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International Federation of Clinical Chemistry
and Laboratory Medicine

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Editorial

Marilena Stamouli,
eNews Editor

Dear colleagues

I wish all of you a Happy, Prosperous and Creative New Year, full of new goals, innovation and advancement of our global community.

In the present issue, our President, Prof. Tomris Ozben, gives us in her message valuable information about planned IFCC EB meetings, organised to ensure progress across IFCC's scientific, educational, and global outreach initiatives. Moreover, she invites us to participate in the 2026 IFCC Global MedLab Week, a global initiative dedicated to celebrate the impact of laboratory medicine worldwide, which will take place on April 20 - 26, 2026. She also announces important upcoming scientific events, such as the African Federation of Clinical Chemistry Congress, which will be held in Nairobi, Kenya, on July 16-17, 2026, the Latin American Confederation of Clinical Biochemistry Congress, which will be held in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, on October 7-10, 2026 and the XXVII IFCC WorldLab Congress 2026, which will take place on October 25-29, 2026, in New Delhi, India.

In this issue you can read interesting news from the IFCC Task Force on Global Lab Quality, the IFCC Professional Scientific Exchange Programme and the IFCC Visiting Lecturer Programme activities, all of which promoted innovation, advanced knowledge, and brought together leading experts from across regions. IFCC Emerging Technologies Division share with us knowledge and experiences that reflect how Innovation has become a defining force in the evolution of laboratory medicine.

News and reports from the National Societies of Serbia, Japan, Pakistan, Spain and Nepal are also included in this issue, highlighting the commitment of these societies to enhance their professional development, disseminate scientific knowledge and promote international collaboration. The COLABIOCLI Accreditation Working Group share with us their experience in promoting the Implementation of ISO 15189:2022 in Clinical Laboratories, while Dr. L. Figueroa Montes, presents an urgent call to stop the metabolic epidemic of diabetes and obesity.

Corporate Members are valued contributors in our shared journey to advance excellence in laboratory medicine for better healthcare. In this issue, you can meet Tricia Ravalico, Corporate Representative to the IFCC-EB, who shares with us her experience of woking with IFCC. Moreover, we are delighted to welcome one new Corporate Member, Boditech Med Inc, and we look forward to working together to advance laboratory medicine worldwide.

The UNIVANTS of Healthcare Excellence award program presents integrated care team works that transform cardiovascular care and reduce the global burden of cardiovascular disease, showcasing the importance of team work and collaboration.

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It is with profound sadness and deep sorrow that the IFCC shares the sudden passing of Dr. Osama Najjar on January 5th, 2026. Dr. Najjar played a pivotal role in advancing laboratory medicine through his leadership and vision. We publish in this issue the words of affection and memories of the many colleagues around the word that have known him and worked with him. We convey our deepest condolences and our sympathy to his family and colleagues.

Marilena Stamouli

The voice of IFCC

IFCC President's Message

January/February 2026
By Tomris Ozben

Prof. Tomris Ozben
EuSpLM, Ph.D.

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

As we begin a new year, I would like to extend my warmest wishes to each of you for a healthy, productive, and inspiring year ahead.

Sadly, this year has begun with the loss of our dear colleague Dr. Osama Najjar, AFCB Regional Federation Representative on the IFCC Executive Board. His dedication, commitment, and significant contributions to laboratory medicine and to IFCC will not be forgotten. We will honour his memory by continuing to advance scientific excellence, education, and collaboration, the values in which he strongly believed.

First and foremost, I would like to warmly express our heartfelt thanks and deep appreciation to Prof. Khosrow Adeli for his outstanding services as President of IFCC. Although his term on the IFCC Executive Board ended on December 31, 2025, this does not mark the end of his contributions to IFCC. He continues to serve in important IFCC activities and will remain an integral part of our community.

The IFCC President-Elect, Prof. Nader Rifai, began his service on the IFCC Executive Board on January 1, 2026, and he will serve as IFCC President from January 1, 2027, to December 31, 2029. I wish him, along with the incoming members of the IFCC Executive Board, a successful and productive term.

The IFCC Executive Board convened its hybrid meeting on 8–9 December, 2025 in London, near the ExCeL Congress Centre, where EuroMedLab 2027 will be held. This one-and-a half day meeting provided an important opportunity to discuss strategic action plans, new functional unit structures, appointments and renewals of officers, congress guidelines, and ongoing activities, while ensuring continuity across IFCC's scientific, educational, and global outreach initiatives.

In 2026, IFCC Executive Board will organize three in-person meetings, in addition to monthly virtual Executive Board meetings as needed. All proposals, projects and key issues are reviewed during these monthly meetings to avoid delays in decision-making. The first virtual meeting of the year was held on January 16, 2026.

This year also brings important updates, beginning with the addition of **the Cameroon Society of Clinical Biology (CSCB) / Société Camerounaise de Biologie Clinique (SCBC)** as a new IFCC Full Member. This brings the total number of IFCC Full Members to 104, reflecting the continued growth and expanding global reach of our organization.

Regarding EuroMedLab, we are pleased to announce that the **EuroMedLab Guidelines** have been updated through close cooperation between the IFCC and EFLM Presidents and have been approved by

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both IFCC and EFLM Executive Boards. These updated Guidelines will be applied to the EuroMedLab Congress to be held in 2029. The call for bids has just been launched, and we warmly invite IFCC and EFLM member societies across Europe to submit applications to host this prestigious event.

We are also delighted to confirm that the **General Agreement for EuroMedLab 2027, London** has been prepared and signed by all four partner organizations (IFCC, EFLM, MZ Events and the Association for Laboratory Medicine-LabMed). Preparations for the Congress are now underway, including organization of the Organizing Committee meeting, the establishment of the Scientific Advisory Committee, and development of the Scientific Programme.

It is my great pleasure to invite you to participate in the **2026 IFCC Global MedLab Week (GMLW)**, which will take place from April 20 to 26, 2026 under the theme **"A Day at the Lab."** This global initiative is dedicated to celebrating and advancing the science, innovation, and impact of laboratory medicine worldwide.

"A Day at the Lab" invites us to shine a light on the real-life work, expertise, and dedication that take place behind laboratory doors every day. It offers an opportunity to highlight the teamwork, precision, and technological innovation that make high-quality diagnostics possible, while helping the public better understand the complexity of laboratory processes, the importance of quality and safety, and the essential role of laboratory professionals in patient care.

IFCC GMLW is designed to enhance visibility, recognition, and global connection within our profession, bringing together patients, clinicians, scientists, and students across continents. This initiative aims to honour and amplify the vital contributions of laboratory medicine and to ensure its significance in healthcare is recognized worldwide. To achieve this, we kindly seek your collaboration and support.

We warmly invite you and your teams to contribute materials aligned with the theme "A Day at the Lab." We also encourage institutions and laboratories to take an active role by:

- Sharing educational content and success stories through short videos (2–6 minutes) submitted via the "Share Your Story" portal
- Developing podcasts, photos, or videos that celebrate the importance of laboratories in healthcare, following IFCC guidelines
- Promoting IFCC GMLW within your networks using downloadable posters, flyers, and banners available on the IFCC GMLW website
- Encouraging students and young professionals to participate

These contributions will help showcase the global evolution of our profession. Your involvement will amplify our collective voice and highlight the essential role of laboratory medicine in improving healthcare outcomes worldwide. **We look forward to celebrating the 2026 IFCC Global MedLab Week together.**

It is also with great pleasure that I announce two upcoming Regional Federation Congresses: the **African Federation of Clinical Chemistry (AFCC) Congress**, to be held in **Nairobi, Kenya, from 16–17 July 2026**; and the **Latin American Confederation of Clinical Biochemistry (COLABIOCLI)** Congress, to be held in **Santa Cruz, Bolivia, from 7–10 October 2026**. These meetings will provide valuable opportunities for scientific exchange, regional collaboration, and professional development.

On behalf of the International Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (IFCC) and the Congress Organizing Committee, I am pleased to invite you to participate in **XXVII IFCC WorldLab Congress New Delhi 2026**, which will take place on **25-29 October, 2026** in the India's largest International Convention and Exhibition Center (IICC), located in Dwarka, New Delhi, India. This prestigious joint event of **IFCC** with the **Asia and Pacific Federation of Clinical Chemistry (APFCB)** hosted by the **Association of Clinical Biochemists of India (ACBI)** is expected to attract a large

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and highly engaged international audience from the Asia–Pacific region as well as from all the other five IFCC Regional Federations. The Congress will bring together laboratory professionals, clinicians, researchers, and healthcare decision-makers, offering an outstanding opportunity for global brand exposure and strategic engagement.
Visa arrangements have been carefully planned and coordinated by MZ Events in close collaboration with local authorities to ensure smooth participation for IVD companies, exhibitors, and all international delegates.

The Scientific Program Committee has dedicated itself to curating an exceptional, multidisciplinary program covering innovative fields, new biomarkers, advanced diagnostics and cutting-edge techniques. Topics suggested by the International Scientific Advisory Board have been incorporated, and the program has been designed to be highly interactive, allowing ample time for discussion and meaningful knowledge exchange. Esteemed international speakers and key opinion leaders will address critical challenges, scientific breakthroughs, and emerging diagnostic technologies.

I am also pleased to announce the availability of **IFCC Travel Scholarships for Young Scientists** from IFCC member countries. These scholarships will support attendance at both the Worldlab Congress and the **5th IFCC WorldLab FORUM for Young Scientists**, to be held prior the Congress. This represents a unique opportunity for emerging leaders in laboratory medicine to enhance their professional development and foster international collaboration.

The IFCC Council meeting of IFCC Executive Board with Presidents/National Society Representatives of Full and Affiliate Member Societies as well as Corporate Members' Representative will be held during the WorldLab Congress. In addition, several satellite meetings on key topics are expected to take place.
I sincerely hope to welcome many of you in New Delhi so that we may exchange ideas, develop new initiatives, and shape our shared vision for the future of laboratory medicine. Please mark **October 25–29, 2026**, in your calendar and join us for this extraordinary global event.

As we move into 2026, I would like to express my deepest gratitude for your continued commitment to advancing laboratory medicine worldwide. I wish you all a successful and fulfilling year ahead, and I thank you for your ongoing dedication to IFCC and our global laboratory community.

With warm regards,
Tomris Ozben
IFCC President

IFCC TF-GLQ Workshop in Montevideo
Strengthening Laboratory Quality: Foundations and Practical Approaches
Montevideo, Uruguay, 24–25 November 2025

By **Dr. Ivan Blasutig** and Q.F; **B.C Beatriz Varela**

In November 2025, the Uruguayan Biochemistry Association (ABU) proudly hosted a specialized workshop on clinical laboratory quality in Montevideo, thanks to the invaluable support of the IFCC and its Task Force on Global Lab Quality (TF-GLQ).
The purpose of this face-to-face workshop was to create a dynamic learning environment focused on strengthening laboratory quality practices in Uruguay. It aimed not only to provide comprehensive education and hands-on training in quality management systems, internal quality control (IQC), and external quality assessment (EQA), but also to foster a deeper understanding of the current state of clinical laboratory quality in the country. Furthermore, the workshop served as a platform for meaningful dialogue and knowledge exchange, enabling participants to share experiences, discuss challenges, and explore practical strategies for implementing international standards and best practices in everyday laboratory operations.
The workshop was held over two days with lectures and interactive sessions at the Hotel Dazzler in Montevideo, Uruguay. There were approximately 40 individuals that registered for the event, as well as 20 daily attendees.
The topics covered in the workshop included good laboratory practices and quality indicators, with a focus on internal quality control (iQC) and external quality assessment (EQA), and included lectures and interactive case studies. Attendees were highly engaged, asking questions that spark reflection throughout the workshop, and actively participated in discussions. The workshop concluded with interactive panel discussions, fostering a productive exchange of ideas and in-depth dialogue among the attendees.

The workshop featured high-level presentations delivered by three distinguished members of the IFCC Task Force on Global Lab Quality (TF-GLQ): Dr Ivan Blasutig, Prof Qing Meng and Dr José Poloni, together with two highly respected local representatives: Q.F;B.C Beatriz Varela and Q.F;B.C Ana Piana. Their combined expertise provided participants with valuable insights into international standards and best practices, as well as practical approaches tailored to the Uruguayan context. This blend of global and local perspectives enriched the discussions and ensured that the content was both relevant and applicable to daily laboratory operations.

Given the positive impact and the high level of engagement observed, we strongly encourage other scientific societies to consider hosting similar workshops in collaboration with IFCC and its Task Force on Global Lab Quality (TF-GLQ). These initiatives not only enhance technical knowledge but also foster a culture of continuous improvement and international best practices in clinical laboratories.

We extend our deepest gratitude to the IFCC and its Task Force on Global Lab Quality (TF-GLQ) for their invaluable support and commitment, which made this workshop possible. Their dedication to advancing laboratory quality globally was fundamental to the success of this event. We also sincerely thank the Uruguayan Biochemistry Association (ABU), its president Dr. Patricia Esperón, and her outstanding team for their leadership and tireless efforts in organizing and hosting this important initiative. The collaboration between international experts and local professionals created a unique learning experience that will undoubtedly contribute to strengthening quality practices in clinical laboratories across Uruguay.

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Workshop participants.

Workshop participants during a lecture.

ABU Board of Directors at the workshop.

IFCC Professional Scientific Exchange Programme (PSEP): my experience at Monash Health, Melbourne, Australia

By: **Yusuf Yesil**, MD, MIS
Erbaa State Hospital
Tokat, Türkiye

Topic: Development of an AI-Based Clinical Decision Support System for Serum Protein Electrophoresis reporting
Host Institution: Monash Health, Melbourne, Australia
Supervisors: A/Prof Zhong Lu and A/Prof James Doery

Introduction & Objectives
As part of the IFCC Professional Exchange Programme (PEP), I undertook a focused research and development visit to the Department of Pathology at Monash Health, Victoria, Australia. The primary objective of this exchange was to design and implement a clinically safe, AI-based decision support system for Serum Protein Electrophoresis (SPEP) reporting. Under the supervision of A/Prof Zhong Lu and A/Prof James Doery, my role was to translate clinical reasoning used by pathologists into computational models, while ensuring that all algorithmic decisions remained aligned with real-world diagnostic practice.

Collaboration & Methodology
This project was conducted as a close collaboration between clinical pathologists and data science methodology, with strong emphasis on clinical safety and interpretability.

Data Integration:
I worked with historical SPEP datasets spanning for last year, integrating raw curve data from capillary electrophoresis instrument (Capillarys 3, Sebia) with relevant clinical and laboratory meta-data (SPEP and immunofixation results with reporting comments, serum free light chains and immunoglobulins) from the LIS.

Curve-Based Analysis:
A key methodological contribution was to design an AI programme to analyse direct SPEP curves, instead of relying solely on quantitative fraction tables. The AI models were designed to analyze the full electropherogram shape, enabling the detection of subtle abnormalities that are typically assessed visually by experienced pathologists.

