EFLM connects National Societies of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine and creates a platform for all European “Specialists in Laboratory Medicine”

EFLM represents IFCC in Europe

HISTORY

The European Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (EFLM) was formed in June 2007 at the EuroMedLab Congress in Amsterdam by the merger of the Forum of European Societies of Clinical Chemistry (FESCC) and the European Communities Confederation of Clinical Chemistry (EC4).

WHO WE ARE

EFLM connects National Societies of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine and creates a platform for all European “Specialists in Laboratory Medicine”. EFLM provides European leadership in Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine to national professional societies, the diagnostic industry and to governmental and non-governmental organisations in order to serve the public interest in health care. EFLM represents the International Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (IFCC) in Europe.

All National Societies in Europe may become members of EFLM. The President/Chair and one national representative of member societies form the General Assembly. This is the main governing body of EFLM. The General Assembly of EFLM convenes at least once every two years. EFLM is legally registered in Belgium and its office is in Milan, maintained in collaboration with IFCC.

Current membership of EFLM comprises the national societies of the following 40 countries: Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Kosovo (provisional member), Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine and United Kingdom.

The operational structure of EFLM consists of an Executive Board (EB) and five Committees (C) which carry out their tasks via Working Groups (WG). Officers of the EB (president, past-president, president elect, secretary, treasurer and two members-at-large) are elected by the General Assembly for 2-year terms. Membership in Cs and WGs is by application and open to nominations by national societies when a call for nominations is issued.

The official scientific journal of EFLM is Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (CCLM).
VISION AND MISSION

Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine is at the heart of modern healthcare, and plays a vital role in screening for disease, diagnosis, risk assessment, treatment selection, monitoring of therapy, prognosis and other aspects of clinical decision-making. It is thus central to effective patient care. Patients throughout Europe have the right to expect high standards of Laboratory Medicine wherever they present to the health care system.

The mission of EFLM is to enhance patient care and improve outcomes by promoting and improving the scientific, professional and clinical aspects of clinical chemistry and laboratory medicine and to ensure effective representation of laboratory medicine both at European Union level and to other pan-European and sub-regional bodies. EFLM deals with specific European issues of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine.

EFLM’s structure at the time of writing is shown in the figure below.

WHAT WE DO

The main activities of EFLM relate to education, research, development of the profession, requirements for competence, quality and accreditation of laboratories, organisation of congresses, and publications. EFLM has five Committees:

- Communications (C-C)
- Education and Training (C-ET)
- Profession (C-P)
- Quality and Regulations (C-QR)
- Science (C-S)

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

The Communications Committee is responsible for communicating EFLM’s activities and results to its membership, related partner organizations and the public via EFLM’s website and Newsletter. The Committee has two Working Groups.

- “News”
- “Promotion”

EDUCATION AND TRAINING COMMITTEE

The Education and Training Committee has general responsibility for the postgraduate training aspects of the work of EFLM in the field of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine focused on laboratory medicine professionals, health care professionals and patients, in liaison with the Education and Management Division of IFCC, and also with UEMS (European Union of Medical Specialists).

In liaison with the IFCC Congresses and Conferences Committee, the C-ET Committee works on the bid preparation, evaluation of the applications to host the EuroMedLab Congresses. In collaboration with UEMS-SLM, the Committee works on the bid preparation and applicants evaluation to host the EFLM-UEMS Congresses. Such evaluated bid material is presented to the General Assemblies for final decision. The Committee organizes regional and sub-regional conferences, workshops and postgraduate continuing education courses in association with relevant national societies.
The Committee operates two Working Groups:

- **“Congresses and Postgraduate Education”** which is involved in the organization of EFLM’s regional congress, EuroMedLab, in collaboration with IFCC; joint European conferences with UEMS, national societies and sub-regional organizations, such as the annual EFLM Symposium for the Balkan region. It is also responsible for organizing the annual EFLM Continuous Postgraduate Course in Dubrovnik on specific clinical topics and the biannual EFLM Conference on Preanalytical Phase (in collaboration with Becton Dickinson). This WG is also involved in creating the Guidelines for all EFLM related scientific and educational events and educational materials as Course handbooks, Conference proceedings and CD with ppt. Presentations which are available on the EFLM web site (www.efclm.eu)
- **“Distance education and e-learning”** which is involved in the organization of distance education programmes and e-learning courses. This WG critically evaluates information from courses, lectures and documents including electronic learning tools. It also interacts with national societies to collect their needs and any potential e-learning resources already available.

**PROFESSION COMMITTEE**

The Profession Committee is responsible for matters of professional regulation and certification (via EC4 EUSpLM Register), and the promotion of the profession in Europe at government level, and to patients and clinical users. It liaises with CEPLIS (European Council of the Liberal Professions) and with the European Commission and Parliament on professional matters. It takes the lead in developing pan-European professional and ethical standards. It also liaises with UEMS (European Union of Medical Specialists) on the roles and responsibilities of medical and scientific practitioners of the discipline.

