker, Director, Division of Infectious Diseases, Maggie Reavis, Infection Control Nurse.

To learn more about this best practice and others, please visit www.UnivantsHCE.com

Reducing unnecessary CT scans in the emergency department with a new mild head injury assessment pathway

Early and accurate assessment of patients with suspected traumatic brain injuries (TBI) is critical to help reduce morbidity and mortality. Assessment of TBI in the ED typically involves a clinical examination and imaging using computed tomography (CT) to determine TBI severity and direct treatment, as needed. Upon investigation, most TBI patients (80%-90%) are categorized as mild; representing a cohort of patients who likely do not needed time consuming, and expensive testing. Given that TBI is a common presentation to the emergency department (ED), expediting assessments has the potential to drastically improve patient flow and improve patient safety.

Picture (from left to right): Felix Brüning-Wolter, Meike Schrader, Nicola Wolff, Thomas Rodt, and Jörg Cramer

At Klinikum Lüneburg in Germany, an integrated clinical care team recognized an opportunity to improve resource utilization, while also protecting patient safety by implementing novel brain biomarkers into clinical care. The biomarkers, glial fibrillary acidic protein (GFAP) and ubiquitin C-terminal hydrolase L1 (UCH-L1), are measured using peripheral blood and are indicated for all adult (18+) mild TBI patients with GCS 13-15 who are seen within 12 hours of trauma. Using these blood tests, used alongside clinical judgement, are used to rule out the risk of intracranial lesions, thus safely mitigating the need for CT.

Following implementation, this team noted that 41% of mild TBI patients in the emergency department were able to avoid unnecessary CT scans, whereas previously a CT would have been necessary, thereby reducing exposure to unnecessary and potentially carcinogenic radiation. “Use of the newly implemented TBI test helps direct treatment decisions and avoid unnecessary radiation exposure. Having an objective biomarker for these decisions is particularly useful in younger patients” remarks Joerg Cramer, Head of Orthopedics and Traumatology. These changes have not only impacted patient care but have enable 19.5 hours of saved time per year for the radiology staff through mitigation of unnecessary CT scans and associated administrative and analysis time, with an associated €24,219 in annual cost savings based on a savings of €207 per mitigated CT scan.

For their efforts and outcomes, this integrated clinical care team was awarded a 2024 UNVIANTS of Healthcare Excellence award recognition of achievement. Congratulations to Felix Brüning-Wolter, Emergency Physician, Meike Schrader, Chief of Laboratory, Nicola Wolff, Chief of Emergency Department, Thomas Rodt, Chief of Radiology, Jörg Cramer, Chief of Orthopedics and Traumatology.

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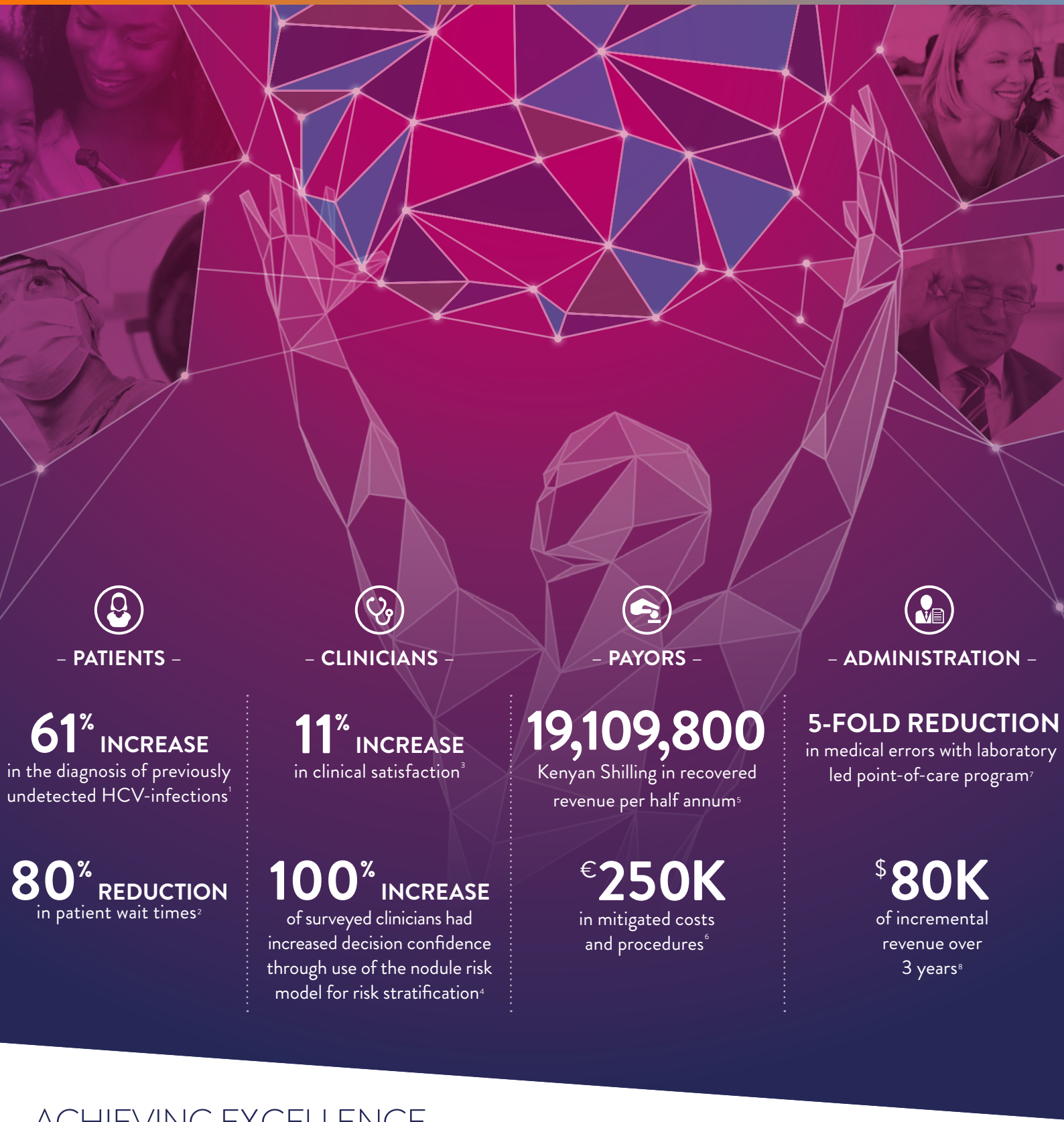