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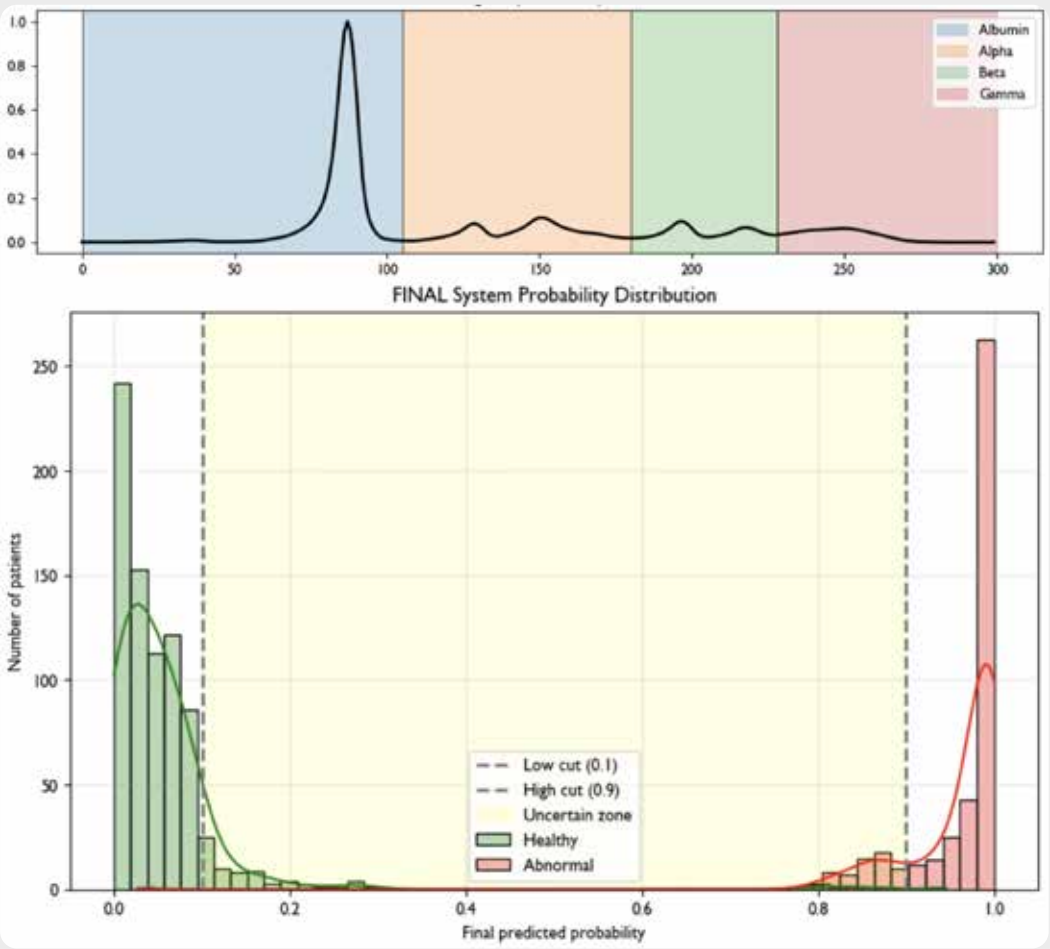
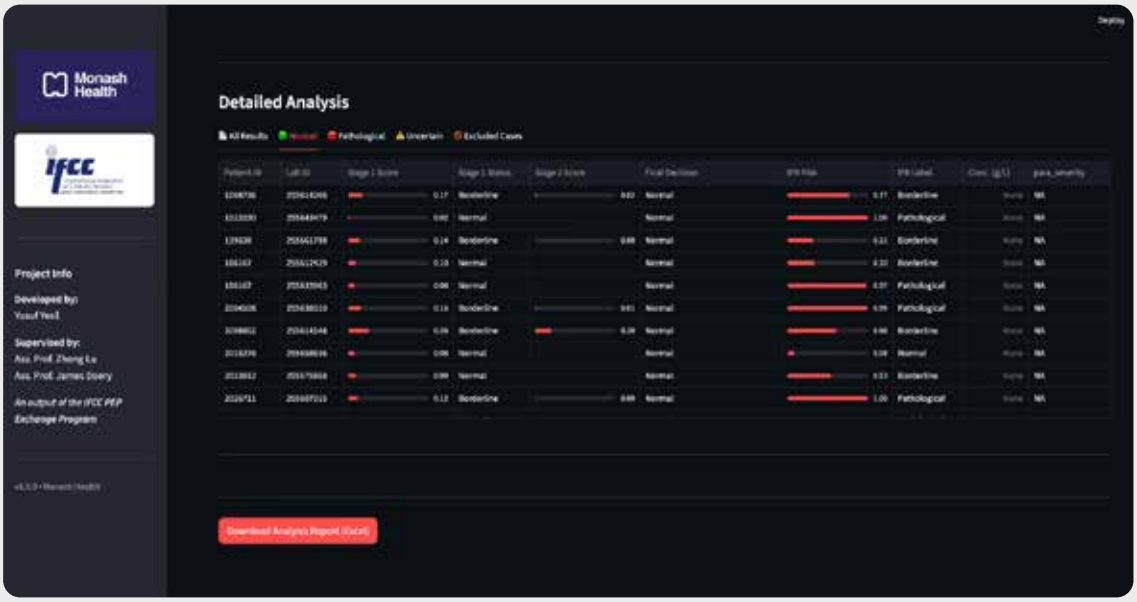
Photo 1 and 2 – AI Curve Analysis and Model Output



SPEP densitometry curves, illustrations that the model is making segmentation and predictions.

Photo 1 and 2 – AI Curve Analysis and Model Output



Web-based user interface, displaying AI risk scores and triage recommendations.

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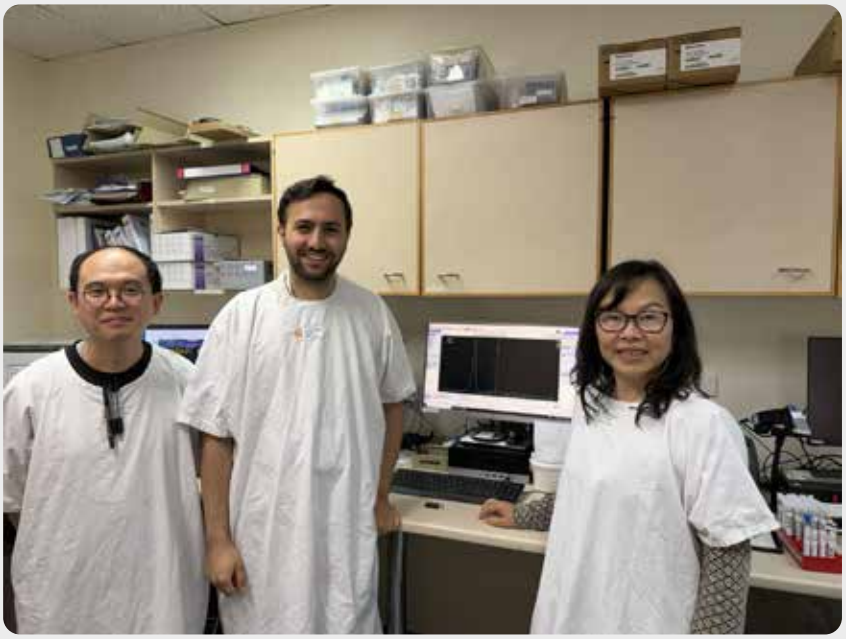
Clinical Validation and Safety Principles:
Regular in-person discussions with A/Prof Lu and A/Prof Doery and constantly modifying the AI models were essential in aligning the model behavior with the real-world diagnostic practice. A strict "safety-first" approach was adopted, ensuring that the system defers to human review whenever prediction confidence is insufficient, mirroring the decision-making process of a pathologist.

Photo 3 – Laboratory Environment



On-site work, including exposure to SPEP instrumentation and routine laboratory workflows.

Project Outcomes
The exchange resulted in the development of a multi-stage AI-based triage framework that can be deployed as a web-based application for internal usage.

- The system demonstrated strong performance in confidently categorizing the SPEP patterns as "Clear normal","Clear pathological" and "Uncertain".
- By safely excluding straightforward cases, the tool shows potential to reduce laboratory workload and turnaround time.
- The architecture was designed to be adaptable, supporting future multi-centre validation and broader clinical evaluation.

Importantly, the full scientific manuscript of this work will be submited to eJIFCC. We are currently preparing an article that reports comprehensive performance metrics, including sensitivity, specificity, predictive values, uncertainty analysis, and clinical coverage.

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Photo 4 – Team

With A/Prof James Doery, A/Prof Zhong Lu, and Dr. Jayden Yau

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Impact & Professional Development
This PEP experience significantly strengthened my ability to operate at the interface of clinical medicine and AI. Acting simultaneously as a clinician, data scientist and developer, provided valuable insight into how AI systems must be designed, constrained, and validated to be safely deployable in clinical laboratories.

Beyond the technical outcomes, this exchange established a strong foundation for continued collaboration and future multi-centre research initiatives. I am sincerely grateful to the IFCC for supporting this opportunity and to the Monash Health team for their mentorship and trust.

IFCC Visiting Lecturer Programme: Report from the 50th Turkish Biochemical Society Meeting (TBS)

By: **Prof. Dr. Kannan Vaidyanathan**, MD, FRCP (Edin.) (UK), FFSc (Research) (RCPA) (Australia), FACBI
Professor & Head, Department of Biochemistry,
& Laboratory Director, Central Laboratory Services,
Believers Church Medical College Hospital,
Tiruvalla, Kerala, India
Co-Editor-In-Chief, eJIFCC & EC Member, CPD (IFCC)

The **50th Turkish Biochemical Society Meeting (TBS)** was conducted at the **Ataturk University, Erzurum** on **28th-31st October, 2025**. Many thanks to **Prof. Sedef Yenice** and IFCC for conferring the **Visiting Lecturer Program (VLP)** for this visit. I gave two talks, on **"The Role of Micronutrients in Health and Disease: A Case Example of Chronic Pancreatitis"** and **"Inborn metabolic disorders - The winding path ahead on the road less traveled"** which were both widely appreciated.

"The Role of Micronutrients in Health and Disease: A Case Example of Chronic Pancreatitis"

Micronutrients, including essential vitamins and minerals that the body needs in small amounts are critical for normal bodily functions, including metabolism, immunity, and growth. Their deficiencies can lead to specific diseases. Suboptimal intake contributes to chronic illnesses. They have a role in maintaining normal health and preventing various diseases. We investigate the role of micronutrients in health and disease with the case example of chronic pancreatitis. The obscure etiology, diverse pathophysiologic mechanisms, and variable course of tropical chronic pancreatitis present a challenging scenario for the clinicians. For the first time, we found significant decrease in majority of plasma amino acid levels (especially, total branched chain amino acid levels) in CP patients, in TCP as compared to ACP patients and as well as controls. We demonstrated that CP is associated with hyperhomocysteinemia and that folate appeared to be a key factor contributing to hyperhomocysteinemia. Our study is the first to demonstrate that folate deficiency may be responsible for defective transsulfuration and transmethylation reactions noted in CP patients. We could demonstrate significant reduction in antioxidants and elevated lipid peroxidation products in TCP patients as compared to both ACP patients and controls. Our study is the first to estimate zinc levels in tropical chronic pancreatitis. The observation of significantly lower levels of erythrocyte zinc in TCP as compared to ACP patients has important implications. We have noted significant reduction in serum rhodanese activity and decreased concentration of sulfur containing amino acids in plasma.

"Inborn metabolic disorders - The winding path ahead on the road less traveled"

Inborn Metabolic Disorders (IMDs), previously known as Inborn Errors of Metabolism (IEM) comprise a large group of 700-1000 different rare genetic disorders. They arise due to mutations in genes encoding a single enzyme in metabolic pathways. Some of these disorders are very rare, whereas certain other disorders are more common. There are considerable racial and ethnic differences in the incidence pattern of these disorders. Aminoacidurias like phenylketonuria are common in the Western population; in Asian countries including India, organic acidurias like propionic acidurias, methyl malonic acidurias and maple syrup urine disease are more common. Clinical presentation of IEM is varied and it affects multiple organ systems, including CNS. Indeed, CNS involvement is one of the most common presenting symptoms. The diseases can appear immediately after birth; or sometimes their onset may be delayed, even appearing in adult life. The challenge is regarding the implementing state-of-the-art technology, tandem mass spectrometry (TMS) is currently not widely available. In addition to the cost, training of personnel poses an additional challenge. International Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (IFCC) along with the International Society for Newborn Screening (ISNS) has formed a task force for newborn screening (TF-NBS) to look into the feasibility of carrying out NBS globally, across various developing countries, including India. TF-NBS is currently looking for ways of implementing screening of, at least, common IMDs globally. This task force has formed clear mandates and a vision for moving ahead. The path ahead is definitely long and tortuous, but working in a determined manner, there's always, as they say, light at the end of the

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tunnel. It's a road less traveled; working with the objective of global newborn screening.

The VLP programme helps to build strong ties and collaboration between IFCC partnering countries and for me personally it was a very enriching experience. I would like to congratulate and thank the Organizing Secretary **Prof. Ahmet Kiziluntc**, TBS President **Prof. Dogan Yucel**, and the **Organizing Committee** of the **50th Turkish Biochemical Society Meeting** for the amazing arrangements and hospitality.

Turkish Republic Day Celebrations with the Organizing Committee members, Prof. Sedef Yenice, Prof. TS Pillay, Prof. Ahmet Kiziluntz

In front of the Ataturk Convention Center, Erzurum, Turkey

Group Photo, 50th TBS Meeting

My presentations on Inborn Metabolic Disorders/Chronic Pancreatitis at the 50th TBS Meeting, Erzurum, Turkey

From Technology to Clinical Value: The IFCC Emerging Technologies Division in Action

By **Bernard Gouget, Damien Gruson, Swarup Shah, Yan Liu, Sven Ebert, Serafeim Karathanos,**
IFCC-Emerging Technologies Division- Executive Committee

Innovation has become a defining force in the evolution of laboratory medicine. Advances in artificial intelligence, digital health, omics technologies, bioengineering, and decentralized testing are not isolated developments but interconnected drivers that are progressively reshaping how laboratories contribute to patient care, prevention, and healthcare system performance. In this dynamic context, the IFCC Emerging Technologies Division (ETD) plays a central role in anticipating change, guiding responsible innovation, and supporting laboratories worldwide as they adapt to emerging scientific, clinical, and societal challenges.
Over recent years, the ETD has evolved from a collection of technology-focused initiatives into a coherent, structured, and forward-looking innovation ecosystem. This evolution reflects a clear strategic ambition: to accompany emerging technologies along their entire translational pathway, from early scientific development to clinical implementation and assessment of real-world impact, while maintaining IFCC's core values of scientific rigor, independence, and global relevance.

From Emerging Technologies to Clinical Value
A key priority for the ETD is to ensure that innovation in laboratory medicine translates into meaningful clinical and healthcare value. New technologies must demonstrate not only analytical performance, but also their impact on clinical decision-making, patient outcomes, laboratory workflows, and healthcare efficiency. Through its Committees and Working Groups, the ETD promotes outcome-oriented evaluation, real-world evidence generation, and health-economic considerations, reinforcing the role of laboratory medicine as an active contributor to value-based healthcare. This perspective aligns with approaches adopted by other leading international societies in laboratory medicine and underscores the ETD's commitment to moving beyond proof-of-concept innovation toward sustainable and clinically relevant implementation.

The ETD Ecosystem: An Integrated Framework for Continuous Evolution
Within this global perspective, the structure of the ETD reflects a deliberate and integrated strategy. Its Functional Units, Committees, and Working Groups address complementary dimensions of innovation, forming a connected ecosystem rather than isolated thematic activities.
Digital transformation represents one of the most powerful drivers of change in laboratory medicine. The **Committee on Artificial Intelligence in Laboratory Medicine** plays a central role in this transition by addressing the scientific, methodological, and ethical challenges associated with AI-based tools. Its work extends beyond algorithm development to encompass data quality, transparency, governance, and integration into clinical workflows, supporting the progressive evolution of laboratories into active partners in clinical decision-making.
Closely linked to this digital dimension, the **Committee on Mobile Health and Bioengineering in Laboratory Medicine** explores the convergence of laboratory diagnostics with connected devices, biosensors, and digital platforms. This functional unit supports the gradual shift toward more decentralized, flexible, and patient-centric diagnostic models, extending laboratory medicine beyond traditional institutional settings and aligning it with evolving care pathways.
Innovation within the ETD ecosystem also emphasizes inclusivity across patient populations. The **Committee on Emerging Technologies in Pediatric Laboratory Medicine** ensures that technological progress considers the specific biological, clinical, and ethical considerations of pediatric care. This focus reinforces the principle that innovation must be adaptable and equitable, serving diverse patient needs throughout the life course.

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Precision and molecular diagnostics form another strategic pillar of the ETD's activities. The **Working Group on Custom-Made Genomic Panels** supports the rational design and evaluation of targeted genomic assays tailored to specific clinical contexts. In parallel, the **Working Group on Single-Cell and Spatial Transcriptomics** addresses advanced approaches that enable high-resolution characterization of tissues and disease processes, bridging cutting-edge research and future clinical applications. These efforts are complemented by the **Working Group on Metabolomics in Laboratory Medicine**, which promotes harmonization and clinical translation of complex metabolic profiling strategies.

