



European Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine

History and Overview

History

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

Who we are?

EFCC connects National Societies of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine and creates a platform for all specialists working in the field in Europe. EFCC provides European leadership in clinical chemistry and laboratory medicine to national professional societies, to the diagnostic industry and to governmental and non-governmental organisations in order to serve the public interest in health care. EFCC represents IFCC in Europe.

All member societies of IFCC in Europe may become members of EFCC. The President/Chair and one national representative of member societies form the General Assembly which is the main governing body of EFCC. The General Assembly of EFCC convenes at least once every two years. Non-IFCC societies may obtain provisional membership for three years, provided that they apply for IFCC membership in the meantime. The General Assembly can decide to accept as an Affiliate Member into the EFCC a national association of a European country or another organization active in the field of laboratory medicine which has applied for such status. EFCC is domiciled in Milan where its office is also maintained in collaboration with IFCC.

Current membership of EFCC comprises the national societies of the following 36 countries: Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Kosovo (provisional member), Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia-Montenegro, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom.

The operational structure of EFCC consists of an Executive Board (EB) and six Committees (C) which carry out their tasks via Working Groups (WG). Officers of the EB (president, past-president, president elect, secretary, treasurer and two members-at-large) are elected by the General Assembly for 2-year terms. In the current EB the following countries are represented: Hungary, Belgium, United Kingdom, The Netherlands, Germany, Italy, and Finland. Membership and corresponding membership in Cs and WGs is by application and open to nominations by national societies.

Vision and Mission

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

The mission of EFCC is to enhance patient care and improve outcomes by promoting and improving the scientific, professional and clinical aspects of clinical chemistry and laboratory medicine and to ensure effective representation of laboratory medicine both at European Union level and to other pan-European and sub-regional bodies. EFCC deals with specific European issues of clinical chemistry and laboratory medicine, building bridges between European societies, and formal co-operation with IFCC and other professional bodies.

Goals and Objectives

The goals of EFCC are:

1. To promote and improve science and education within the field of clinical chemistry and laboratory medicine.
2. To improve patient outcomes and the quality and safety of patient care through the highest standards of laboratory medicine.
3. To represent clinical chemistry and laboratory medicine at European level to political, professional, scientific and other bodies including patients' organizations.
4. To represent IFCC activities in Europe.
5. To represent the professional interests of specialists in clinical chemistry and laboratory medicine (both medical and scientific) in Europe.
6. To promote the profession of specialist in clinical chemistry and laboratory medicine
7. To certify and register professionals in clinical chemistry and laboratory medicine through the (EC4) Register of European Specialists in Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine.

EFCC achieves these goals through the following specific objectives:

1. Developing initiatives to improve the quality of clinical chemistry and laboratory medicine as practised in Europe.
2. Preserving, promoting and developing the ethical standards of the profession.
3. Representing clinical chemistry and laboratory medicine to the European Commission and the European Parliament.
4. Representing clinical chemistry and laboratory medicine to other pan-European and sub-regional scientific or medical organizations.
5. Liaising with patients, carers and clinical service users to ensure that clinical chemistry and laboratory medicine services meet their needs.
6. Organize sub-regional conferences in association with relevant National Societies. Determine the location of the European Congress of Laboratory Medicine and support the appropriate National Society in the organization of the Congress.
7. Promoting the profession of clinical chemistry and laboratory medicine to the general public.
8. Supporting the (EC4) Register of European Specialists in Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine and promotion of the Register.