– PATIENTS –

61% INCREASE
in the diagnosis of previously undetected HCV-infections[1]

80% REDUCTION
in patient wait times[2]

– CLINICIANS –

11% INCREASE
in clinical satisfaction[3]

100% INCREASE
of surveyed clinicians had increased decision confidence through use of the nodule risk model for risk stratification[4]

– PAYORS –

19,109,800
Kenyan Shilling in recovered revenue per half annum[5]

€250K
in mitigated costs and procedures[6]

– ADMINISTRATION –

5-FOLD REDUCTION
in medical errors with laboratory led point-of-care program[7]

$80K
of incremental revenue over 3 years[8]

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1. University of Alabama Birmingham Hospital, 2020. 2. Nova Scotia Health, 2020. 3. St. Petersburg Hospital Number Two, 2020. 4. The First Affiliated Hospital of Sun Yat-sen University, 2020. 5. Aga Khan University Hospital, 2020. 6. Hospital Clínico San Carlos, 2020. 7. Aga Khan University Hospital, 2020. 8. Seirei Hamamatsu HP, 2020.

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Global determinants of health

By **Dr. Luis Figueroa Montes ,** Past president of ALAPAC
ORCID https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3708-8603

Several efforts have been made to understand the spectrum of health determinants outside of traditional clinical and public health frameworks. To date, there are many factors that combine to affect the health of individuals and communities. Whether people are healthy or not depends on their circumstances and the environment in which they live. Factors such as where we live, the state of our environment, genetics, our income, educational level, and our relationships with friends and family have a considerable impact on health, while the more considered factors, such as access to and use of health care services, usually have a lesser impact. These factors are defined by the World Health Organization as the "Determinants of health" (1). In this sense, these determinants are:

- The social and economic environment,
- The physical environment, and
- The individual characteristics and behaviors of the person.

The context of people's lives determines their health, so blaming people for poor health or giving them credit for good health is inappropriate. Many of the determinants of health are unlikely to be directly controlled by individuals (1). For a variety of reasons, these determinants of health over the years become individualized into specific components, which we will discuss later.

Social **determinants of health:** These are the non-medical factors that influence health outcomes. They are the conditions in which people are born, grow, work, live, and age, and the broader set of forces and systems that shape the conditions of daily life. These forces and systems include economic policies and systems, development agendas, social norms, social policies, and political systems (2).

These determinants have an important influence on health inequalities, that is, the unfair and avoidable differences in health status observed within and between countries. In countries at all income levels, health and disease follow a social gradient: the lower the socioeconomic position, the worse the health (2). Examples: income and social protection; education; unemployment and job insecurity; working life conditions; food insecurity; housing; basic services and the environment; early childhood development; social inclusion and non-discrimination; structural conflict; access to affordable and decent health services (2).

Commercial determinants of health: While commercial entities can contribute positively to health and society, there is growing evidence that the products and practices of some commercial actors, particularly the largest transnational corporations, are responsible for rising rates of avoidable ill health, damage to the planet, and social and health inequity; these problems are referred to as "The commercial determinants of health." Four industries producing tobacco, ultra-processed foods, alcohol, and burning fossil fuels, generate one-third of the deaths in the world (3).

Addressing these determinants is essential to reducing risk factors and the burden of diseases such as cancer, heart disease, diabetes and other chronic non-communicable diseases, as well as infectious diseases such as malaria, emerging threats such as antimicrobial resistance, injuries from motor vehicle accidents or weapons, and broader challenges such as climate change, unplanned urbanization and inequality (3).