The Committee currently has a 2 permanent Working Groups:

- **“Common Training Frameworks / Syllabus”**
- **“Recognition of Professional Qualifications. Liaison with European entities”** which works in collaboration with the EC4 Register Commission. This operates the EC4 Register of Specialists in Laboratory Medicine to achieve recognition of professional qualifications under European Union legislation, based on the principles of free movement of professionals within Europe. The EC4 Register and its finances are independently handled by the EC4 Foundation, a charitable Trust based in Brussels.

**QUALITY AND REGULATIONS**

The Quality and Regulations Committee supports the establishment of effective accreditation schemes and quality management systems in all European countries and liaises with ISO, CEN and the European Accreditation body (EA).

The Committee currently has two Working Groups:

- **“Accreditation and ISO/CEN”** which represents EFLM in EA, ISO TC212 and CEN TC140. The WG focuses on influencing ISO/CEN standards and harmonization of accreditation by international surveys, education and training of assessors related to specific professional standards of ISO 15189 and on setting European procedures for accreditation according to the flexible scope.
- **“IVD Directive”** which focuses on the provision of guidelines and guidance documents for the application of the Directive in laboratory practice and during accreditation of laboratories, and liaises with the manufacturers concerning accreditation aspects.

**SCIENCE COMMITTEE**

The Science Committee focuses on promotion of research that translates the scientific results of laboratory medicine to clinical applications and improves patient outcomes through the appropriate use and interpretation of laboratory data in clinical practice.

The Committee currently has the following Working Groups:

- **“Cardiac Markers”** which investigates, via European surveys, how the reporting, interpretation and use of cardiac markers are implemented in different countries.
- **“Guidelines”** for the laboratory investigation and management of various conditions.
- **“Biological Variation”** which explores how studies of biological variation are performed and develops a critical appraisal checklist for papers on biological variation.
- **“Patient Focused Laboratory Medicine”** with the aim to evaluate how laboratories can communicate with patients to improve patient ownership of their disease and provide a service that better reflects patients’ expectations.
- **“Personalized Laboratory Medicine”** with the aim to define the role and responsibilities of medical laboratories in procedures linked to personalized medicine approaches in cancer.
- **“Post-analytical External Quality Assessment”** which carries out international surveys amongst clinicians and laboratories to see how laboratory results are reported and interpreted. Under this WG, there is the Task and Finish Group “Critical results” with the aim to perform a European survey on how critical result are managed in laboratories.
- **“Pre-analytical Phase”** with the goal to increase the awareness of the importance of the preanalytical phase in the total testing process and recommend guidelines for the best preanalytical practices in order to reduce the error risk.
- **“Test Evaluation”** which sets standards and develops practical tools for designing studies for the evaluation of the clinical value and impact of new biomarkers.
AWARDS PROGRAMME

EFLM has two awards:

- The EFLM-Roche Scientific Award for Laboratory Medicine is awarded every two years to honour an individual from an EFLM member country who has made unique contributions to the promotion and understanding of clinical chemistry throughout Europe or who has made one or more contributions that have had a major impact on clinical chemistry. The Award consists of a certificate and the sum of Eur 7,500.

- The EFLM-Labs Are Vital Award for Excellence in Outcomes Research in Laboratory Medicine is sponsored by Abbott and will be presented to the author(s) of the best published paper, as judged by an independent panel of experts, which demonstrates the relationship between the application of an in-vitro diagnostic test or testing strategy and clinical and/or economic outcomes. The award was presented for the first time at IFCC/Euromedlab 2011 in Berlin and thereafter every two years at EuroMedLab conferences. The Award consists of a certificate and the sum of Eur 15,000.

COLLABORATION

EFLM collaborates with sub-regional professional organizations in the Balkan and Nordic region. A memorandum of understanding between EFLM and IFCC formalizes the relationship between the two Federations. EFLM, as a new Federation, has no corporate membership yet, but negotiations are under way with members of the IVD industry in setting up various projects that support the development of the profession in Europe. EFLM is keen to set up wider collaboration with sister Federations in order to harmonize scientific, educational and professional efforts in a complementary fashion, so that laboratory and health care professionals enjoy the benefits of such a collaboration both in the Euro-region and worldwide.

WHAT IS THE EUROPEAN REGISTER OF SPECIALISTS IN LABORATORY MEDICINE

- A database of senior professionals in the EU who meet the agreed education and training requirements to be independent (consultant/director grade) practitioners
- On the Register are Scientific, pharmacy and medically qualified practitioners
- Over 3000 registrants from 22 countries
- Registration via the national society
- National societies must demonstrate equivalence of standards (EoS) between their training programmes and the EC4 standards

Why is the Register important?

- For patient safety
- For harmonisation of high level professional competence across Europe
- As quality benchmark

Why is the Register important for you?

- Recognition of high level of professional competence
- Helpful if moving to another country within the EU
- Title of European Specialist in Laboratory Medicine (EuSpLM)

Why is the Register important for the profession?

- Promotes understanding of Laboratory Medicine within the EU
- Increases influence of EFLM with the European Commission
- Important quality benchmark

Do join us – the more of us there are, the greater our influence!

How do I join?

Contact your EC4 RC National Representative via www.ec4register.eu

Further information?

EC4 RC National Representative or EC4 RC Chair Dr. Rob Jansen e-mail: rjansen@skml.nl

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