Recognizing that innovation must be underpinned by rigorous evaluation, the ETD has placed strong emphasis on methodological consistency and impact assessment. **The Working Group on Method Evaluation Protocols** provides transversal guidance for analytical and clinical validation, supporting comparability and reliability across emerging technologies. This work is extended by **the Working Group on Health Technology Assessment**, which addresses organizational, economic, and system-level implications, ensuring that innovation aligns with sustainable laboratory practice and healthcare system needs.
The evolving contribution of laboratory medicine to prevention and long-term risk management is illustrated by **the Working Group on Next-Generation Technologies for Cardiovascular Disease Prevention**. By exploring innovative biomarker strategies and multi-parameter risk assessment approaches, this group exemplifies the shift of laboratory medicine toward earlier intervention and longitudinal monitoring.
Finally, **the Working Group on Microsampling** addresses a key enabler of future laboratory models: minimally invasive, low-volume, and decentralized sample collection. Microsampling technologies support remote testing, longitudinal follow-up, and improved access to diagnostics, aligning laboratory medicine with broader trends toward patient-centered, sustainable, and equitable healthcare delivery.

Together, these Committees and Working Groups form an interconnected framework that allows the ETD to respond dynamically to emerging challenges and opportunities. Rather than focusing on fixed timelines or endpoints, the ETD supports a continuous evolution of laboratory medicine, guided by scientific evidence, clinical relevance, and ethical responsibility.

People, Skills, and Responsible Partnerships
Technological innovation is inseparable from human expertise. As laboratory medicine evolves, new professional profiles are emerging at the interface of laboratory science, data analytics, engineering, and clinical care. The ETD supports education, mentoring, and international collaboration to foster these competencies and to ensure that innovation remains driven by skilled professionals. At the same time, the ETD recognizes the essential role of responsible collaboration with industry. Innovation in laboratory medicine cannot progress without close interaction between laboratories, academia, and industrial partners. The ETD promotes structured, transparent, and pre-competitive collaboration frameworks that preserve scientific independence while accelerating translation from concept to routine clinical use. Industry is viewed not merely as a technology provider, but as a strategic partner in delivering clinically meaningful and sustainable diagnostic solutions.

In conclusion, the IFCC Emerging Technologies Division has progressively built a structured and integrated innovation ecosystem that reflects the evolving role of laboratory medicine within healthcare. By connecting digital technologies, omics sciences, evaluation methodologies, patient-centered approaches, and responsible partnerships, the ETD acts as a global catalyst for innovation. Through anticipation, guidance, and collaboration, the ETD continues to support the ongoing evolution of laboratory medicine, ensuring that emerging technologies translate into real clinical value and improved patient care worldwide.

From Vision to Care: Dubai Powering Modern Laboratory Medicine for Better Health

By **Bernard Gouget* **, Anirban Ganguly**, Laila AbdelWareth**, James Nichols**, Swarup Shah*, Damien Gruson***
*IFCC-ETD EC, **IFCC-CMHBLM

Dubai and the Emirates: a real-world testbed for next-generation healthcare
Can Dubai still be described simply as a futuristic city? In 2025, the Emirate is better understood as a full-scale living laboratory for tomorrow's healthcare, an ecosystem where innovation is tested in real time and where boundaries between medical laboratories, hospitals/clinics, data infrastructures, and biotech hubs are becoming increasingly permeable. Supported by substantial investment and a national strategy aimed at health-system excellence, the United Arab Emirates are driving a distinctive ambition: to build a next-generation healthcare model for the region, grounded in prediction, personalization, and intelligent automation. Technologies such as diagnostic AI, patient digital twins, autonomous surgical robotics, and connected laboratory platforms are reshaping pathways of care. Laboratory medicine, long perceived as a technical back office, is now emerging as a strategic engine of this transformation, enabled by ultra-rapid testing, increasingly accessible genomic sequencing, automated laboratories embedded within hospitals/clinics, and real-time epidemiological surveillance capabilities.
Acceleration, however, comes with challenges: data standardization, digital sovereignty, workforce capacity, agile regulation, and scalable biomedical infrastructure. The Emirates have demonstrated an ability to turn such constraints into catalysts for progress, with outcomes that are increasingly visible, high engagement in accreditation, sustained improvements in quality-of-care benchmarks, robust sector growth, and rising international attractiveness. At a time when many countries are still debating their post-pandemic health model, Dubai and the UAE are advancing a clear direction: to become a regional platform for medical innovation, where digital health, precision medicine, and emerging technologies contribute to shaping new standards of care.

A landmark meeting at the intersection of laboratory medicine and digital health.
It is within this context of rapid technological change and global health ambitions that the 1st Annual Meeting of the Emirates Clinical Chemistry Society (ECCS) & Digital Health and Lab Medicine Forum took place on 17–18 October 2025 at the Conrad Hotel in Dubai, in collaboration with the IFCC Emerging Technologies Division (ETD). More than a scientific meeting, the event represented a milestone: Dubai positioning itself as an international point of convergence for advanced laboratory medicine, digital health, and forward-looking regulatory thinking. By bringing together international experts, decision-makers, industry leaders, and pioneers of digital transformation, the Forum aligned with the Emirati vision of building a health system that meets global standards, while also anticipating the next wave of technological disruption. This inaugural meeting conveyed a simple message: the Emirates are not only adopting innovation; they are increasingly contributing to its definition and implementation.

Opening perspectives: laboratories at the heart of system transformation
The ECCS–IFCC Annual Congress opened under the sign of profound transformation: a health system that places the medical laboratory at the centre of change, at the intersection of science, innovation, and strategic vision. Dr **Laila AbdelWareth** (UAE), President of ECCS, set the tone by framing the meeting as a platform where regional expertise meets international leadership. She highlighted the growing role of the UAE within the global laboratory medicine ecosystem and emphasized ECCS's commitment to raising quality standards, strengthening continuing professional development, and accelerating digital integration across laboratories in the country. Prof **Damien Gruson** (BE), Co-Chair of the conference and a leading figure within IFCC and EuroMedLab Brussels 2025, broadened the perspective by outlining the forces reshaping the discipline: the data explosion, artificial intelligence, mass spectrometry, omics technologies, and advanced automation. He stressed that the future of laboratory medicine rests on a critical triad: technological innovation, international standardization, and workforce upskilling. His contributions, particularly on the strategic role of mass spectrometry, anchored the meeting in a forward-looking and international

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vision. The presence of Prof **Khosrow Adeli** (CA), Past President of IFCC and a globally recognized leader, further reinforced the scientific stature of the Forum. His engagement in scientific sessions and academic recognition moments highlighted IFCC's support for ECCS and confirmed the emergence of this event as a major regional scientific stage.
Together, these opening interventions converged on a shared conclusion: laboratory medicine is entering a new era, predictive, digital, integrated, and collaborative, and the Emirates are positioning themselves as an active contributor to this transition, supported by a strong partnership between ECCS and IFCC-ETD. This spirit was reflected in a rich and multidisciplinary program, ranging from big-data reference intervals to advanced technologies (NGS, liquid biopsy), health equity, smart sensors, and mobile medicine.

Plenary session: Big Data and reference intervals, toward inclusive biological standards
The plenary session addressed a foundational question: how can Big Data be leveraged to better define, harmonize, and derive reference intervals across populations? International experts and IFCC teams emphasized the global need to move beyond traditional reference interval approaches by integrating larger, more representative cohorts. Prof Khosrow Adeli delivered a key message: health equity begins with inclusive and scientifically robust biological standards.

Specialized testing and emerging technologies
Under the theme Specialized Testing and Emerging Technologies and chaired by Dr **Mouza AlSharhan**, Prof **Damien Gruson** presented "Empowering Laboratory Diagnostic Services with Mass Spectrometry", illustrating how mass spectrometry is becoming a cornerstone of modern laboratories, improving analytical specificity, reducing interferences, and facilitating broader access to specialized testing. Dr **Hemad Yasaei** (UAE) highlighted advances in next-generation sequencing for genomics and personalized medicine, focusing on circulating tumor DNA, targeted panels, and molecular stratification in cancer and genetic disorders. Iman M. Talaat (UAE) addressed the rise of liquid biopsy, emphasizing emerging biomarkers, the value of minimally invasive sampling, and the impact on early cancer detection.
Taken together, these talks conveyed a clear message: omics technologies are no longer a distant promise, they are increasingly embedded in today's innovative laboratories.

Laboratory medicine and health equity
A second session examined the role of laboratory medicine in health equity. Dr **Shereen Amer** framed inequity reduction as both a regional and global priority and called for biomedical approaches adapted to population needs. Prof **Anwar Al Borai** (SA) demonstrated why reference intervals must reflect ethnic, demographic, and environmental variability. Dr **Hady Elkhodary** (UAE) discussed current barriers to test accessibility, particularly for marginalized populations, while Dr **Ola Elgaddar** (UAE) highlighted the role of public laboratories in equitable access, especially in rapidly growing regions.
The session concluded with a strong reminder: equitable care begins at the point of sampling, in the collection tube.

Biomarkers for neurological disorders
After the lunch break, the session on "Biomarkers for Neurological Disorders", **Dr Leila Abdelwareth** underscored the public health importance of neurological biomarkers for earlier detection of high-burden conditions such as stroke, dementias, and parkinsonian syndromes, reducing mortality and disability, enabling timely interventions, alleviating societal and economic burden, and strengthening epidemiological monitoring. Dr **Shereen Amer** (USA) reviewed current diagnostic criteria in traumatic brain injury, including standardized neurological assessment, rational use of brain CT, and the contribution of serum biomarkers, stressing the importance of early identification of secondary injury to guide therapy. Dr **Fayhaa Ahmed** (UAE) presented the current landscape of biomarkers in parkinsonism and the scientific hurdles that remain before routine clinical implementation. Neurology was highlighted as a field where laboratories can transform care through earlier and more objective diagnosis.

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Unlocking the power of personalized medicine
The afternoon continued with "Unlocking the Power of Personalized Medicine", chaired by Dr **Olga Elgaddar.** Dr **Swarup Shah** (IN) explored the strategic value of biomarkers for patient stratification (risk, response, prognosis) and emphasized the need for rigorous validation of predictive biomarkers to support safe and effective individualized decisions. Dr **James Donnelly** (USA) focused on progress in pharmacogenomics and the importance of incorporating genetic profiles into therapeutic protocols.
This session reinforced the idea that personalized medicine is no longer a scientific luxury, but an emerging standard of care.

Regional round table: newborn screening in the MENA region
The end-of-day round table offered an overview of newborn screening programmes across the MENA region. Dr **Ali Alothaim** (SA), Dr **Rania Bedair** (UAE), and Dr **Adrian Glen Miller** (QA) discussed logistical challenges (transport, turnaround times, infrastructure), national variation in screening panels, the need to strengthen public laboratories and specialized training, and the measurable impact of early screening on reducing infant mortality.
This high-value regional discussion illustrated the direct contribution of laboratory medicine to population health and future generations.

Day 2 – Digital Health

A strategic agenda for large-scale digital transformation
The second day focused on digital health, exploring opportunities and challenges of large-scale adoption of digital technologies within national health systems, and the strategic frameworks needed to guide transformation within healthcare organizations, including laboratories. The day opened with a visionary lecture by Prof **James Nichols** (USA), who examined how digitalization is reshaping chronic disease management. He emphasized the importance of real-time data integration, security of connected solutions, and the growing role of laboratories in new digital care models. The future of chronic disease follow-up, he argued, depends on a seamless continuum between laboratory medicine, clinical care, and digital tools enabling more proactive, personalized, and efficient patient management.

AI, connected sensors, and quality: enabling proactive chronic care
The first session, chaired by Dr **Hady Elgaddar (**UAE), explored the role of artificial intelligence, connected sensors, and quality assurance in the evolution of chronic disease management, highlighting their direct impact on laboratory medicine and clinical monitoring. Dr **Laila AbdelWareth** (UAE) presented applications of AI in anatomic pathology and laboratory medicine, noting its potential to improve diagnostic accuracy, reduce inter-observer variability, and optimize workflows. She positioned AI as a decision-support tool that can strengthen quality and reliability while supporting healthcare professionals. Dr **Ola Elgaddar** (SA) addressed the integration of wearable devices in chronic disease follow-up, showing how continuous physiological and biological data collection supports remote monitoring, early detection of decompensation, and better personalization of care pathways.
Overall, the session highlighted that the convergence of AI, connected sensors, and quality systems is a key lever for more proactive, secure, and patient-centered digital care models.

Patient empowerment and mobile health
In contemporary health systems, patient empowerment is increasingly central to digital transformation, as emphasized by Dr **Faytha Ahmed.** Dr **Nadine Nehme** (UAE) described how mobile health solutions can enhance patient engagement, improve therapeutic education, support adherence, and strengthen continuity of care. She stressed the need for user-centered design to ensure sustained adoption and clinical effectiveness. Dr **Anirban Ganguly** (IN) focused on AI in Alzheimer's disease, discussing early diagnosis and personalized therapeutic approaches. He demonstrated how advanced analysis of clinical, biological, and cognitive data can identify at-risk profiles earlier and optimize longitudinal follow-up, supporting more proactive and patient-centered care.

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Digital solutions, immunoassays, and value-based pathways
During the networking lunch period, presentations further explored how AI and digital solutions can strengthen patient empowerment and transform clinical management. Dr **Umar Ansari** (UAE) discussed how AI tools can help reduce hospital burden, personalize treatment, and anticipate risk, contributing to more proactive and efficient care. Mr. **Leon Vanderstraeten** (UAE) highlighted patient-centered digital solutions that structure smoother, more coordinated and continuous pathways, improving patient experience and communication across stakeholders. Dr **Ahmed Shehatta** (UAE) presented "The New Era of Immunoassay Testing", describing the evolution of immunoassays toward higher sensitivity, increased automation, and stronger standardization, delivering reliable and reproducible results essential for timely clinical decision-making.
Taken together, these contributions reinforced a key message: the patient is increasingly becoming an active participant in care, supported by digital tools, AI technologies, and trustworthy diagnostics, enabling a more personalized, participatory, and value-oriented medicine.

POCT and interoperability in cardiovascular care
In cardiovascular diseases, where diagnostic speed and continuity of care are decisive, the post–coffee break session chaired by Dr **Laila AbdelWareth** highlighted the strategic role of POCT deployment and digital interoperability. Prof **Damien Gruson** (BE) described how POCT can transform cardiovascular care through rapid diagnosis, immediate decision-making, and shorter therapeutic delays, particularly in acute settings. He emphasized that embedding POCT into structured pathways can improve efficiency while maintaining high standards of quality and safety. Dr **Bernard Gouget** (FR) addressed interoperability challenges in digital systems applied to cardiovascular care, showing that secure, seamless data exchange between laboratories, connected devices, and hospital information systems is essential for continuity, coordination, and optimal use of clinical data. Together, POCT and interoperability were presented as powerful levers for improving responsiveness, coordination, and quality of cardiovascular care.

Interoperability as a foundation for sustainable digital health
In an increasingly digital health environment, Prof **James Nichols** (USA) highlighted data exchange and interoperability as fundamental conditions for effective and sustainable transformation. Integrating digital health solutions into chronic disease management can improve outcomes through better use of data and more coordinated pathways. Dr **Umar Ansari** (UAE) emphasized the importance of interconnected systems to support real-time clinical decision-making. Mr **Alaa Salama** (UAE) described how digital platforms can transform care pathways by enabling secure data sharing across stakeholders and improving overall system efficiency.
The session concluded with a forward-looking reflection on success factors for digital transformation, underscoring that interoperability, data governance, and professional adoption are essential levers to fully realize the potential of digital technologies.