Article continued on the next page

Four industries – tobacco, unhealthy food, fossil fuels and alcohol – are responsible for at least one third of global deaths each year

Political determinants of health: relate to the way in which health is inherently political and the ways in which political decisions affect health outcomes. They involve the systematic process of structuring relationships, distributing resources and managing power, which operate simultaneously as health policies reinforce or influence each other to shape opportunities that promote health equity or exacerbate health inequalities (4). Political determinants of health create the social factors – including poor environmental conditions, inadequate transportation, unsafe neighborhoods, and lack of healthy food options – that affect all other health dynamics. By understanding these determinants, their origins, and their impact on the equitable distribution of opportunities and resources, we can be better prepared to develop and implement viable solutions to close the health gap (4).

Emotional determinants of health: There is an important dimension of emotions in the ecosystem of levers that affect health decisions and outcomes. Decisions about health not only depend on a rational process, but are also affected by our hopes, fears, anxieties and worries, empathy and feelings, which are intertwined with political and social determinants, but deserve their own attention. “Emotions do not exist to make us think, they exist to keep us alive.” Health care is relational and many crucial health challenges reside in human behavior and relationships, which are, by nature, emotional. Understanding human emotions can provide insights into why people make certain health decisions, why they respond to health crises in various ways, and what meanings they attribute to health interventions, health care providers, or public health strategies and policies (5).

In conclusion, as we observed, there are different approaches in relation to the determinants of health: social, commercial, political and emotional. For this reason, I propose to name the “Global determinants of health” “Global determinants of health” which includes all these variables. In a search in medical evidence bases and in traditional search engines, this definition is not contemplated.

Links of interest

1. https://www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/determinants-of-health
2. https://www.who.int/health-topics/social-determinants-of-health#tab=tab_1
3. https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(23)00013-2/abstract
4. https://satcherinstitute.org/priorities/political-determinants-of-health/
5. https://www.vaccineconfidence.org/wp-content/uploads/The-emotional-determinants-of-health-2020-Larson.pdf

News from Regional Federations and Member Societies

News from Japan Society of Clinical Chemistry (JSCC) 2024 JSCC Outstanding Young Investigator Award

By **Hideo Sakamoto,** Ph.D, International Exchange Committee of JSCC

The Japan Society of Clinical Chemistry (JSCC) Outstanding Young Investigator Award is awarded to individual who have contributed outstanding academic research in clinical chemistry. In 2024, Yoshifumi Kurosaki, Ph.D., won the JSCC Outstanding Young Investigator Award. At the 64th Annual Meeting of the JSCC in Tochigi, Japan, held August 30 to September 1, 2024, award winner Dr. Kurosaki was congratulated by Dr. Takashi Miida, President of JSCC for his outstanding work in clinical chemistry.
We JSCC proudly introduce the 2024 JSCC Outstanding Young Investigator Award winner in this issue and distribute his outstanding work.

Yoshifumi Kurosaki, Ph.D. (Department of Medical Laboratory Sciences, Kitasato University School of Allied Health Sciences) is the winner of the 2024 JSCC Outstanding Young Investigator Award, entitled “Proteinuria causes excessive proliferation and senescence in proximal tubular cells via receptor-mediated endocytosis”.

Chronic kidney disease (CKD) is a common disease and a state of progressive loss of kidney function, resulting in the need for renal replacement therapy, such as hemodialysis. It is important for preserving kidney function to identify people at high risk of progression and to start intensified treatment as soon as possible. In their previous study, Yoshifumi Kurosaki, Ph.D and his colleague reported that renal expression of protein endocytic receptor, megalin, was upregulated by oxidative stress in the early stage of diabetic rats without albuminuria (Kurosaki et al. Am J Physiol Renal Physiol 2018). Those diabetic rats also showed the over-reabsorption of protein into proximal tubules. Then he was interested in the effect of excessive protein uptake into proximal tubule on the fate of proximal tubular epithelial cells (PTECs) and found that protein overload to the PTECs induced cell proliferation and senescence in PTECs. Senescence is a tumor suppressor mechanism by which cells adapt to DNA damage, oxidative stress, and telomere shortening. Senescent cell secretes pro-inflammatory molecules, which behavior is termed as senescence-associated secretory phenotype (SASP). The chronic secretion of SASP factors promotes inflammation and epithelial-to-mesenchymal transition; therefore, cellular senescence in PTECs could be associated with the progression of tubular-interstitial fibrosis and chronic inflammation leading to CKD. This also is suggested to be associated with the transition of acute kidney injury (AKI) to CKD.
Their final goal is to clarify the molecular mechanisms by which proteinuria induces cellular senescence in the PTECs and to develop the novel diagnostic markers for CKD progression and predictive markers for AKI-to-CKD transition. These challenges would contribute to decrease in the number of patients on hemodialysis.

Yoshifumi Kurosaki, Ph.D., winner of the 2024 JSCC Outstanding Young Investigator Award,

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The 24th Annual Scientific Conference in memory of Professor Ivan Berkeš

By **Neda Milinković, Nada Majkić-Singh,** Society of Medical Biochemist of Serbia

The 24th Annual Scientific Conference "Professor Ivan Berkeš" was held in 2024 in memory and gratitude to Professor Ivan Berkeš, who established medical biochemistry as a scientific and healthcare discipline in Serbia. The conference is organized traditionally by the Society of Medical Biochemist of Serbia (SMBS), and this year it was co-organized and hosted by the Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Belgrade. This traditional meeting of students and professors of the Faculty of Pharmacy, honouring the legacy of one of its most distinguished professors was held on 5 December 2024. Prof. Nada Majkić-Singh, the President of the Scientific Foundation "Professor Ivan Berkeš", greeted the participants with her opening words and reminded audience of the history and the idea behind the scientific foundation, the significance of the conference, as well as of the life and work of Professor Ivan Berkeš, in whose honour it was established.

This year, chairs of the conference were Prof. Nada Majkić-Singh, Assistant Prof. Snežana Jovičić and Assistant Prof. Neda Milinković. After an opening address of Assistant Prof. Snežana Jovičić, the President of SMBS, followed by the welcoming address of the Dean of the Faculty of Pharmacy, Prof. Nataša Bogavac Stanojević and the President of the Alliance of Pharmaceutical Associations of Serbia Prof. Branislava Miljković, Prof. Nada Majkić-Singh, presented annual awards of the Foundation. Diplomas and monetary awards were traditionally presented to the best graduate students of the Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Belgrade, and this year's recipients were Jovana Jerotijević (Master of Pharmacy-Medical Biochemist) and Dušica Kušljević (Master of Pharmacy).

Traditionally, the scientific part of the conference followed the award ceremony. It is consisted of presentations of selected results of Ph.D. thesis research presented by the Doctors of Medical Sciences-Pharmacy who defended their doctoral theses in the previous academic year. The first lecture, entitled "HDL subclasses and the distribution of paraoxonase 1 activity in patients with ST-segment elevation acute myocardial infarction," was presented by Dr Saška Đekić who received her doctorate at the Department of Medical Biochemistry, Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Belgrade. The second lecture, entitled "Analysis of antibiotic consumption and antimicrobial resistance in the Republic of Serbia: the immediate and long-term effect of COVID-19", was presented by Dr Tanja Tomić, who received her doctorate at the Department of Social Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Legislation, Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Belgrade. The third lecture, entitled "Effects of supplementation with gliadin complex with melon extract standardized to superoxide dismutase content on parameters of oxidative status and physical performance of categorized athletes", was presented by Dr Olina Dudašova Petrovičova, who received her doctorate at the Department of Bromatology, Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Belgrade. The closing lecture was held by Azra Guzonjić, who presented the results of her final thesis of the specialist academic studies, entitled "Economic evaluation of lipid scores in risk assessment for the development of cardiovascular diseases in patients with type 2 diabetes", defended at the Department of Medical Biochemistry, Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Belgrade. The conference was closed after the discussion of presented results.

The continuity of this conference is based on respect for the past, but also on the awareness that young PhDs in the scientific field of medical biochemistry of the Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Belgrade are the pillars of the future of pharmacy and medical biochemistry science in Serbia.

Article continued on the next page

Laureates of the 24th Scientific Conference in memory of Prof. Ivan Berkeš with Dean of the Faculty of Pharmacy, President of the Alliance of Pharmaceutical Associations of Serbia and Conference Chairs.

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International XXIII Serbian Congress of Medical Biochemistry and Laboratory Medicine

By **Neda Milinković, Snežana Jovičić,** Society of Medical Biochemist of Serbia

Constant professional development and continuous education is the basis of a successful profession of laboratory medicine. For this reason, the Serbian Congress of Medical Biochemistry and Laboratory Medicine with international participation was organized for the 23rd time by the Society of Medical Biochemists of Serbia (SMBS) and the Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Belgrade, Serbia. The congress was held September 16–18th, in Belgrade, Serbia, under the auspices of the International Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (IFCC), European Federation for Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (EFLM), and Balkan Clinical Laboratory Federation (BCLF), as well as the Ministry of Education and Science and Technological Development, and the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Serbia.

The distinguished guests of the Congress were Prof. Mario Plebani, the EFLM President, and Prof. Tomris Ozben, the IFCC President, who both addressed and greeted the delegates on behalf of EFLM and IFCC Executive Boards. Also, the Dean of the Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Belgrade, Prof. Slađana Šobajić, and the President of the Alliance of Pharmaceutical Associations of Serbia, Prof. Dr. Branislava Miljković, joined the welcome address. During the opening ceremony, prof. Mario Plebani presented the EFLM's recognition to Prof. Nada Majkić-Singh, as sign of appreciation for her dedication to the development of laboratory medicine profession on national and international level. This recognition was awarded to Prof. Majkić-Singh being a long-year President of the Society of Medical Biochemists of Serbia, one of the founders of the Balkan Clinical Laboratory Federation, and its past president. Also, Prof. Majkić-Singh actively took part in the EFLM activities as a member of several EFLM functional units and was the initiator of the Belgrade Symposium for Balkan Region, which was jointly organized annually from 2005 until 2018 by EFLM and the SMBS. Prof. Plebani said that her commitment to advancing medical biochemistry in Serbia and the Balkan region was widely recognized and will remain a significant milestone.