Final Round Table and Conclusion: Powering Tomorrow's Healthcare: The Enablers That Matter
The final round table synthesized the core insights from two days of discussion and positioned them within an international perspective. Across the Emirates, healthcare is undergoing a profound transformation, driven by national vision, scientific ambition, and sustained commitment to innovation. The discussions highlighted a clear shift from reactive care to predictive, preventive, and personalized medicine, responding to major regional health challenges including diabetes, cardiovascular disease, cancer, obesity, and inherited disorders. Participants emphasized the central role of clinicians, clinical biologists, healthcare leaders, and laboratories as the nervous system of modern medicine, connecting biological data, diagnostics, and decision-making from bench to bedside. Integrating genomics, molecular diagnostics, artificial intelligence, and digital health platforms is enabling earlier detection, more precise interventions, and improved patient outcomes. A major focus was data interoperability, accelerating secure exchange between laboratories, hospitals, and home-based devices through internationally recognized approaches, while maintaining trust through robust governance and privacy frameworks. In this context, the Emirates illustrate that

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healthcare innovation is not only about technology, but also about system-level coherence, the ability to operationalize standards, and a sustained capacity to translate vision into clinical impact. As concluded by Bernard Gouget, the future of healthcare will not be defined by technology alone, but by our collective ability to harmonize innovation, governance, and human expertise, always keeping the patient at the centre of care. Powering tomorrow's healthcare means aligning vision, science, and compassion. The success of this inaugural ECCS–IFCC ETD meeting strongly supports the value of continued collaboration and sets the stage for a widely anticipated second edition.

The IFCC group along with some other speakers at the conference

IFCC Visiting Lecturer Programme: Report from IX International Congress and Innovation Technology Expo – Mazatlán Sinaloa, Mexico May 21–23, 2025

By: **Ixchel De La Luz Martínez**
International Affairs CONQUILAB
Colegio Nacional de Químicos Clínicos en Medicina de Laboratorio, A.C.
Mexico

As part of the IX International Congress and Innovation Technology Expo – Mazatlán, organized from May 21–23, 2025 by the **National College of Clinical Chemists in Laboratory Medicine, A.C. (CONQUILAB)**, we had the great honor of receiving, for the first time in our institutional history, an official speaker from the **International Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (IFCC).**
Dr. Félix Hernán Fares-Taie, IFCC Expert and member of the IFCC Speakers Bureau, delivered the workshop entitled "Clinical Biochemistry in the Age of Knowledge and Artificial Intelligence," marking a milestone for our community of congress attendees and affiliates, who received this participation with enthusiasm as a sign of international cooperation and academic growth for our Board.

Conference Content and Focus
Dr. Fares Taie gave a clear, rigorous, and forward-looking presentation on the evolving role of clinical biochemistry in a world increasingly shaped by digital transformation and scientific acceleration.
His talk centered on the strategic implementation of artificial intelligence (AI) in laboratory medicine, while emphasizing the goal: **improving patient outcomes.**
He placed strong emphasis on the role of evidence-based medicine, highlighting that any technological advancement (especially in the application of AI) must be grounded in validated clinical data and rigorous scientific methodology. This ensures that laboratory results translate into safe, reproducible, and ethical clinical decisions.
For Dr. Fares Taie, the clinical laboratory must be seen not as an isolated unit, but as an essential component of the care continuum, capable of contributing directly to diagnosis, monitoring, and prognosis.

Artificial Intelligence with Clinical Purpose
One of the most inspiring elements of the workshop was Dr. Fares Taie's practical and ethical approach to the use of artificial intelligence algorithms designed to create real clinical value.
He stressed that AI, when properly applied and scientifically validated, not only improves diagnostic efficiency and accuracy but also promotes personalized, predictive, and patient-centered healthcare.
His vision integrated technological innovation with clinical practice grounded in evidence, offering a modern, responsible, and patient-focused outlook on the future of laboratory medicine.

Acknowledgements and First Institutional Engagement with IFCC
The **National College of Clinical Chemists in Laboratory Medicine, A.C.** wishes to express its deepest appreciation to the **IFCC Visiting Lecturer Program** for this first official participation in one of our national congresses. Dr. Fares Taie's presence marked the beginning of what we hope will be a long-term, strategic, and fruitful relationship, both for our organization and for the academic and professional development of our members.

CONQUILAB sincerely thank Dr. Félix Hernán Fares Taie for his generosity, clarity, and commitment to knowledge sharing. His activities during the congress not only enriched our scientific program but also left a lasting impression on attendees, inspiring them to envision the laboratory of the future.
We enthusiastically celebrate this first connection with IFCC and look forward to building new opportunities for collaboration, education, and joint participation, always in service of our members and the patients we are privileged to serve.

- CONQUILAB gratefully acknowledges financial support from IFCC in our IX International Conference and Technologic Expo, Mazatlan 2025.

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Welcome Reception at Hotel Playa Mazatlan.

Dr Hernan Fares Taie, IFCC Visiting Lecturer Programme: Clinical biochemistry in the era of knowledge and artificial intelligence.

Workshop: Evidence-Based Laboratory Medicine: What is it and how to apply it to clinical practice.

IFCC Professional Scientific Exchange Programme (PSEP): My experience at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, Department of Laboratory Medicine, Houston Texas, US

By **Ram Vinod Mahato,** PhD
Tribhuvan University Institute of Medicine
Research Directorate
Kirtipur, Kathmandu, Nepal

INTRODUCTION

I am grateful to the International Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (IFCC) for the prestigious award PSEP Fellowship at MD Anderson Cancer Center. This exchange program offered me advanced and comprehensive exposure to high-complexity clinical laboratory operations and state-of-the-art diagnostic technologies, significantly enhancing my professional competencies in laboratory medicine.

PROFESSIONAL SCIENTIFIC EXCHANGE

The programme commenced with experience in phlebotomy, specimen collection, accessioning, and processing, emphasizing critical quality and safety considerations during early phases of sample testing. It was followed by extensive training on fully automated core laboratory systems, particularly the Roche Cobas 8100 and 8000 platforms, for routine and specialized Chemistry and Immunoassays with a focus on instrument operation, calibration, quality control, maintenance, and troubleshooting. Structured practical and theoretical training was received in multiple diagnostic areas such as: Urinalysis using automated urine analyzer AUTION MAX™ AX-4030 and DxU 850m Iris, Blood gas analysis by ABL 90 and ABL 800 FLEX PLUS Analyzer, Beckman Coulter, UniCel Dxl 600 Immunoassay system using chemiluminescence for measurement of EPO, Tg, TgAb, TPOAb, tumor markers, vitamins and Point-of-Care Testing, and immunoturbidimetric procedures.
I also learned to operate Thermos Fisher Optilite for measurement of IgG, IgA, IgM, free light chains Kappa, and Lambda, Prealbumin, Beta-2-Microglobulin, and Haptoglobin, Abbott, Alinity i for Therapeutic Drug Monitoring (such as-Tacrolimus and Sirolimus) and infectious disease markers, Immunoassay platforms such as protein electrophoresis by Cappilarys2 SEBIA Flex piercing, 24-hour urine concentration methods, Serum and Urine Immunofixation electrophoresis by SEBIA HYDRASYS2 Scan Focusing, Cryocrit for cryoglobulin detection, Liquid Chromatography-Tandem Mass Spectrometry (LC-MS/MS) and SIMADZU LC/MS 8045 for Busulfan drug, Flow cytometry for bone marrow and body fluid specimens and cytogenetics, Coagulation profile, Complete Blood Count, slide staining and Reading by Sysmex automated Hematology analyzer. Training covered pre-analytical, analytical, and post-analytical phases, for a systematic understanding of laboratory workflows and quality assurance processes.

In addition, I observed academic and translational research activities and gained insight into specialized test menus. Interaction with international laboratory professionals facilitated the exchange of scientific perspectives and benchmarking of global laboratory practices.

CULTURAL EXPERIENCE

Training coincided with two most celebrated cultural events: Thanksgiving and Christmas 2025. Staff were very active in organizing get-togethers. Great Christmas party offered a mix of festive lunches and I really enjoyed the gathering. I learned that they always have celebrations like in National holidays, National laboratory week, New year and Diwali. I had the opportunity to visit my friends at Tulane University, New Orleans and University of Alabama at Birmingham during holidays. The cultural absorption, combined with the friendliness and warmth of the community made my stay truly outstanding.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to extend my deepest thanks to Prof. Dr. Qing H. Meng, Director, Clinical Chemistry Laboratories, Department of Laboratory Medicine for his exemplary unwavering guidance. I am truly indebted to all technical staff, Judith Johnson and other administrative staff for their generous hospitality and ongoing encouragement. My sincere appreciation also extends to PSEP Committee and Silvia Cardinale, whose commitment to global learning and collaboration has been instrumental in the success of this programme.

I am grateful to Vice President Prof. Diane C. Badurka, Medical Director Prof. Jun Zou, for their leadership and support. Special appreciation is extended to Prof. Dr. Beverly C. Handy and Dr. Lechuang Chen for their cooperation during my training.

CONCLUSION

This experience has strengthened my diagnostic capabilities, enhanced understanding of laboratory automation and quality management, and has prepared me to implement advanced practices in my home institution. I strongly encourage laboratory professionals worldwide to take advantage of this unique opportunity.

Clinical Chemistry Core Lab staff with Director Prof. Dr. Meng and me

Prof. Dr. Meng and me in Clinical Chemistry Lab

Special Chemistry Staff Members

Loading Samples in the Cobas Roche 8001 system

Milan, 22 January, 2026

To: Presidents and IFCC/EFLM National Representatives of
European National Societies of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine

EUROMEDLAB 2029 – INVITATION TO BID

Dear Colleagues,

As you are aware, the EUROMEDLAB conference is the premier event in European laboratory medicine, held every two years. Last year's conference was successfully held in Brussels, Belgium.

IFCC and EFLM are now pleased to invite formal bids from European National Societies to host the EUROMEDLAB 2029. The selection of the host city for EUROMEDLAB 2029 will be made by the respective IFCC and EFLM Executive Boards (Please see Guidelines Rev. 18 document in attachment).

All applications should be submitted using the enclosed from B, and must be received by **March 31th , 2026** at following email addresses: ifcc@ifcc.org and eflm@eflm.eu.

We look forward to receiving your bids for the 2029 EUROMEDLAB Congress of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine!

With best wishes,

Tomris Ozben
President, IFCC

Tomas Zima
President, EFLM

Päivi Laitinen
Chair, Congresses and Conferences Committee, IFCC

Daria Pasalic
Chair, Education and Profession Division, EFLM

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IFCC: the people

Farewell to Dr Osama Najjar, Arab Federation of Clinical Biology (AFCB) Regional Representative on the IFCC Executive Board

Dr. Osama Najjar

It is with profound sadness and deep sorrow that the IFCC shares the sudden passing of **Dr. Osama Najjar** on January 5th, 2026, while serving as the Regional Federation Representative at the IFCC Executive Board, and Past President of the Arab Federation of Clinical Biology (AFCB), President of the Palestinian Medical Technology Association (PMTA), and Deputy Assistant of Allied Health Professions and Blood Banks at the Ministry of Health (MOH), Palestine.

We publish here the words of affection and memories of the many colleagues around the word that have known and worked with him.

Dear Friends and Colleagues,
It is with profound sadness and deep sorrow that I share the sudden passing of Dr. Osama Najjar on January 5th, 2026. He was a very close friend and a valued colleague for many years, serving with distinction as the Regional Federation Representative and Past President of the Arab Federation of Clinical Biology (AFCB), President of the Palestinian Medical Technology Association (PMTA), and Deputy Assistant of Allied Health Professions and Blood Banks at the Ministry of Health (MOH), Palestine. This is a devastating loss for all of us and for the global scientific community. We have lost not only an exceptional scientist and leader, but also a remarkable friend and colleague whose intellectual brilliance was matched by his kindness, generosity, and unwavering commitment to our profession.

On behalf of the International Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (IFCC), I extend our most sincere and heartfelt condolences to Professor Najjar's family, friends, and colleagues. He was an outstanding scientist, a respected leader, and a passionate advocate for laboratory medicine. Throughout his career, he embodied the highest values of our profession through his professionalism, integrity, dedication, and humanity. The loss of such a scientist and friend has left our hearts truly broken.

Dr. Najjar played a pivotal role in advancing laboratory medicine through his leadership and vision. He organized numerous high-quality scientific meetings that promoted innovation, advanced knowledge, and brought together leading experts from across regions. Through these efforts, he fostered meaningful collaborations and helped translate laboratory science into tangible progress for healthcare systems and patients. He was dynamic, energetic, and forward-looking, yet always open to dialogue, eager to exchange ideas, and generous in sharing his vision and projects with colleagues worldwide.

His presence, contributions, and bright ideas were highly appreciated at the IFCC Executive Board. I will never forget his active engagement, his thoughtful input, and his genuine collegial spirit. His absence will be deeply felt, and he will be profoundly missed.

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Our community has lost an exceptional scientist who championed the development of laboratory medicine in emerging and innovative fields, a talented and insightful leader, and a colleague whose warmth and enthusiasm inspired all who worked with him. Those of us fortunate enough to know him personally, and to be influenced by his passion and professionalism, will remember him with great respect and gratitude for all that he gave to our field and to the international scientific community. We share the deep sorrow of this loss with his family, friends, and colleagues, and we extend our sincerest condolences to his entire family. My thoughts are with his loved ones during this immensely difficult time.

May his soul rest in eternal peace.

Sincerely,
Tomris Ozben
IFCC President

Tribute to Osama Najjar

By **Prof. Christa M. Cobbaert**, IFCC Scientific Division Chair
Clinical Chemist Head of the Department of Clinical Chemistry
Leiden University Medical Center
Leiden - The Netherlands

Osama Najjar will be remembered as a man of principle, vision, and quiet strength—someone whose leadership was rooted not in position alone, but in character.

As AFBC regional representative at the IFCC EB he carried his responsibilities with integrity, patience, and an unwavering commitment to service and patient care. He believed deeply in the power of institutions to uplift people, and in the responsibility of leaders to act with fairness, transparency, and humanity. His work reflected a rare balance: strategic clarity combined with genuine care for those around him.

As chairman of the Health Professions Unions in Palestine and being invited for lecturing during the 12th International Palestinian Conference of Laboratory Medicine (IPCLM 12) entitled: “Shaping the Future of Medicine by Laboratory Medicine” in August 2023, I experienced the intense solidarity that Osama achieved during the Palestinian Medical Technology Association (PMTA) conference. PMTA is a professional, non-governmental body for all professional technicians and laboratory medicine specialists in Palestine. It has 11 sub-committees with 7000 members.

Beyond his professional role, Osama Najjar embodied values that resonated deeply within the local society: resilience, dedication, and faith in collective progress despite adversity. He understood that leadership is not about recognition, but about responsibility, and he bore that responsibility with humility and honor.

His sudden passing leaves a profound absence. Yet his legacy endures in the institutions he strengthened, the people he mentored, and the example he set for future generations of leaders. His contributions will continue to shape the AFCB and PMTA and their mission, and his memory will remain a source of guidance and inspiration.

We honor Osama Najjar not only for what he achieved, but for who he was: a committed leader, a trusted colleague, and a dignified human being.

May his memory be a blessing, and may his legacy continue to serve all those who believe in his vision.

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Our Final Tribute to Osama, our Friend.

By **Dr Myrna Germanos**, Lebanese Society of Clinical Biology / Syndicat des Biologistes du Liban (SDBLB) President and IFCC National Representative.
Dr Christian Haddad, President Arab Federation of Clinical Biology (AFCB).

We received with deep sadness the news of the passing this morning of Dr. Osama Ahmad Najjar, President of the PMTA (Palestinian Medical Technologists Association) and Assistant Director at the Ministry of Health. His heart had faltered several times before, yet he was accustomed to brushing off those threats, just as he often laughed at life itself.

Always optimistic despite the challenges faced by his country, he carried within him a constant hope of embarking on new projects. He belonged to that rare category of courageous and resilient builders—unafraid to take risks, and to whom success seemed to naturally follow. Above all, he had many sincere friends, among whom we were honored to count ourselves.

He dreamed like a child, with a smile and a cigarette on his lips, yet he knew how to bring people together and inspire those around him. He created enterprises that will endure beyond him and established plans and structures where none existed. He founded the PMTA, one of the most important associations in the Arab world—not only in terms of membership, but also for its achievements and contributions to clinical and biological research. Its most recent scientific congress brought together more than 12,000 participants, both in person and virtually.

As head of the Arab Federation of Clinical Biology (AFBC), he exceeded expectations, developing and implementing ambitious plans to elevate the federation to new horizons. He united countries that were geographically and culturally diverse around a shared goal: promoting science, sharing knowledge, and strengthening the position of AFBC member countries on the international stage. He placed particular emphasis on young scientists, repeatedly affirming that they were the builders of tomorrow, and actively involved them in numerous programs and initiatives.