On the occasion of national congresses, the SMBS traditionally awards its Honorary Diploma, the highest recognition presented to foreign colleagues for promoting clinical chemistry and laboratory medicine in Europe and globally, and for significant contribution to the work and development of the Society of Medical Biochemists of Serbia. It was awarded so far to Prof. Victor Blaton (2010), Prof. Stoyan Danev (2012), Prof. Simone Zerah (2015), and to Prof. Mario Plebani (2017). This years' laureate of the Honorary Diploma of the Society of Medical Biochemists of Serbia was Prof. Dr. Tomris Ozben, current president of IFCC and past president of EFLM.

The SMBS also awarded an award of the "Magistra Milica Marković" Foundation to the most dedicated professional who contributed to the development and growth of laboratory medicine service in their institution. This year's laureate was Dr. Jon Čoban, a specialist in clinical biochemistry, Head of the Laboratory Diagnostics Service at the Vršac General Hospital, who recently retired.

The scientific program of the congress was dedicated to innovations and trends that shape the future of laboratory diagnostics. It was opened with a plenary lecture by Prof. Abdurrahman Coskun entitled "Personalized reference intervals: the road to personalized laboratory medicine", and with the opening session on the practical application of artificial intelligence, delivered by Prof. Mario Plebani and the members of the EFLM Working Group on Artificial Intelligence – Prof. Andrea Padoan, Dr Anna Carobene, and Dr Salomón Martín Pérez. The program continued with the session dedicated to healthy aging with related talks about the methodological aspects of diagnosis and treatment of the post-COVID and chronic fatigue syndromes (Prof. Branislav Milovanović), the role of telomere length in predicting biological age and disease (Prof. Jelena Kotur Stevuljević), the aging process (Dr Danijela Drašković Radojković), and to the oxidative stress in cardiovascular disease (Prof. Milica Miljković Trailović).

The third session was dedicated to the role of senescence in disease pathogenesis. It was opened by a distinguished guest speaker, Prof. Vesna Garović from Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, USA, with the

Article continued on the next page

talk about the role of SASP in pathogenesis of pre-eclampsia. The lectures about the mechanisms and implications in physiology and pathology of senescence (by Prof. Tamara Gojković) and the evolutionary aspects of menopause (by Prof. Ljiljana Marina) followed. The session was closed with the lecture of another renowned speaker, Dr Maja Milanović from the Charité University of Medicine in Berlin, Germany, who presented her research on the role of senescence in tumor therapy.

The fourth session was dedicated to gene therapy and rare diseases, presenting the status of rare diseases in the Republic of Serbia (by Dr Bojana Mirosavljević), gene therapies for rare diseases (by Prof. Maja Stojiljković), the diagnostics and gene therapy of spinal muscular atrophy (by Prof. Miloš Brkušan), experiences from the Republic of Croatia in newborn screening (by Prof. Ksenija Fumić), and the significance of chitotriosidase in the diagnosis of certain rare diseases (by Prof. Zorica Šumarac).

The plenary lecture of the second day of the congress was presented by Prof. Tomris Ozben, entitled "Time for a sustainable transition within the medical laboratories". Session 5 followed with the discussion on the application of omics technologies in medical biochemistry. It covered topics on the application of next generation sequencing in prenatal diagnostics (by Dr Ivana Joksić), the analysis of HDL lipidome and proteome in pregnancy (by Prof. Jelena Vekić), microRNA as novel diagnostic and prognostic biomarkers in non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (by Prof. Ana Ninić), and on the application of multi-omics approach in diagnosis of acute coronary syndrome (by Prof. Jelena Munjas).

The following, session 6 was dedicated to the biochemical aspects of dietary interventions, as an important aspect of the health of the common man. The talks dealt with the significance of personalized diet in achieving optimal nutritional status (by Ana Petrović), the influence of lifestyle changes to the level of adipocytokines in obese persons with disturbed glycolregulation (by Dr Margarita Dodevska), the effect of highly processed food on the nutritional status (by Prof. Nevena Ivanović), and the immune-metabolic divergence in plant-based and omnivorous diet adherents (by Marta Despotović).

Session 7 opened the third day of the congress, and it was dedicated to the risk management in medical laboratories, with the talks on the construction and interpretation of error grid for quantitative diagnostic assays (by Prof. Nataša Bogavac Stanjević), the risk management in the pre-analytical phase (by Sonja Šuput), the risk management in primary healthcare laboratories (by Danijela Ristovski Kornic), the importance of quality control plan in risk management (by Snežana Jovičić), and closing with the presentation on a more flexible approach to risk management based on ISO 15189:2022 (by Prof. Domagoj Marijančević).

The penultimate session was dedicated to the field of diagnosis and treatment of inflammatory bowel diseases, with the lectures on inflammatory bowel disease epidemiology, etiopathogenesis, clinical manifestation, and diagnostics (by Dr Nikola Panić), laboratory assessment (by Sanja Obradović), modern treatment (by Dr Zoran Milenković), and the development and implementation of laboratory monitoring of biological therapy (by Dr Iva Perović Blagojević).

The closing session presented the novelties related to the influence of microbiota on health and disease pathogenesis, with lectures covering the influence of microbiota on human health (by Prof. Brankica Filipić), probiotics as natural innovative and unique strategy for cell-aging deceleration (by Dr Nataša Golić), the antidepressant potential of postbiotics (by Dr Miroslav Dinić), and an approach of microbiota modification to the treatment of multiple sclerosis (by Dr Jelena Đokić).

Two workshop sessions were organized by companies Vivogen (distributor of Thermo Fisher Scientific) and Makler (distributor of Beckman Coulter) in Serbia.

Poster session gathered 32 poster presentations from Serbia and abroad, while many of them were the work of students and young scientists. Poster's vivid discussion closed the XXIII Serbian Congress of Medical Biochemistry and Laboratory Medicine. The congress was successful, with up-to-date topics currently discussed in the scientific community, which have a significant impact on global health structures. The Congress attended over 200 participants mostly from Serbia, but also from neighbouring countries – Republic of Srpska and Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Montenegro, and Croatia.

Article continued on the next page

The discussion during one of the sessions

The students of the University of Belgrade – Faculty of Pharmacy, participants of the Poster Session

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A Fresh Start for 2025: Updates from the EFLM Community

By **Lejla Alic,** member of the Promotion & Publication Committee

As we step into 2025, the European Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (EFLM) is excited to share the latest edition of EuroLabNews, your go-to bimonthly newsletter for updates on the most relevant and ongoing activities within the EFLM family.

In his introductory message, Prof. Mario Plebani reflects on the ongoing reorganization of the EFLM structure and highlights key initiatives such as the EFLM Postgraduate Courses, EFLM Bursaries, and the EFLM LabX. He also extends a warm invitation to the 26th IFCC-EFLM EuroMedLab Congress, set to take place in Brussels from May 18–22, 2025. Mark your calendars—this is an event you do not want to miss!

This year, EFLM is proud to introduce the EFLM Young Laboratory Medicine Professional Award, recognizing outstanding achievements by young scientists in the field of laboratory medicine. The call for nominations is open until March 15, 2025. Additionally, the EFLM Academy Award, which honors contributions to education in laboratory medicine, has been awarded to Dr. Matteo Vidali for his exceptional work.

For those looking to get more involved, EFLM has announced an impressive number of 27 vacancies across its divisions and committees.

Out of other exciting news, EFLM has launched a user-friendly, open-access Analytical Performance Specifications (APS) Calculator, now available at https://www.eflm.eu/aps-calculator.html. This tool is designed to enhance reliability and accuracy of results in laboratory medicine.

Looking ahead, 2025 will feature four engaging Meet the Expert sessions, focusing on current topics in laboratory medicine with a special emphasis on real-life case scenarios. These sessions promise to be both informative and practical, offering valuable insights for professionals at all levels.

We are also thrilled to reflect on the success of EuLabDay 2024 and share tips on how you can improve sustainability in your labs. Meanwhile, the EFLM LabX Initiative continues to provide training, research, and practice opportunities across member laboratories. One of the recipients of the LabX exchange support shares her inspiring experience in this edition.

Do not forget to check out updates on EFLM scientific papers and upcoming EFLM webinars, as well as a comprehensive list of events organized under the auspices of EFLM.

Here's to a productive and inspiring 2025! Stay connected with EFLM and make the most of the opportunities ahead.

For more details, visit www.eflm.eu.

AMBICON 2024: a great success for the annual conference in Ahmedabad, Gujarat (India)

The Association of Medical Biochemists of India (AMBI) and the organizing committee of AMBICON 2024 express their gratitude to IFCC for the permission to conduct the conference under its aegis.
AMBICON 2024, the 31st annual conference of AMBI and the first to be hosted by the Gujarat state, was conducted from December 19 to 21st 2024 at The forum Convention center, Club 07, Ahmedabad, Gujarat under the aegis of IFCC and APFCB.

176 delegates attended the twelve pre-conference workshops while there were 550 delegates registered for the conference. The scientific schedule was planned to include all aspects of Biochemistry from teaching and learning to laboratory aspects to research and recent advances. Sessions were in the form of orations, symposium, plenary, Panel discussion, Quiz and free paper and poster presentations.

Dr. Sedef Yenice, Dr. Rajiv Erasmus and Dr. Tahir Pillay were part of the IFCC visiting lecturer program. Similarly, there were many other guest speakers of national and international standing. We once again thank IFCC and APFCB for granting us the permission to conduct the conference under their aegis.

New IFCC Members

IFCC welcomes two new members:

The Thai Society of Clinical Pathology (TSCP)

By **Busadee Pratumvinit,** President
Website: www.thaicp.org

The Thai Society of Clinical Pathology (TSCP) is a legally registered society established in 2002. On April 24, 2001, Dr. Benjavan Rungpitarangsi convened a meeting with the founding members to initiate the establishment of the society and later became its first president.