More recently, Dr. Najjar represented AFBC countries within the International Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (IFCC), serving on its executive bodies. He worked tirelessly to strengthen ties between communities, firmly believing that progress could only be achieved through collaboration across nations and cultures.

Dr. Najjar was a recognized specialist in his field, a university professor, and a respected international leader. He recently led an innovative project focused on the screening of congenital hematological disorders, supported by a broad international network of collaborators. He worked relentlessly to place clinical biology at the heart of diagnosis and medical treatment, and to promote the essential role of the medical biologist throughout the patient care pathway.

His strong personality left a lasting mark on all who knew him. He defended his convictions with courage and held fast to a vision of a more just world, where everyone would have their place in the sun. Sadly, he left us before seeing even the faint outline of that world.
His passing affects us all deeply. Those of us who had the privilege of knowing him over the years—of celebrating his bold and consistently successful projects, and of smiling with him at life's ironies—will remember his laughter, his humanity, and the image of a persevering man with both national and international vision, resilient despite difficult circumstances. His death represents a tremendous loss for the IFCC, the AFBC, and the international laboratory medicine community, but above all for Palestine, his beloved country.

His legacy will continue to inspire present and future generations of professionals dedicated to advancing medical biology, regardless of circumstances and despite the challenges of time.

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Peace upon your pure soul, dr Dr. Osama Al-Najjar

By Dr. **AbdlSalam Sarari**
Palestinian Medical Technology Association (PMTA) Coordinator

On January 5, 2026, Palestine turned a luminous page in the history of professional and syndical work with the passing of Dr. Osama Al-Najjar, the founding president of the Medical Laboratory Sciences Syndicate. His departure was not merely the loss of an individual, but the closing of a demanding founding chapter and the beginning of a true test for the sustainability of the great legacy he left behind.

As a friend who knew him for more than three decades, I write with profound grief and sorrow to introduce those who did not know this man—an exceptional strategic mind who early on understood that medical laboratory science is not simply about tubes and tests, but a pillar of national health security that requires strict governance and meticulous regulation.

From Chaos to Institution: The Philosophy of Governance

Before Dr. Osama's Al-Najjar era, the laboratory sector suffered from fragmentation and scattered efforts. His vision centered on transforming the profession from a mere "job" into an institutional identity. He carried a weighty question: "How can we build a laboratory system that meets global standards under occupation?"

The answer, in his belief, lays in governance, which he built upon three strategic pillars:
Unified Authority:
He fought tirelessly to unify the laboratory body under the umbrella of the Medical Laboratory Sciences Syndicate as both shield and guardian, so that professionals would become part of a single body protected by law.

Quality as a Creed:
He enforced quality control programs, firmly believing that the Palestinian citizen deserves diagnostic accuracy on par with the world's leading capitals, thereby strengthening trust in the national health system.

Investment in Human Capital:
He linked professional practice to continuous education, ensuring that Palestinian laboratory professionals could keep pace with the latest global technologies despite siege and restriction.

A Fierce Defender of the "White Army"
For Dr. Osama Al-Najjar, governance was never about restriction it was about protection.
He waged tough syndical battles to improve financial conditions and secure safe working environments against biological hazards. He reclaimed leadership status for laboratory professionals, transforming the profession from one that worked "behind the scenes" into a frontline force confronting epidemics and disease.

A Living Legacy: An Enduring School
Dr. Osama Al-Najjar has departed in body, but he left behind a system. His fingerprints remain etched in unified protocols, regulatory frameworks, and the stature the syndicate achieved locally and across the Arab world.
True loyalty to this steadfast leader is not expressed through elegy alone, but through preserving the governance achievements he established and continuing to develop the laboratory sector with the same passion and integrity.

Peace upon your pure soul, and peace upon your legacy one that will live on with every test result that saves a human life.

"Indeed, we belong to God, and to Him we shall return.

Article continued on the next page

Farewell, Osama.

By **Dr Ghassan Shannan**
Arab Federation of Clinical Biology, AFCB
International Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine, IFCC

It is with deep sorrow and profound sadness that we mourn the passing of our dear colleague and friend, Osama, whose loss is felt deeply by all who had the privilege of knowing and working with him. Osama was not only a dedicated and valued member of the Arab Federation of Clinical Biology and the International Federation of Clinical Chemistry & Laboratory Medicine, but also a person of integrity, kindness, and generosity. His commitment to excellence, willingness to support others, and passion for their work left a lasting impact on colleagues, students, and friends alike.
Beyond professional achievements, Osama will be remembered for his warm spirit, humility, and genuine care for those around him. He had a remarkable ability to inspire, encourage, and bring people together, creating an environment of respect and friendship.
His passing leaves a void that cannot be filled, but his legacy will continue to live on through the lives he touched and the contributions he made. We extend our deepest condolences to Osama's family, loved ones, and all who are grieving this great loss.
May Osama rest in peace, and may we honour his memory by carrying forward the values and dedication he exemplified throughout his life.

In Memoriam: Dr. Osama Ahmad Najjar (1967–2026) a man who lived by his ideals and never compromised them.

By: Dr **Bernard GOUGET**
Chair, IFCC TF History, IFCC-ETD EC

It is with deep sadness that we learned of the passing, on the morning of 5 January 2026, of Dr Osama Ahmad Najjar, a distinguished laboratory medicine specialist from Palestine and an internationally respected professional leader, following a sudden stroke.

This loss has profoundly affected all those who had the privilege of working closely with Dr Najjar, particularly after the shared success of the recent Congress of the Lebanese Syndicate of Medical Biologists held in Beirut at the end of September 2025. His leadership, vision for laboratory medicine in Palestine, and unwavering commitment were deeply appreciated by all participants.

Dr Najjar was a distinguished laboratory medicine specialist, university professor, and an internationally respected professional leader. He held a master's degree in clinical laboratory sciences and was actively engaged in advanced academic work in hematology. His professional life was entirely dedicated to strengthening laboratory medicine as a cornerstone of quality healthcare and patient safety.

At the national level, Dr Najjar played a central role in structuring and unifying laboratory medicine in Palestine. He served for many years as President of the Palestinian Laboratory Medicine Syndicate, contributing decisively to professional organization, quality improvement, and the development of modern laboratory infrastructures and technical platforms within the healthcare system.

At the regional and international levels, his contribution was outstanding. In 2018, Dr Najjar was appointed President of the Arab Federation of Clinical Biology (AFCB). In this capacity, he demonstrated exceptional leadership, notably during the AFCB Congress held in Ramallah, Palestine, in 2018, which he organized with remarkable success. This congress marked a significant step forward, highlighting the integration of new laboratory technologies, innovation, and the strong involvement of young laboratory professionals from across the region.

Article continued on the next page

Dr Najjar also represented the State of Palestine within the International Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (IFCC), including service within its executive structures. Through these responsibilities, he worked tirelessly to strengthen collaboration between the AFCB and the IFCC and to facilitate the integration of Palestinian and Arab laboratory professionals into the global scientific community.

A strong advocate for education and capacity building, Dr Najjar actively supported young laboratory specialists, encouraging their participation in IFCC and AFCB activities, scientific programs, and training initiatives. He firmly believed that sustained investment in people, knowledge, and professional ethics was essential to ensuring high-quality diagnostic services and optimal patient care.

Beyond his many responsibilities, Dr Najjar remained a person close to people, generous in spirit and deeply committed to human values. He lived in accordance with his convictions: upright, dedicated, and steadfast. His dignity was the center of his life and sense of responsibility guided his actions, and his example demonstrated that professional excellence is inseparable from service, integrity, and perseverance.

His passing represents a great loss for the IFCC, the AFCB, and the international laboratory medicine community. His legacy will continue to inspire current and future generations of professionals dedicated to advancing laboratory medicine under all circumstances.
May he be remembered with respect and gratitude for his lifelong service to science, healthcare, and the laboratory medicine community, as well as for his principled and unwavering commitment to the Palestinian people, a rare model of a man who lived his ideals fully and never compromised them.

May Almighty God grant him mercy, forgiveness, and eternal peace.

With very kind regards and deepest respect,

Bernard GOUGET
Chair, IFCC TF History, IFCC-ETD EC

Dr Osama Ahmad Najjar, here portrayed in the middle of photo, at one of the many meetings he promoted for strengthening the collaboration between the AFCB and the IFCC.

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COLABIOCLI
Confederación Latinoamericana
de Bioquímica Clínica

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2024 – 2026

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Nota 001/2026

Panamá, 05 de enero de 2026

Professor Dr. Tomris Ozben
President of the IFCC
and Members of the Executive
Board Milan, Italy

Asunto: Condolence Note on the Passing of Dr. Osama Najjar

Dear Members of the Board and the IFCC Secretariat,

Please accept our respectful and sincere greetings.

On behalf of the **Executive Committee – Board of Directors of the Latin American Confederation of Clinical Biochemistry (COLABIOCLI)**, we wish to express our deepest sorrow at the passing of **Dr. Osama Najjar**, distinguished member of the IFCC Board representing the Arab Federation of Clinical Biology (AFCB).

The international clinical laboratory community has lost a professional of outstanding career, strong institutional commitment, and valuable contributions to the development and strengthening of our discipline at the global level. His human, scientific, and professional legacy will remain a lasting reference for our profession.

We respectfully request that our most sincere condolences be extended to his family, friends, and close colleagues, whom we accompany in solidarity during this time of profound sorrow.

Please accept the assurances of our highest consideration and esteem.

Sincerely,

Dr. Julio Nieto R.
Presidente COLABIOCLI

John Jairo Córdoba
Secretario General de COLABIOCLI

Osama: in Memoriam

Dr. Al-Najjar was a respected professional in the field of clinical chemistry, and his loss is deeply felt by colleagues and those who had the privilege of working with him.

Dr. Al-Najjar was a man who fulfilled his mission with exceptional professionalism and an extremely high scientific standard. Dr. Al-Najjar is a man whose absence will be felt in international forums even before local ones within the field of laboratory medicine. With distinction, he worked to build a global scientific laboratory network that contributed significantly to positioning laboratory medicine at a highly respected international level. May he rest in eternal peace.

Dr Rana K. Khanafsa
Head of Lab at Jerusalem Directorate / Ministry of Health

Palestinian, Arab, and international biology has lost one of its most fervent defenders. As for me, I have lost a great friend.

Pr. Hedhili Abderrazek
Pr Hospital-universitaire en Toxicologie
Chargé de mission auprès du cabinet du ministre de la Santé
Directeur du laboratoire de Recherche Toxicologie -Environnement LR12SP07
Membre de l'Académie de Pharmacie de France
Expert WHO ICSC
Vice President AFCB

I first met Osama Najjar 20 years ago when I first became a member of the Education and Management Executive Division of the IFCC in 2004. He was a very active member of the Palestine Medical Laboratory Association and was active in IFCC circles. Later when I became Chair of the IFCC-Abbott Visiting Lectureship programme, Osama applied for IFCC Visiting Lectureships to Palestine on a regular basis. More recently, when I became Chair of the IFCC Nominations Committee in 2021, he was a member of the Nominations Committee and I greatly value the support I received from him and the active role he played as a member of the Nominations Committee. He resigned from the Nominations Committee in 2022 to stand for election as the Regional Federation Representative for the Arab Federation of Clinical Biology on the IFCC Executive Board, a position he was elected to for the term of office 2023 to 2025.
I am very sad to learn of his passing. He was a mild-mannered gentleman who had a warm smile and always had kind and encouraging words for others. He contributed significantly to the field of clinical biochemistry and laboratory medicine and our profession both in Palestine and internationally and will be deeply missed by his family, friends and colleagues.

Prof. Leslie Lai
Chair IFCC Nominations Committee
Department of Medicine
Gleneagles Kuala Lumpur
Kuala Lumpur - Malaysia

On behalf of the **Canadian Society of Clinical Chemists (CSCC)**, we extend our heartfelt condolences to the family, friends, and colleagues of Dr. Osama Al-Najjar. His passing is a great loss to our profession. Dr. Al-Najjar served with distinction on the IFCC Executive Board, where his leadership and collegial spirit left a lasting impact. Many Canadian colleagues valued the opportunity to work with him and appreciated his wisdom and dedication to advancing laboratory medicine worldwide. He will be deeply missed, and his contributions will not be forgotten. May he rest in peace.

ADLM recognizes the tremendous loss of Dr. Osama Al-Najjar and express our sympathies to his family, friends, and many colleagues who are mourning his passing. His leadership and service touched many in our laboratory medicine community and will have a lasting impact on the profession and global health.

CUBRA

Confederación Unificada Bioquímica de la República Argentina

PERSONERÍA JURÍDICA RESOLUCIÓN I.G.J. 358467| Representaciones Nacionales:

IFCC
International Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine

COLABIOCLI
Confederación Latinoamericana de Bioquímica Clínica

Buenos Aires, 5th January 2026

Dear Board of Directors
International Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (IFCC)

On behalf and in representation of the Confederación Unificada Bioquímica de la República Argentina (CUBRA), we address you with profound sorrow to express our most sincere condolences on the irreparable loss of Dr. Osama Najjar, member of the IFCC Board representing the Arab Federation.

From CUBRA, we pray for his eternal rest and stand in solidarity with his family, loved ones, and colleagues during this difficult time.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Diego Sebastián Martín
Secretario CUBRA

Dr. Enrique Humberto Ocampos
Presidente CUBRA

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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.

The IFCC is inviting nominations for following positions:

Emerging Technologies Division Executive Committee (ETD-EC) - 1 member position
The Emerging Technologies Division announces a call for nominations for one member within the Executive Committee.
Replies should be sent to the IFCC Office (colli-lanzi@ifcc.org) by 15 February 2026.
Click here to download the Call for nominations letter.

Scientific Division Executive Committee (SD-EC) - 1 member position
The Scientific Division announces a call for nominations for one member within the Executive Committee.
Replies should be sent to the IFCC Office (elisa.fossati@ifcc.org) by 27 February 2026.
Click here to download the Call for nominations letter and click here for the application form.

Committee on Public Relations (C-PR) - 1 member position
The Communication and Publications Division (CPD) announces a call for nominations for one member within the Committee on Public Relations (C-PR)
Replies should be sent to the IFCC Office (colli-lanzi@ifcc.org) by 28 February 2026.
Click here to download the Call for nominations letter.

Congresses and Conferences Committee (C-CC) - 1 member position in the Asia Pacific region and 1 member position in the Latin America region
The Congresses and Conferences Committee (C-CC) announces a call for nominations for one member from the Asia Pacific region.
Replies should be sent to the IFCC Office (cardinale@ifcc.org) by 28 February 2026.
Click here to download the Call for nominations letter for the Asia Pacific region.
Click here to download the Call for nominations letter for the Latin America region.

IFCC Calls for Interest

Task Force Environmental Impact of Laboratory Medicine (TF-EILM)
The Task Force on Environmental Impact of Laboratory Medicine announces a call for interest for Corresponding Members.
Replies should be sent to the IFCC Office (elisa.fossati@ifcc.org) by 20 February 2026.
Click here to download the Call for interest letter.

FOR UPDATES ABOUT IFCC CALL FOR NOMINATIONS VISIT https://ifcc.org/about/ifcc-calls-for-nominations/
For any further information on nominations, please refer to your National or Corporate Representative - contacts are available here.

A New Voice for Innovation: Serafeim Karathanos Joins IFCC ETD-EC as Young Scientist

Bernard Gouget, Damien Gruson, IFCC ETD-EC and **Alexander Haliassos,** IFCC treasurer

The IFCC Emerging Technologies Division (ETD) is proud to welcome Mr. Serafeim Karathanos, MSc, as a Young Scientist member of the ETD Executive Committee, bringing fresh energy and a strong innovative vision to the Division's mission of shaping the future of laboratory medicine.

Serafeim Karathanos

Mr. Karathanos is a dynamic young scientist with growing international recognition in flow cytometry, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, and other cutting-edge technologies that are transforming clinical laboratories. He currently serves as scientific staff member in the External Quality Assessment (EQA) department of ESEAP, the ISO 17043-accredited Greek EQA provider and a non-profit initiative of the Greek Society of Clinical Chemistry–Clinical Biochemistry. In this role, he actively contributes to the design, organization, and evaluation of EQA schemes, supporting laboratories in achieving excellence and compliance with international quality standards.

Working under the guidance of Dr. Alexander Haliassos, Serafeim Karathanos has been deeply involved in the development of innovative, data-driven quality strategies, exploring the use of digital tools and AI-based approaches to enhance performance monitoring and continuous improvement. Through ESEAP's participation in EQALM, he has presented oral and poster communications at international meetings and collaborated with experts on key topics such as digitalization of EQA, data analytics, integration of emerging technologies, and cybersecurity in laboratory systems.

In parallel, his activity in a private clinical laboratory provides hands-on experience in advanced diagnostics, particularly in flow cytometry for the detection and classification of hematological malignancies. This dual engagement, combining real-world clinical practice with high-level quality management, gives him a comprehensive understanding of the challenges laboratories face when translating innovation into routine practice across the pre-analytical, analytical, and post-analytical phases.
Recognized for his technical-scientific excellence, enthusiasm, and forward-thinking mindset, S. Karathanos embodies a new generation of laboratory professionals who bridge science, technology, and quality. His strong interest in AI-driven decision support, digital transformation, and secure laboratory information systems highlights his potential to actively contribute to ETD initiatives, including the development of guidelines, educational resources, and quality frameworks for the responsible implementation of emerging technologies.

With his energy, collaborative spirit, and clear commitment to innovation, Serafeim Karathanos is poised to become a strong voice within the ETD, contributing to IFCC's strategic vision and to the advancement of laboratory medicine worldwide.

Voices of our Corporate Members

New Value Proposition for IFCC Corporate Members

Corporate Members (CMs) have long been associated with the IFCC. Four companies for example were recognized in 2025 for legacy memberships that exceed 45 years. Today, nearly 60 companies are now associated with the IFCC, with corporate member support continuing to thrive.

Many leaders widely recognize the impact of corporate members on the IFCC through their valued financial commitments. Often overlooked, but not undervalued, are other meaningful contributions from corporate members, including valued leadership roles across IFCC divisions and further opportunities for expanded partnerships.

Following a recent communication from the Emerging Technologies Division was a call for action for corporate members to enhance their IFCC partnership and be more widely associated for their collaborative vs transactional engagements. That proposal was addressed by the IFCC Task Force of Corporate Members (IFCC TF-CMs) and most recently, reviewed at a January 2026 meeting of all corporate members.

With unanimous approval, the new value proposition of corporate members to the IFCC is as follows: IFCC Corporate Members are strategic partners, bringing specialized knowledge, continuous innovation, and engaged global networks, that drive enhancements in laboratory medicine. Corporate member collaborations contribute to shaping standards, enriching education, and accelerating solutions that enable better patient health.

Representative examples across each tier can be found below and on the updated website for the IFCC Corporate Members.

Specialized Knowledge	Continuous Innovation	Engaged Global Networks
• In-depth product development knowledge • Regulatory subject matter expertise • Governance and compliance expertise • On-market product surveillance	• Emerging technologies • Scientific publications • Best practices • Exhibitor showcases • Ideation roundtables	• Timely, credible medical and scientific education • Scientific program diversity • Global speaker engagement • Product education • Patient accessibility

“This new value proposition for the IFCC Corporate Members was a significant undertaking and a collaborative effort. We had active engagement from corporate representatives across the IFCC divisions with recent validation from more than 2 dozen active companies,” comments Tricia Ravalico, Corporate Representative to the IFCC Executive Board.

“One of the things I like most about this value proposition,” comments Yan Liu, Corporate Representative for the Emerging Technology Division (ETD), “is the focus on strategic partnerships.” “Well done,” concludes Professor Nader Rifai, President-elect of IFCC on a recent collaborative call. “Corporate Members are valued contributors with vital and unique contributions across programs. This value proposition is an exciting first step on our shared journey to advance excellence in laboratory medicine for better healthcare worldwide.”

“We are very pleased with the collaboration with our Corporate Members. One of the key priorities of the IFCC Strategic Action Plan (2024-2026) is to strengthen communication and collaboration between IFCC and in vitro diagnostic (IVD) companies, with the aim of improving laboratory medicine outcomes worldwide. This successful partnership clearly demonstrates that our strategy is effective and encourages us to continue in this direction to further develop these collaborations. The strong engagement of the IVD industry was also evident at the IFCC General Conference held in Bruges, where a dedicated session addressed the future of the in vitro diagnostics sector and explored

Article continued on the next page

partnership models for integrating emerging technologies into medical laboratories, highlighting the shared value and mutual benefits of this collaboration," concluded Professor Tomris Özben, IFCC President.

On demand content is available at this link

Spotlight on IFCC Corporate Members
Meet Tricia Ravalico, Corporate Representative to the IFCC Executive Board

Tricia Ravalico

How long have you been associated with IFCC?
My first exposure to the IFCC began over 15 years ago with the creation of an IFCC Task Force on the Clinical Application of Cardiac Biomarkers. I was leading numerous medical research studies for Abbott's cardiac assays at that time, so I had strong overlapping interest in this area. Many industry leaders were involved from other companies as well, enabling diverse, unbiased and well-needed educational efforts, including tools and events. The Task Force was so successful that it eventually became a formal IFCC committee under the Education and Management Division with sustained, strong industry involvement even today.

What inspires you to get more involved?
One of the many powerful benefits of the IFCC is to advance laboratory medicine across the globe. There are so many valued committees and working groups that help achieve this goal across each division that it can be a daunting task to know how and where to begin, especially for new corporate members. Once exposed, however, to any of the IFCC initiative, additional opportunistic paths emerge. In those moments, it is less about being inspired to get 'more involved', but rather a passion to continue the momentum.
I remember, for example, receiving an email from the IFCC office when there was an open position for a corporate representative on the Communications and Publications Division (CPD). I was immediately drawn to the opportunity because the CPD has a mission to elevate the value of laboratory medicine through social media, IFCC eNews and the eJIFCC. As a champion of laboratory medicine, I have a similar mission and was honored to eventually serve the CPD for 6 years.

What do you like most about your involvement with IFCC?
One of most rewarding aspects of the IFCC is teamwork. As chair of the IFCC Task Force of Corporate Members (IFCC TF-CMs), I have had the privilege of working beside passionate representatives of other IFCC Corporate Members. While our companies are of course competitive, many of our goals, regulatory limitations and opportunities are all very similar. By putting our differences aside, we can work together for the betterment of progress and patient care. The comradery that I have witnessed has been priceless and productive. We have been able to learn from one another, and trust in the process. Together, we have accomplished unprecedented initiatives including multiple, cross-company educational events, joint industry position statements, and foundational brainstorming related to challenge areas of joint interest. I am so proud to be one of many corporate members associated with the IFCC and am genuinely honored to represent the corporate member voice to the IFCC executive board.

What advice do you have for other Corporate Members?
I want to begin first with a thank you. All companies who are corporate members to the IFCC have a passion to advance the field of laboratory medicine with the International Federation for Clinical Chemistry and Laboraotry Medicine in the world. Second, I want to remind all corporate

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members that involvement is the key to progress. Being a member of the IFCC is a first step. It enables access to vast opportunities, but to take advantage of those opportunities requires engagement. Become involved in a working group and/or committee that aligns with your passion. Read the emails that come from the IFCC office when Corporate Representatives are being requested for specific teams and circulate those requests within your companies. Not every committee may be of interest to you, but they may be of interest to someone else. It is our role as corporate representatives to distribute and act upon information that we receive. The more people we have involved across each effort, the more powerful each effort can be.

Is there anything else you would like to add before we close this interview?
I read a passage recently that spoke about the paradox of life; how working out can make us feel weak until it makes us feel stronger; how learning new things can make us feel dumb before it makes us wiser, and/or how facing fears can be terrifying until it makes us brave. We have to be comfortable in the uncomfortable to grow. The vastness of the IFCC gives all corporate members that chance. I know how daunting it can feel as a beginner, but the reality is the IFCC wants and needs the involvement of corporate members. Some committees and working groups for example do not even have any corporate representatives on their teams. It is incumbent upon all corporate members as champions of the IFCC and laboratory medicine to help where and how we can.

And know this... once you begin, it can hard to stop... and not because we can't stop, but because we don't want to. Being part of IFCC is incredibly rewarding and I hope this interview inspires more corporate representatives to be involved.

Contribute to IFCC eNews

Celebrating Heart Health: Advancing Wellness Through Laboratory-Enabled Best Practices.

Each February, Heart Month serves as a powerful reminder of the global burden of cardiovascular disease (CVD) and the urgent need for transformative approaches that improve prevention, diagnosis, and care. A fun source of inspiration can come from the UNIVANTS of Healthcare Excellence award program. The UNIVANTS of Healthcare Excellence award program is a global, prestigious award program led in partnership through Abbott, International Federation of Clinical Chemistry (IFCC), Association for Diagnostics and Laboratory Medicine (ADLM), Modern Healthcare, National Association for Healthcare Quality (NAHQ), European Health Management Association (EHMA), Institute of Health Economics (IHE), Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS). The award program recognizes, amplifies, and celebrates best practices in healthcare that are facilitated by laboratory medicine and cross-functional collaboration. Within the diverse integrated clinical care initiatives recognized and celebrated each year, many of the recognized best practices stand out for their direct impact on heart health, offering important lessons for healthcare systems striving to reduce cardiovascular risk and save lives.

One such site is Kaiser Permanente Southern California, and their SureNet initiative which improves the management of patients with high low density lipoprotein cholesterol (LDL-C). The initiative utilizes electronic health record (EHR)–directed algorithms to scan electronic health records and identify adults with a recent LDL-C result ≥190 mg/dL and no evidence of any statin fill within the prior 2–6 months. Subsequently, high-intensity statin orders, along with follow-up lipid panel orders are automatically generated for primary care provider approval. Primary care providers are alerted of pending statin and lab orders by care managers, and once approved, letters are sent to each patient with reminders to retrieve their statin medication and to complete follow-up lab tests.

This cross-functional and collaborative effort has improved the likelihood patients will fill their prescription by 32% (relative increase), patients are now 41% more likely to complete follow-up testing, and most importantly, 21% more likely to lower their LDL-C. An important success factor for this initiative is that clinicians did not find that it substantially increased their workload, while even suggesting more education to enable enhanced awareness.

Interested in learning more about this best practice, please visit here, with additional standout practices related to heart health and more, available here.

As we observe Heart Month, the cardiovascular focused best practices recognized by the UNIVANTS of Healthcare Excellence program offer timely and practical insights into how integrated care teams can transform cardiovascular care. By learning from these awardwinning best practices, health systems everywhere can take meaningful steps toward reducing the global burden of cardiovascular disease—one evidencebased innovation at a time.

– 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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EHMA European Health Management Association
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IHE INSTITUTE OF HEALTH ECONOMICS

Beyond sugar: an urgent call to stop the metabolic epidemic of diabetes and obesity

by **Dr. Luis Figueroa Montes**
Past president of Asociación Latinoamericana de Patología Clínica y Medicina de Laboratorio (ALAPAC – ML)
Social networks: https://linktr.ee/luis.figueroam

Figueroa Montes

World Diabetes Day is the perfect opportunity for people living with diabetes, healthcare professionals, advocates, policymakers and the general public, to come together, to raise awareness and take action. The theme for the 2025 global campaign was "Learn more about diabetes and take action in your workplace" (1).

Globally, 7 out of 10 adults living with diabetes are of working age. For millions of workers, diabetes is an everyday reality, but in the workplace, it can become a source of stress, stigma, and fear. Despite growing awareness of employee well-being, many people living with diabetes continue to struggle to reconcile their health condition with work expectations, leading them to hide their condition and avoid open communication. This ongoing struggle not only impacts mental well-being but also limits career advancement (2).

By 2025, the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) is calling for more inclusive and supportive workplaces, where people living with diabetes feel supported and not stigmatized. It is time to dispel misconceptions, educate experts, and foster environments where employees living with diabetes can manage their condition without fear (2). Awareness and understanding must be strengthened, ensuring workplaces where people living with diabetes feel safe, valued, and able to thrive, without jeopardizing their health or ambitions (2).

Some statistics: 589 million adults worldwide live with diabetes; 7 out of 10 are of working age; 3 out of 4 people living with diabetes live in low- and middle-income countries; nearly half of adults living with diabetes are undiagnosed; 3 out of 4 people living with diabetes experience anxiety, depression, or another mental health disorder due to diabetes; 4 out of 5 people living with diabetes surveyed by the IDF have experienced emotional exhaustion due to diabetes (2).

Now let's focus on making a poorly kept secret visible: the consumption of sugar (in all of its forms), carbohydrates (especially simple carbohydrates), and ultra-processed (industrialized) food is generating a sustained increase in obesity, now called Adiposity-Based Chronic Disease, increasing morbidity and mortality worldwide.

An article published by Hannou et al. (2018) explains that when we consume sugar, especially in its fructose form (found in corn syrup and other products), the following process occurs: fructose is processed in the liver, where it has a "special" metabolic pathway that differentiates it from glucose. This rapid process can generate lipids (fats), fat accumulation in the liver, production of intermediate products that can damage cells, and reduction in insulin response (the hormone that introduces glucose into cells for use). Furthermore, it generates a greater production of reactive oxygen species and metabolic stress: when cells have to handle excesses,

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they can "wear out" more quickly, and as a consequence of these processes, the following results occur: increased body fat (obesity), metabolic syndrome, an elevated risk of diabetes, and therefore, elevated risk of associated chronic diseases. In simple terms, "Consuming sugar leads to liver overload, fat formation, cell damage, and increased body fat (obesity)" (3).

Malik and Hu (2022) present the evidence that sugary drinks (e.g., sodas, sweetened juices, soft drinks, etc.) play a key role in the global rise in obesity, type 2 diabetes, and other chronic diseases (4). Drinking these types of beverages adds liquid calories to the body, which are often not offset by eating less during meals, leading to weight gain; furthermore, rapid sugar absorption causes spikes in glucose and insulin, and excess fructose forces the liver to metabolize more than it can handle, generating fat and metabolic stress. Globally, the consumption of these beverages is increasing, especially in low- and middle-income countries (4).

The future of public health isn't defined solely in hospitals, but also in every decision we make regarding a plate, a package, or a beverage we consume. Diabetes and obesity are not inevitable: they reflect a food context we have allowed to develop and which we must now transform.

Educating, preventing, and taking action is not the responsibility of healthcare professionals only, but a shared responsibility about individual and community health. Every time we choose less sugar, fewer ultra-processed foods, and greater awareness, we contribute to a healthier and more informed society.

In conclusion, we must slow the rise in diabetes and obesity worldwide. We must strengthen public policies that educate our population about healthy eating without sugar and ultra-processed foods (5). Let's change our reality. Now is the time.

Links of interest

1. https://worlddiabetesday.org/es/participe/
2. https://new.express.adobe.com/webpage/Elj9eJ3cBWUfn#mensajes-clave
3. https://www.jci.org/articles/view/96702/pdf
4. https://www.nature.com/articles/s41574-021-00627-6
5. https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/el-consumo-de-alimentos-ultraprocesados-foods-upf-y-figueroa-montes-dl9ge/?trackingId=xVQZ79jSQJawLNGPXxNAgQ%3D%3D

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Call for Papers in 2026

01 Tumor Marker in Cancer Treatment
Tumor markers are substances that can be detected within or are generated by cancerous cells or by other cells of the body as a reaction to the presence of cancer or some nonmalignant conditions.

Topics including (but not limited to):

- Tumor marker discovery and validation in cancer diagnosis
- Tumor marker for the estimate of cancer prognosis
- Tumor marker in recurrence prediction
- Determination of targeted therapy
- Efficacy assessment

Guest Editor
Prof. Sergio Bernardini, Laboratory Medicine Units University of Tor Vergata Hospital

02 AI Application in Laboratory Medicine
Recognizing the strengths of AI and its suitable applications, as well as being aware of the current capabilities and constraints, can be beneficial for professionals in the lab and for clinicians.