The Thai Society of Clinical Pathology (TSCP) aims to support education, research, training, and the exchange of knowledge in clinical pathology while serving as a coordinating center for collaboration both within Thailand and internationally. It promotes clinical pathology practices that align with national and international standards and strives to enhance the quality and reliability of clinical pathology services to address health concerns effectively. Society also plays a key role in supporting quality assurance and accreditation systems to ensure high standards in clinical pathology services. Additionally, TSCP fosters unity among its members and professionals in the field while upholding ethical standards, promoting Thai cultural values, and maintaining neutrality from political activities.

Currently, it has four main activities as follows:

1. **Thailand National External Quality Assessment Scheme for Blood Coagulation [Thailand NEQAS (Blood Coagulation)]**
   Established in 2005, the Thailand National External Quality Assessment Scheme for Blood Coagulation (Thailand NEQAS – Blood Coagulation) was launched in collaboration with the Department of Clinical Pathology, Faculty of Medicine Siriraj Hospital. This laboratory is the only facility in Thailand recognized as a member of the WHO International External Quality Assessment Scheme (IEQAS) for Blood Coagulation. The IEQAS aims to provide External Quality Assessment (EQA) services to member countries and encourage them to develop their own national EQA programs.
   Currently, Thailand NEQAS (Blood Coagulation) serves as an EQA provider for testing prothrombin time (PT), PT-INR (International Normalized Ratio), activated partial thromboplastin time (APTT), and Factor VIII. The scheme has over 700 participating laboratories across the country and is accredited by ISO17043. In addition to providing EQA services, the program regularly organizes scientific meetings and training sessions to enhance the knowledge of laboratory professionals, ensuring high-quality test results that contribute to effective patient care.
2. **Thailand National External Quality Assessment Scheme for Precision Molecular Pathology [Thailand NEQAS (Precision Molecular Pathology)]**
   Established in 2015, the Thailand National External Quality Assessment Scheme for Precision Molecular Pathology (Thailand NEQAS – Precision Molecular Pathology) was launched in collaboration with the Royal College of Pathologists of Thailand and the Department of Clinical Pathology, Faculty of Medicine, Siriraj Hospital.
   Currently, Thailand NEQAS (Precision Molecular Pathology) offers five EQA schemes covering mutations in EGFR, KRAS, NRAS, BRAF, MSI, PIK3CA, POLE, BRCA1, BRCA2, and HRR, as well as gene fusions in ALK, ROS1, RET, and NTRK, which are relevant to lung, colorectal, breast, and ovarian cancers. The program has 37 participating laboratories nationwide and is ISO 17043 accredited.
3. **Continuous Laboratory Quality Improvement by Sigma Performance**
   Established in 2018, the program aims to promote medical laboratories in Thailand to implement

Article continued on the next page

quality control in laboratory testing based on scientific principles, continuously enhance testing quality and efficiency, and develop the knowledge and skills of laboratory personnel to meet international standards. The program evaluates the performance of participating laboratories in terms of imprecision, bias, and sigma performance, while also providing education and training for its members.

4. **Annual scientific meeting**
   The society holds an annual scientific meeting focused on medical laboratory topics. Each year, the meeting covers a diverse range of subjects, featuring esteemed speakers from various institutions across the country. Additionally, specialized seminars and workshops related to laboratory practices are organized periodically to enhance knowledge and skills in the field.

Annual TSCP meeting 2025

TH NEQAS for precision molecular pathology meeting

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The Association of Physicians and Specialists in the field of Laboratory Medicine of the Republic of Moldova

The Association of Physicians and Specialists in the field of Laboratory Medicine of the Republic of Moldova (AMLRM) was formed in 2006 and is the main society, which unites specialists in laboratory medicine – laboratory medicine physicians, biologists and chemists working in clinical laboratories. Currently 210 specialists of laboratory medicine are full members of the Association.

AMLRM serves as a collaborative platform for specialists in medical laboratories, facilitating the exchange of experience and access to periodic training. By organizing conferences, seminars, and professional development courses, the association contributes to the enhancement of its members' professional skills, ensuring more precise and faster medical diagnostics. The Association actively engages in dialogue with authorities to improve the legislative framework and increase funding for this essential sector of the healthcare system.

The importance of laboratory medicine became even more evident during the COVID-19 pandemic when laboratories were at the forefront of testing and diagnostic efforts. The work of specialists in this field is essential for early disease detection, treatment monitoring, and infection prevention.

Looking ahead, the Association of Physicians and Specialists in the field of Laboratory Medicine of the Republic of Moldova aims to expand international collaborations, attract investments for laboratory modernization, and promote the use of artificial intelligence in diagnostics. Through such initiatives, the Association contributes to improving healthcare services and raising professional standards in the Republic of Moldova.

In an ever-evolving medical world, the Association remains an essential support point for doctors and specialists in medical laboratories, strengthening a vital domain for public health.

Conference "Immunoassay Insight in Clinical Lab Testing", held in October in Chisinau, Moldova.