Topics including (but not limited to):

- AI application in patient data management
- AI application in quality control and risk management of clinical laboratory tests
- AI application in personalized precision medicine
- AI application in the management and prevention of chronic diseases

Guest Editor
Prof. Sergio Bernardini, Laboratory Medicine Units University of Tor Vergata Hospital

03 Cancer: Molecular, cellular, genetic and clinical aspects
The articles in this issue highlight the critical importance of a multidisciplinary approach to understanding and combating cancer by exploring the latest discoveries in tumor genetics, immunotherapy, and cancer biomarkers.

Topics including (but not limited to):

- Molecular mechanisms driving cancer initiation and progression

Article continued on the next page

- Genetic mutations and epigenetic alterations in cancer
- Tumor microenvironment and its role in cancer development
- Chemo/radiation and transplant oncology
- Cancer immunotherapy and novel therapeutic approaches

Guest Editors
Dr. Simab Kanwal, Institute of Nutrition, Mahidol University, Thailand
And
Dr. Sher Zaman Safi, Faculty of Medicine, MAHSA University, Malaysia

04 Brain-Computer Interface and Laboratory Technology
Brain-computer interface technology has a wide range of application prospects in the field of laboratory medicine. It can not only assist diagnosis and treatment, but also promote in-depth research on brain functions and diseases.

Topics including (but not limited to):
- Application of Brain-Computer Interface in Laboratory Medicine
- Application Prospect of Brain-Computer Interface Technology in Diagnosis and Treatment of Mental Diseases
- Application of Cerebral Electrical Activity Detection Technique in Disease Diagnosis

Guest Editors
Prof. Lu Yong, Ruijin Hospital, Shanghai Jiao Tong University School of Medicine
Prof. Li Chengyu, Chinese Academy of Sciences

05 Human Genetics
Human genetics is an inherently interdisciplinary field
that covers a wide range of topics, ranging from gene regulations to disease mechanisms, providing a deeper understanding of the genetic, evolutionary, and developmental foundations of human health and disease.

Topics including (but not limited to):
- Tumor Detection Methods Utilizing Multi-Omics Data
- Clinical Laboratory Applications
- Algorithms and Tools for Multi-Omics Data Integration and Analysis
- Drug Target Identification and Validation

Guest Editor
Dr. Jiantao Shi, Chinese Academy of Sciences

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News from Regional Federations and Member Societies

Driving Excellence Through Audits in Clinical Laboratories- Workshop On Clinical Audits in Pakistan

By: **Mashhooda Irfan**, Clinical Laboratories, Aga Khan University Hospital Karachi, Pk

The Clinical Laboratories, Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine of Aga Khan University Hospital, organized a workshop on Clinical/Quality Improvement Audit on September 5, 2025, at the Karachi campus. The workshop brought together section managers and quality professionals to enhance their knowledge and skills in planning and conducting an effective audit. The session covers the full audit cycle, from planning and data collection to reporting and implementation.

Following a welcome note by Mr. Hussain Pirwani, Senior Manager – Clinical Lab, an informative talk was given by our Vice-Chair, Clinical Services, Dr. Sibtain Ahmed. His presentation encompasses the history of Clinical Audits, what Clinical Audits are, and the purpose behind them. He also suggested different priority areas for doing audits. Ms. Mashhooda Rasool Hashmi, Manager, Quality Assurance, Clinical Lab, delivered a talk on compliance standards of CAP and JCIA. She emphasized the importance of cross-sectional and multidisciplinary audits, which can lead to improvements for a diverse patient population. Ms. Saba Sohail, Assistant Manager Quality Assurance, explained the complete audit cycle – planning, reporting, and implementation – to the participants.

Through interactive sessions, case studies, and group exercises, participants explored the audit cycle, from defining objectives and selecting standards to data collection, analysis, and implementation of corrective actions. The groups were facilitated by Mr. Muhammad Ahmer, Ms. Gulnaz Wahid, Ms Lubna Khaleeq and Ms Bushra Ahmed.

The closing remarks were given by the Administrative Director, Mr. Waqar Mirza. He highlighted the importance of conducting such workshops frequently. He also appreciated the efforts of the Quality Assurance Group of the lab in organizing this learning activity.

By the end of the workshop, attendees were able to appreciate the role of clinical and quality improvement audits as powerful drivers of patient-centered care, operational efficiency, and readiness for accreditation.

Workshop Participants

Speakers

Group Presentations

COLABIOCLI Accreditation Working Group (WG) Programme: Promoting the Implementation of ISO 15189:2022 in Clinical Laboratories

By: **Rigoberto Sánchez**
Principal Member, Accreditation Working Group
Panama

Rigoberto Sánchez

Introduction

The Accreditation Working Group (WG) of the Latin American Confederation of Clinical Biochemistry (COLABIOCLI) reaffirmed its commitment to quality in clinical laboratories through a comprehensive programme, that included two inaugural presentations and a strategic round table discussion. The event, held during the XVI National Congress of Clinical Laboratory Professionals in Panama City, aimed to disseminate knowledge about the ISO 15189:2022 standard and to strengthen the interaction among National Accreditation Bodies (NABs), laboratory medicine professionals, and health authorities. This collaboration is one of the Accreditation's WG medium-term objectives, and the event constitutes strong evidence of this effort.

Programme Inauguration and Objectives

The event was inaugurated on October 10th at 8:30 a.m. by Dr. Julio Nieto Ramos, President of COLABIOCLI, who offered a warm welcome. Dr. Ramos delivered two presentations that provided the necessary context and framework for the subsequent discussion. The aim of these presentations was to translate the requirements of ISO 15189:2022 into practical actions for clinical laboratories, highlighting the differences with the previous standard version (2012):

- Integration of cross-cutting risk management
- Patient centerd approach and emphasis on professional ethics
- Alignment with the HLS (High Level Structure) framework
- Flexibility of the management system

These updates reflect the evolution of the standard toward a more dynamic approach focused on patient safety.

Inaugural Presentations

The two inaugural presentations were focused on:

1. Management System and Continuous Improvement, presented by Dr. María del C. Pasquel, Coordinator of the Accreditation Working Group, Ecuador. Dr. Pasquel highlighted the importance of documentation, record control, risk and opportunity identification, internal audits, and management review.

   Key message: The management system is the compass for continuous improvement.

2. Analytical Processes and Validation, presented by Dr. Yury Andrea Rodríguez, principal member of the Accreditation Working Group, Colombia. Her presentation highlighted the pre-analytical, analytical, and post-analytical processes, with emphasis on method verification and validation, uncertainty measurement, and the implementation of IQC and EQA, that ensure the validity of results.

   Key message: Reliability depends on rigorous verification and validation.

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Subsequently, two complementary presentations were delivered:

- Governance and Leadership, presented by Mgtr. Rigoberto Sánchez, principal member of the Accreditation Working Group, Panama. He emphasized the importance of impartiality, confidentiality, and patient-related requirements. The role of the laboratory director and the strategic responsibilities were defined, emphasizing the integration of risk management into institutional governance.

  Key message: Governance is the fundamental component of quality.

- Resources and Technical Competence, delivered by Dr. Rafael Azevedo, principal member of the Accreditation Working Group, Brazil, who presented critical aspects such as: laboratory personnel competence, continuing education, biosafety conditions, metrological traceability, and supplier management.

  Key message: The strength of a laboratory lies on its resources and its personnel.

Round table: Key Tools for Implementing ISO 15189:2022

The most anticipated part of the programme was the round table discussion titled "Key Tools for Implementing ISO 15189:2022 in Clinical Laboratories," moderated by Dr. Juan Pablo Gramático from Argentina. The discussion was initiated by Dr. Julio Nieto, who emphasized the importance of the event as a platform for collaboration and technical exchange.

Participation and Context

The event brought together 54 special guests, including various authorities, such as representatives from the National Accreditation Council (CNA), officials from the Panama Ministry of Health (MINSA) and the Social Security Fund (CSS), Quality Management System (QMS) managers, and professionals from the Gorgas Memorial Institute. This diverse group of participants fostered an enriching and action-oriented dialogue.

Strategic Importance of Collaboration between National Accreditation Bodies (NABs) and Professionals

One of the most relevant points was the role of NABs and the need for close engagement with laboratory medicine professionals and health authorities. This collaboration facilitates the understanding of regulatory requirements and promotes public policies that are consistent with operational realities.

Why was this important event organized?

Because it represents a concrete step towards the strategic objective: creating spaces for creative dialogue that results in the alignment of expectations, resolution of doubts and the promotion of a quality culture in the health sector.

Conclusions and Follow-up

The closing session included an interactive panel, where the speakers answered questions about:

- Challenges in implementing the standard.
- Practical application of risk management.
- Recommendations for laboratories initiating the accreditation process.
- Benefits for the patient and the institution.

It was concluded that implementing ISO 15189:2022 provides confidence, patient safety, and continuous improvement, going beyond mere regulatory compliance.

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As immediate actions, the following were agreed:

- Prioritize staff education and training.
- Integrate verification and validation processes.
- Enhance metrological traceability.
- Delineate risk management at all levels.

Moreover, the creation of exchange networks among implementing units was proposed, in order to share experiences and best practices on the path to accreditation.

Programme Impact

The event was not only an academic activity but also a demonstration of the leadership of the COLABIOCLI Accreditation Working Group in the region. It reaffirmed its commitment to quality and patient safety and marked a milestone in the collaboration among key stakeholders in the healthcare system.

The active participation of authorities, National Accreditation Bodies (NABs), and laboratory professionals confirms that accreditation is a means to guarantee reliable and ethical services for the benefit of the population.

The COLABIOCLI Accreditation Working Group expresses its sincere gratitude to the authorities of the National College of Clinical Laboratory Professionals of Panama (CONALAC), especially to its president, Dr. Julio Nieto Ramos, and to the president of the XVI Congress, Ms. Michelle Face, for their leadership and commitment. We also extend our appreciation to all those who made this valuable meeting possible: clinical laboratory professionals, health authorities, national representatives and COLABIOCLI authorities, and representatives of the National Accreditation Council of Panama (CNA). Owing to their dedication, this forum for dialogue, knowledge dissemination, and quality enhancement was carried out with excellence.

"ISO 15189 accreditation is not a final goal; it is the starting point toward the continuous excellence, that patients deserve and the region needs."

Leaflet of the COLABIOCLI Accreditation Working Group programme

Welcome remarks by Dr. Julio Nieto, COLABIOCLI President, during the inauguration of the Accreditation Working Group programme

Twenty Fifth Annual Prof. Dr Ivan Berkeš Conference Report for 2025 from Society of Medical Biochemists of Serbia

by Ass. Prof. **Neda Milinković**

The Twenty Fifth Annual Scientific Conference “Professor Ivan Berkeš” was held in 2025 in memory and gratitude to Professor Ivan Berkeš, who founded medical biochemistry and established it as a scientific and health discipline in Serbia. This Conference, organized traditionally by the Society of Medical Biochemists of Serbia, this year 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, honoring the legacy of one of its most distinguished professors, was held on 11 December 2025. Prof. Dr. Nada Majkić-Singh, with her opening words greeted the participants and reminded us of the history, the idea of Scientific Foundation “Professor Ivan Berkeš”, and the significance of the Conference, as well as of the life and work of Professor Ivan Berkeš, whom it honors.

This year, coordinators of the Conference were Prof. Dr Nada Majkić-Singh and Assistant Prof. Dr Neda Milinković. After the opening address of Prof. Dr Nada Majkić-Singh, following the welcoming address of the Vice Dean for Teaching of the Faculty of Pharmacy, Prof. Dr Jelena Đuriš, the Found President Prof. Dr Nada Majkić-Singh, presented the awards of the Foundation. Diplomas and funding awards were traditionally presented by the Scientific Fund “Dr Ivan Berkeš” to the top preforiming students of the Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Belgrade, and this year’s recipients were Marko Ivanković (Master of Pharmacy-Medical Biochemist) and Uroš Sretenović (Master of Pharmacy).

The scientific program was completed by five lectures held by one Specialist of Medical Biochemistry and doctor candidates of medical sciences and pharmacy, who defended their doctoral theses or other scientific investigation performed in the previous years. The topics of the lectures were precisely the topics of their research. The first lecture titled “The importance of oxidative stress and the kynurenine pathway of tryptophan metabolism in the onset and development of multiple sclerosis in the population of Serbia” was presented by Marija Vasić, who received her doctorate from the Department of Medical Biochemistry, Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Belgrade. Second lecture titled “Cholesterol synthesis and absorption markers and sphingolipid profile in preeclampsia” was presented by Tamara Antonić who received her doctorate from the Department of Medical Biochemistry, Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Belgrade. Third lecture titled “Inflammatory markers and qualitative and quantitative high-density lipoprotein particle characterization in preeclampsia risk assessment” was presented by Gorica Marković who received her doctorate from the Department of Medical Biochemistry, Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Belgrade. Fourth lecture titled “The influence of methionine sulfoxide reductase A on the occurrence of COPD” was held by Vera Milovanović who received her doctorate from the Department of Medical Biochemistry, Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Belgrade. The final lecture was held by Slađana Menković, EurSpLM, based on research from her specialist medical study titled “Significance of glycoalbumin determination in patients with type 2 diabetes mellitus”, from the Department of Medical Biochemistry, Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Belgrade.

The continuity of this conference is based on respect for the past, but also on the awareness that young and new PhDs of the Faculty of Pharmacy of the University of Serbia are the pillars of the future of pharmaceutical and medical laboratory science in Serbia. This is exactly a confirmation that science and the profession are closely connected, which also strengthens their quality.

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Chairpersons at the opening of the conference: Prof. Dr Nada Majkić-Singh and Ass. Prof. Dr Neda Milinković

Prof. Dr Jelena Đuriš, Uroš Sretenović, Prof. Dr Nada Majkić-Singh, Marko Ivanković, Ass. Prof. Dr Neda Milinković

Uroš Sretenović, Tamara Antonić, Gorica Marković, Prof. Dr Nada Majkić-Singh, Slađana Menković, Ass. Prof. Dr Neda Milinković, Marko Ivanković, Vera Milovanović

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MZ EVENTS

The Clinical Laboratory: Key to the Early Diagnosis of Chronic Kidney Disease

"Valencia Cares for Your Kidneys," an event held under the auspices of the XIX National Congress of Clinical Laboratories (LABCLIN 2025)

The Spanish Society of Laboratory Medicine (SEMEDLAB) held the "Valencia Cares for Your Kidneys" event on November 11th, with the aim of bringing the work of the Clinical Laboratory closer to the citizens of the Valencian Community through blood tests of their kidney function. The campaign sought to promote the early diagnosis of chronic kidney disease (CKD), an underdiagnosed disease where early detection and treatment are key to preventing its progression and reducing associated complications.

The campaign was carried out in collaboration with the National Federation of ALCER Associations (Association for the Fight Against Kidney Diseases), the Spanish Society of Nephrology (SEN), and the Spanish Society of General Practitioners (SEMG), with the support of Nova Biomedical, the company that supplied the equipment and reagents necessary for the initiative, as well as the support of the pharmaceutical companies AstraZeneca and Boehringer Ingelheim. The initiative took place within the framework of the 19th National Congress of Clinical Laboratories (LABCLIN 2025), organized by the Spanish Society of Laboratory Medicine (SEMEDLAB), which brought together more than 1,500 clinical laboratory professionals in Valencia from November 12 to 14, to discuss the latest developments in the various areas of the specialty.

A Public Health Problem

Chronic kidney disease (CKD) is a public health problem, according to Dr. Luis Garcia de Guadiana, a member of the SEMEDLAB Emergency Medicine Commission and the LABCLIN 2025 Organizing Committee. Dr. Garcia de Guadiana points out that, according to the latest estimates, it will rise from the tenth leading cause of death in 2022 to the fifth in 2051. In Spain, the prevalence of this disease is approximately 15%. Furthermore, these estimates are expected to increase in Spain as a consequence of the aging population and a higher incidence of hypertension and diabetes.

Despite its high prevalence, CKD is known as the "silent epidemic" due to underdiagnosis, as the disease does not produce symptoms until advanced stages, but also due to the public's lack of awareness: "Only 6% of the general population and 10% of the high-risk population are aware that they have CKD," reports Dr. García de Guadiana.

In this context, the "Valencia Cares for Your Kidney" initiative gave attendees the opportunity to have their creatinine levels measured and their glomerular filtration rate (GFR) estimated, criteria used to diagnose this disease. The event was a resounding success (210 attendees) and the results confirmed the reality of hidden kidney disease, with more than 8% of patients presenting with a GFR <60 mL/min/1.72m^2.