IFCC's Calendar of Congresses, Conferences & Events

IFCC and Regional Federation Events			
Date		Title	Place
May 18 - 22, 2025	EUROMEDLAB BRUSSELS 2025 May 18-22, 2025	XXVI IFCC-EFLM EUROMEDLAB 2025	Brussels, BE
Oct 25 - 30, 2026	IFCC International Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine	XXVII IFCC WORLDLAB 2026	New Dehli, IN
Oct 10 - 13, 2027	APFCB	APFCB 2027 KUALA LUMPUR	Kuala Lumpur, MY
Date to be selected	IFCC International Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine EFLM	XXVII IFCC-EFLM EUROMEDLAB 2027	Venue to be selected
Date to be selected	IFCC International Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine	XXVII IFCC WORLDLAB 2028	**Venue to be selected**
Date to be selected	IFCC International Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine EFLM	XXVII IFCC-EFLM EUROMEDLAB 2029	Venue to be selected
Date to be selected	IFCC International Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine	XXVII IFCC WORLDLAB 2030	**Venue to be selected**

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Corporate Member Events with IFCC Auspices

Date	Title	Place
Jan 15 - May 31, 2025	Validation and Verification of Qualitative and Quantitative Methods	Quality Consulting, online events
Mar 21, 2025	International Symposium on Laboratory Medicine SNIBE	Warsaw, PL
Mar 30, 2025	Peripheral blood smear, blood count interpretation, and clinical correlation	Quality Consulting, online event

Other events with IFCC auspices

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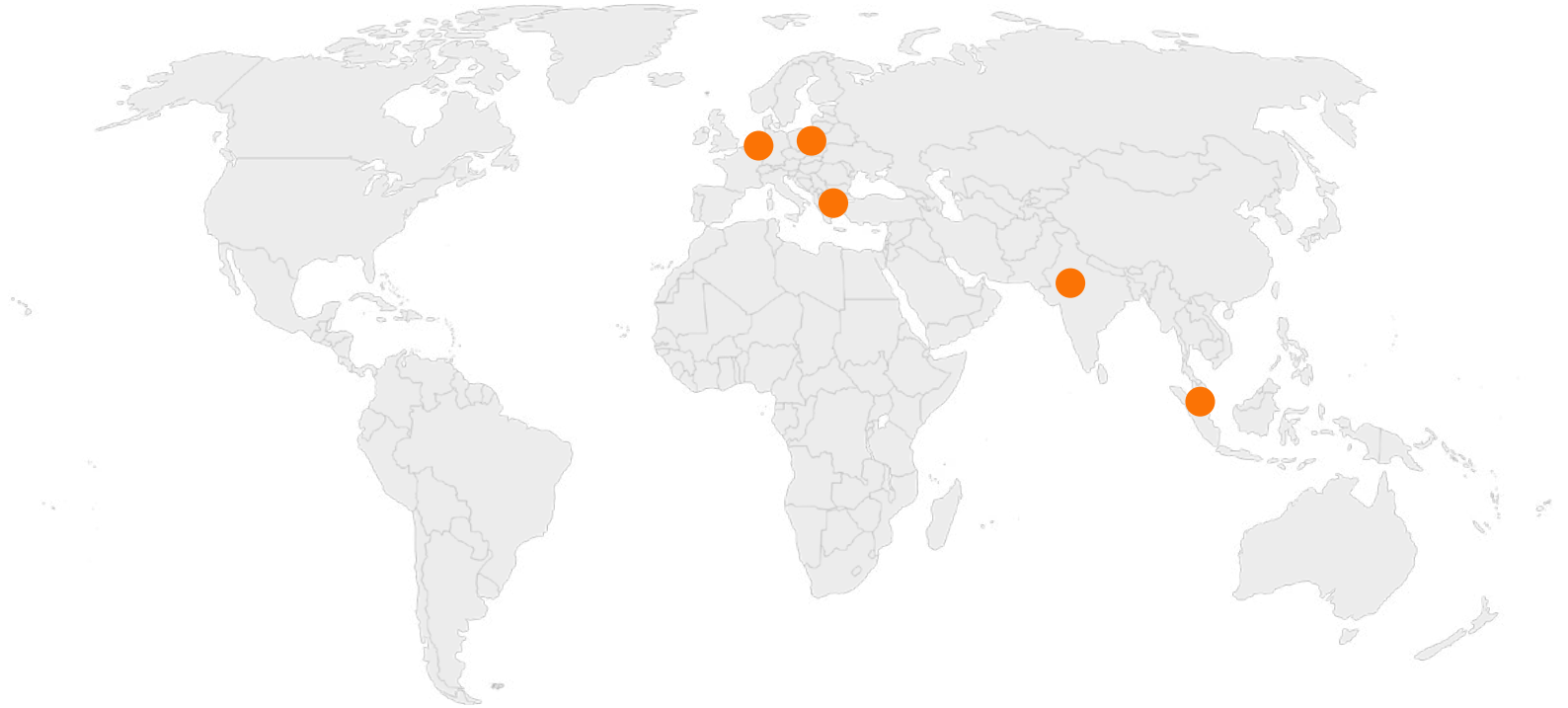

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Editor
Tahir Pillay, MB ChB, PhD, FRCPath (Lon), FCPath (SA)
Department of Chemical Pathology,
University of Pretoria, South Africa
E-mail: enews@ifcc.org

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