The event aimed to continue the activity initiated during the last year's National Congress, the "Healthy Bilbao" event, where the lipid profiles of over 150 people who visited the event were measured.

The diagnosis of chronic kidney disease (CKD) is based on two criteria provided by clinical laboratory specialists: blood creatinine measurement, with estimation of glomerular filtration rate, and urine albumin/creatinine ratio measurement. "Both tests are available in all laboratories, accessible to both primary and specialist physicians. The fact that these tests are simple and accessible should be key to the early diagnosis of this disease," states Dr. Garcia de Guadiana.

Likewise, it is necessary to highlight the central role of the laboratory medicine expert in its early diagnosis. As Dr. García de Guadiana states, the work of the Clinical Laboratory allows for the integration of all patient information, from clinical, demographic, and other comorbidity data, in order to achieve, in collaboration with other services involved in this disease, an early diagnosis of the disease, "which will contribute to improving the patient's quality of life and optimizing the resources of the healthcare system."

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SEMEDLAB SEQC-MLSEQC-MLSEQC-ML

Sociedad Española de Medicina de Laboratorio - Semedlab

SEMEDLAB members organizing the campaign "Valencia Cares for Your Kidneys"

Two moments in the development of the campaign "Valencia Cares for Your Kidneys"

Newborn screening in Nepal: Early Diagnosis Matters

By **Dr. Vivek Pant** and **Dr. Santosh Pradhan**
Bench to Clinic Research Center (BTC) – Nepal

A two days program on Newborn Screening (NBS) was organized by Bench to Clinic Research Center (BTC), Nepal, under the auspices of the International Federation for Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (IFCC) and of the International Society for Neonatal Screening (ISNS) on 7-8 November 2025, with the objective to build a consensus on initiating a sustainable and equitable NBS Program in Nepal.

Day 1: Close Country Meeting, 7th November 2025, Hotel Square, Lalitpur, Nepal

Close country Meeting on Newborn Screening (NBS) successfully convened key national stakeholders and international partners, including representatives from WHO Nepal, UNICEF Nepal, Bench to Clinic Research Center (BTC), Nepal Pediatric Society, Nepalese Association for Clinical Chemistry (NACC), Nepalese Association for Medical Laboratory Sciences (NAMLS), Rare Diseases Society Nepal (RDSN), Paropakar Maternity and Women's Hospital (PMWH), Institute of Medicine, TUTH, Kathmandu University School of Medical Sciences, IFCC and ISNS on November 7, 2025. This meeting featured presentations on the current status, challenges, global best practices, as well as a robust roundtable discussion. A strong consensus emerged on the urgent need for a phased, collaborative approach and drafting policy framework as a foundational roadmap to initiate NBS in Nepal.

Opening Session
Dr. Vivek Pant (BTC) welcomed the participants, emphasizing that NBS is a critical public health intervention for preventing disability and mortality from congenital disorders, aligning with Nepal's commitments to child health and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Current Status of NBS
Dr. Santosh Pradhan (BTC) presented current status of NBS in Nepal including various activities on NBS from different stakeholders, studies done on NBS, currently available diagnostic platforms and availability of trained manpower for NBS.

Evidence and Clinical Need
Dr. Bijaya Mishra (RDSN) and Dr. Shailendra Bir Karmacharya (PMWH) presented compelling data from Nepali cohorts and clinical cases, demonstrating that late diagnosis of inborn errors of metabolism leads to severe, irreversible outcomes, underscoring the cost-effectiveness of early detection through NBS. Dr. Karmacharya discussed the feasibility of NBS programs in Nepal citing the work done at PMWH. Dr. Prajwal Paudel (PMWH) outlined major challenges: infrastructure gaps, need for trained human resources, logistical hurdles for sample transport, data management and ensuring equitable access across all regions.

Roundtable Discussion/Global Support
Prof. Dr. Dianne Webster, member of IFCC/ISNS Task Force on Global Newborn Screening, provided a global perspective, showcasing successful models from other low-and-middle-income countries and offering technical support for capacity building and protocol development. Dr. Rajesh Khanna, WHO SEAR, shared UNS guidelines and emphasized its role in providing normative guidance, policy advocacy, and technical assistance to integrate NBS within the National Health Policy. Ms. Chahana Singh Rana, UNICEF Nepal, introduced the "Early Identification and Early Interventions (EIEI)" tool including "Every Women Every Child" (EWEC) guidelines, highlighting its potential for training healthcare workers and creating family support pathways.
Dr. Aysha Habib Khan, Co-chair of IFCC/ISNS Task Force on Global Newborn Screening, suggested identifying a champion or a lead, followed by identifying the conditions to be screened and develop a feasibility plan. Prof. Dr. James R. Bonham (Virtual attendance), Co-chair of IFCC/ISNS Task Force on Global Newborn Screening, emphasized the importance to recognize Newborn Screening not just in terms of mortality, but also by the rest of its impact, the iceberg of morbidity addressed by it. He highlighted Newborn Screening as the pathway and processes, and advised to focus on foundations,

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connectivity and organization of Newborn Screening from early stage of its establishment for long term benefit. Dr. Balwinder Singh Chawla, Team Lead, Immunization Preventable Disease, WHO Nepal, focused on preparing the standard operating procedure, forming strong expert technical team and emphasized on NBS related researches.

Key Consensus Points
a. Phased implementation is critical: Start with a pilot program in 1-2 major tertiary hospitals focusing on 2-3 conditions including Congenital Hypothyroidism (CH)
b. Strong governance is essential: Establish a National NBS Committee under Ministry of Health and Population, Nepal, with sub-committees for technical oversight, laboratory quality, and training.
c. Public-Private Partnership (PPP): Leverage the expertise of professional societies for laboratory service, research and awareness.
d. Workforce Development: Training programs for nurses, midwives, and lab technicians on sample collection, handling, and reporting.

Day 2: CME, 8th November 2025, at Hotel Vivanta, Lalitpur, Nepal
Around 80 participants joined the CME which was approved by Nepal Medical Council CPD Unit with 5.5 CPD points. Pediatricians, obstetricians, laboratory professionals, midwives, and nurses were actively engaged in the program and had a fruitful discussion on establishing Newborn Screening in Nepal.

Highlights
Dr Aysha highlighted the contribution of IFCC and ISNS in global NBS. Dr. Jeevan Adhikari, Pathologist in Standalone Laboratory, shared his experience on establishing the NBS set up. Ms. Marika Kase, member of IFCC Task Force on Global Newborn Screening, explained on various technologies that can be used for NBS. Prof. Dr. Carmencita Padilla (Recorded Session) highlighted on different models that can be implemented for starting NBS. She foresighted the challenges that might be encountered during initial stages of establishing NBS. Dr. Aysha and Dr. Shreehari M Nair form Kerala Health Services, India, shared their experiences in starting the NBS in Pakistan and Kerala respectively. Prof. Dr. Webster enforced that Congenital Hypothyroidism (CH) could be the first candidate to start NBS in Nepal and discussed various clinical and laboratory aspects of CH.

The day successfully concluded emphasizing the importance of stakeholders including clinicians, laboratory professionals, national societies, and hospitals working on NBS, to work as a single unit under the governance of Health Ministry of Nepal for sustainable nationwide screening program. International societies including IFCC, ISNS and United Nation agencies WHO Nepal and UNICEF Nepal, committed to provide technical support for this initiation.

CME participants

Speakers, Organizers, Volunteers and Sponsors at closing session

Article continued on the next page

Organizers with IFCC/ISNS representatives

Participants for Close Country Meeting

On demand content will be soon available.

News from the Japan Society of Clinical Chemistry (JSCC): 2025 JSCC Academic Award

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

The Japan Society of Clinical Chemistry (JSCC) Academic Award is awarded to individuals who have contributed outstanding academic research in clinical chemistry. In 2025, Satoru Shinriki, D.D.S., Ph.D., won the JSCC Academic Award. At the 65th Annual Meeting of the JSCC in Aichi, Japan, held November 7 to 9, 2025, award winner Dr. Shinriki was congratulated by Dr. Takashi Miida, President of JSCC for his outstanding work in clinical chemistry.
We proudly introduce the 2025 JSCC Academic Award winner in this issue and distribute his outstanding work.

Satoru Shinriki, D.D.S., Ph.D., Department of Molecular Laboratory Medicine, Faculty of Life Sciences, Kumamoto University, won the 2025 JSCC Academic Award for his work entitled, “Cancer research and diagnostic research based on genomic biochemistry”. His work investigates the mechanisms of cancer metastasis and genomic instability.
Metastasis arises from disseminated tumor cells (DTCs) that remain dormant at distant sites before forming secondary tumors. However, the clonal composition of DTCs in a latent state remains unclear. Dr. Shinriki and his colleagues applied high-resolution DNA barcode tracking to a mouse model that recapitulated the metastatic dormancy of head and neck squamous cell carcinoma (HNSCC). He revealed that clones abundant in circulation dominate the DTC population. They identified subclones that form homotypic circulating tumor cell (CTC) clusters, which are highly resistant to fluid shear stress in an E-cadherin-dependent manner. These clusters survive by regulating actin-myosin dynamics, enabling them to withstand mechanical forces in the bloodstream. The expression of specific E-cadherin-binding and actin-regulating factors, which were enriched in the origin clone of CTC clusters, was associated with recurrence in HNSCC patients. He termed this selection process based on mechanical adaptability “mechanoselection.”
In a separate project, his team studied the RNA helicase DDX41, whose mutations are linked to bone marrow failure and myeloid cancers. His group demonstrated that loss of DDX41 function impaired efficient RNA splicing, resulting in DNA replication stress with excess R-loop formation. Mechanistically, DDX41 bound to the 5’ splice site (5’SS) of coding RNA and coordinates RNA splicing and transcriptional elongation; loss of DDX41 prevented splicing-coupled transient pausing of RNA polymerase II at 5’SS, causing aberrant R-loop formation and transcription-replication collisions. Although the degree of DNA replication stress acquired in S phase was small, cells undergo mitosis with under-replicated DNA being remained, resulting in micronuclei formation and significant DNA damage, thus leading to impaired cell proliferation and genomic instability. These processes may be responsible for disease phenotypes associated with DDX41 mutations.
His group is now analyzing the precise molecular mechanisms for cancer progression, which would contribute to a development of novel diagnostics and treatment strategies.

Dr Satoru Shinriki, winner of the 2025 JSCC Academic Award for his work entitled: “Cancer research and diagnostic research based on genomic biochemistry”.

Acta Bioquímica Clínica Latinoamericana (ABCL) celebrates 60 years of uninterrupted publications in 2026

By **Rosa Sierra-Amor**, PhD.
Member, WG-eNews CPD, Member, Nominations Committee IFCC

Acta Bioquímica Clínica Latinoamericana (ABCL), the official scientific dissemination organ of the **Latin American Confederation of Clinical Biochemistry (COLABIOCLI)**, the Unified Biochemical Confederation of the Argentine Republic (CUBRA) and the Biochemical Federation of the Province of Buenos Aires (FABA), its publisher and owner, will celebrate **60 years** of uninterrupted institutional presence at the national and international level in 2026.

The pages of Acta Bioquímica Clínica Latinoamericana reflect the history of the development of Clinical Biochemistry in the Argentine Republic. Since its creation, our journal has sought to promote knowledge and collaboration in the field of Clinical Biochemistry in Latin America and the rest of the world. Its existence arose from the professional mystique that in 1960 gave rise to the Federation of Specialists in Biological Analysis of the Province of Buenos Aires (today the Biochemical Federation of the Province of Buenos Aires). This mystique has remained in permanent force through the editorial of her creation as Clinical Biochemistry in 1966, which clearly stated the objectives to be fulfilled and had as its primary mission to achieve the professional scientific approach of clinical biochemists. https://abcl.org.ar/index.php/abcl/actaBioquimica.

The authors of scientific articles are biochemists, biologists, bacteriologists, pharmacists, doctors, veterinarians and others. This publication is aimed at professionals specialized in the clinical laboratory, biochemists, chemists, bacteriologists, pharmacists, doctors, biologists, biotechnologists, and anyone who is interested in the subject of health.

It was directed for more than 50 years by Prof. Dr. Juan Miguel Castagnino † and its current Director is Prof. Dr. Horacio Ángel Lopardo. It is a peer-reviewed scientific journal, whose primary objective was the scientific hierarchy of the profession and was oriented to the scientific and professional approach of Clinical Biochemists. In 1971 it received the 1st APTA/Rizzuto prize from the Association of the Argentine Technical and Specialized Press in the scientific category. In 1976, received its current name (Acta Bioquímica Clínica Latinoamericana).

Since 2004, by resolution No. 1373/04 of the National Council for Scientific and Technical Research (CONICET), it has formed the Basic Nucleus of Scientific Journals (Category 1). ABCL was included in the SciELO (Scientific Electronic Library on line) site for comprehensive electronic dissemination at the international level, which is accessed from http://www.scielo.org.ar. It is also part of the Network of Scientific Journals of Latin America and the Caribbean, Spain and Portugal (http://redalyc.uaemex.mx).

In order to maintain and improve its editorial quality, ABCL currently adjusts to the requirements of the bodies that evaluate scientific publications on a permanent basis and to the portals that make scientific articles visible by managing their editions through the Open Journal System (OJS) platform; this being one of the most used platforms in open access journals globally.

Article continued on the next page

In 2026, the special anniversary edition that we will publish in September 2026 will be widely disseminated and promoted at academic and scientific events.

For further information, please contact actabioq@fbpba.org.ar
Official webpage ABCL: https://abcl.org.ar/index.php/abcl

IFCC welcomes new Members

Boditech Med Inc

The IFCC is delighted to welcome one new Corporate Member to our global community. We look forward to working together to advance clinical chemistry and laboratory medicine worldwide. Please join us in extending a warm welcome to our newest member.

Boditech Med Inc. is a South Korean in vitro diagnostics company that develops and manufactures immunoassay and point-of-care testing systems for use in clinical laboratories and hospitals worldwide. Our core platforms, include ichroma and AFIAS analyzers, provide quantitative measurements for cardiac, inflammatory, infectious, metabolic, and other key biomarkers essential to evidence-based clinical decision-making. By offering rapid, reliable, lab quality results at or near the point of care, Boditech helps laboratories optimize turnaround time, improve workflow efficiency, and expand access to high-value testing services.
The company participates in national and international R&D projects to develop high-sensitivity reagents in laboratory medicine. With installed analyzers and test usage reported in more than 120-140 countries, Boditech contributes to harmonizing diagnostic performance across diverse clinical settings, from central labs to decentralized ones.
Grounded in the value of “respect for life”, Boditech is committed to advancing clinical laboratories science through continuous innovation and global collaboration in in vitro diagnostics.

IFCC's Calendar of Congresses, Conferences & Events

IFCC and Regional Federation Events			
Date		Title	Place
May 11 - 12, 2026		1ST IFCC ROME FORUM Jointly organised by ETD and EMD	Rome, IT
Jul 16 - 117, 2026		AFCC 2026 NAIROBI	Nairobi, KE
Oct 7 - 11, 2026		XXVII COLABIOCLI 2026	Santa Cruz, BO
Oct 25 - 30, 2026		XXVII IFCC WORLDLAB 2026	New Delhi, IN
May 16-20, 2027		XXVII IFCC-EFLM EUROMEDLAB 2027	London, UK
Oct 10 - 13, 2027		APFCB 2027 KUALA LUMPUR	Kuala Lumpur, MY
Date to be announced		XXVIII IFCC WORLDLAB 2028 - Date to be announced	Buenos Aires, AR

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Corporate Member Events with IFCC Auspices		
Date	Title	Place
Oct 1, 2025 - Jul 31, 2026	Diplomado international in Analytical Quality Management	Quality consulting, online event
Feb 23 - Jun 26, 2026	Flow Cytometry for Malignant Hematological Disorders	Quality consulting, online event
Mar 1 - Mar 20, 2026	International Symposium on Laboratory Medicine	SNIBE, Shenzen, P.R:. China
Mar 20, 2026	International Symposium on Laboratory Medicine	SNIBE, Warsaw, PL

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