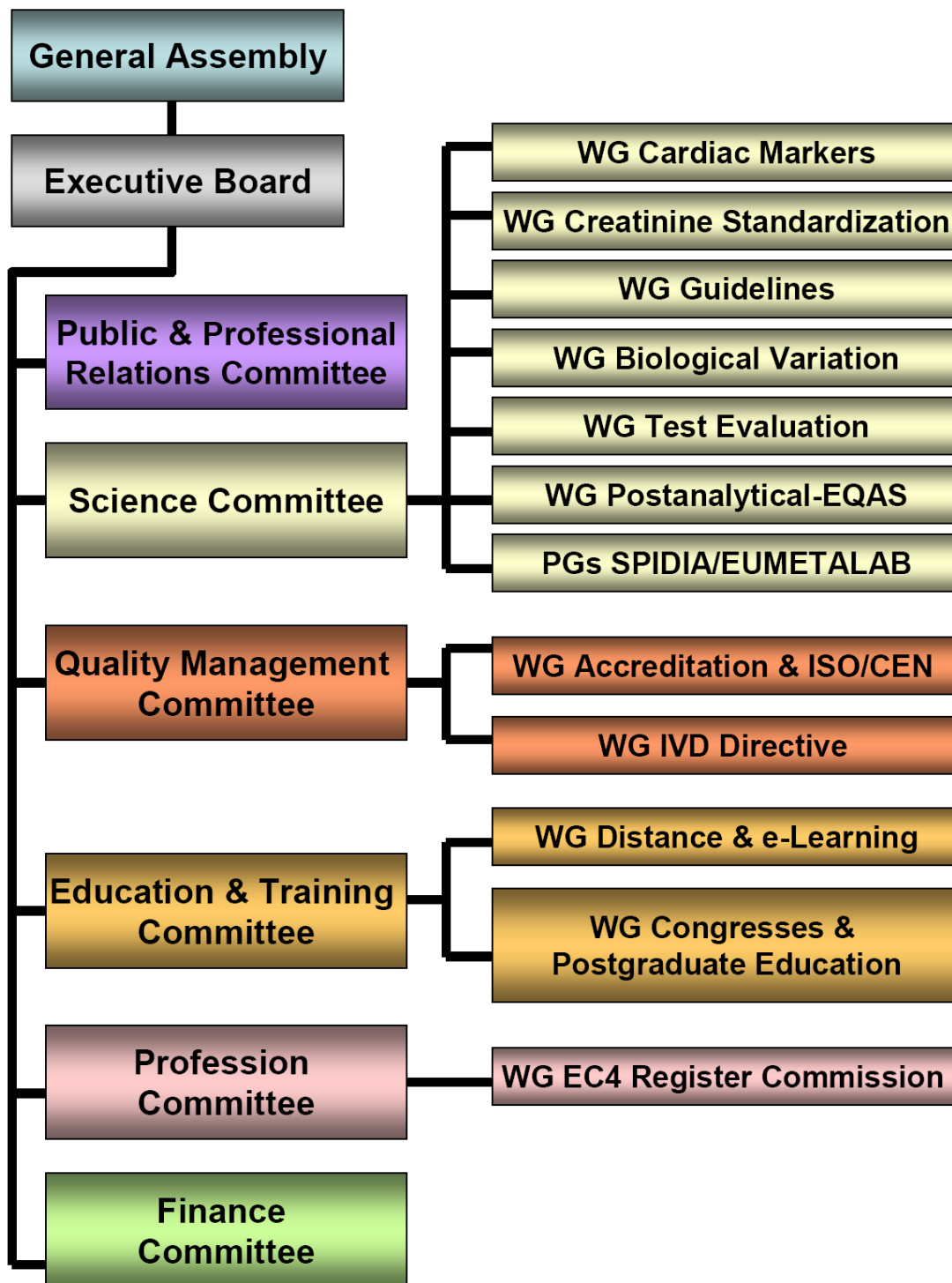
9. Promoting IFCC activities in Europe.
10. Liaising and collaborating with IFCC and its constituent Divisions.
11. Organizing educational programmes, workshops and exchange programmes.
12. Achieving recognition of professional qualifications under European Union legislation based on the principles of free movement of professionals within Europe.
13. Certifying the training of professionals in clinical chemistry and laboratory medicine through the qualification European Specialist in Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (EurClinChem).
14. Co-operation to reach equivalence of standards in training in clinical chemistry and laboratory medicine, irrespective of the academic background.
15. Promoting co-operation between clinical chemistry and laboratory medicine societies in different European countries.
16. Promoting scientific co-operation in clinical chemistry and laboratory medicine between European institutions and other organizations within and outside Europe.
17. Co-operation in defining European guidelines for the investigation and laboratory management of disease.
18. Harmonising standards of practice through production of guidance documents stating best practice in areas of clinical chemistry and laboratory medicine.
19. Supporting the establishment of effective accreditation schemes in all European countries, co-ordinating accreditation matters relating to clinical chemistry and laboratory medicine and liaising with ISO, CEN and European Accreditation on accreditation matters.
20. Developing European initiatives on the standardization of laboratory data.
21. Liaising and collaborating with in vitro diagnostics manufacturers and their European organization(s) e.g. EDMA.
22. Applying for scientific, educational and other grants to support the objectives of the Federation.

What we do?

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

- Science (C-S)
- Quality Management (C-QM)
- Profession (C-P)
- Education and Training (C-ET)
- Public and Professional Relations (C-PPR)
- Finance (C-F)

EFCC's structure at the time of writing is shown in the Figure below. For updates, please visit the EFCC website (www.efcclm.eu).



The **Public and Professional Relations Committee** is responsible for communicating EFCC's activities and results to its membership, related partner organizations and the public via EFCC's website (www.efcclm.eu) and Newsletter. The Committee also supports the work of the European editorial board of LabTests Online which, in collaboration with EDMA, provides information to European patients on laboratory testing in Czech, English, German, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Polish, and Spanish languages. Other European language versions, such as in French and Portuguese are in preparation. The official scientific journal of EFCC is Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (CCLM).

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

- *Cardiac Markers* which investigates, via European surveys, how the reporting, interpretation and use of cardiac markers impact on patient outcomes in different countries.
- *Creatinine Standardization* that investigates the effects of IVD 98/79 on creatinine standardisation and the clinical effects of creatinine re-standardisation.
- *Guidelines* for the laboratory investigation and management of various conditions.
- *Biological Variation* which explores the sources of variation in and develops a critical appraisal checklist for papers on biological variation.
- *Test Evaluation* which sets standards and develops practical tools for designing research studies for the evaluation of the clinical value and impact of new biomarkers.
- *Post-analytical external quality assessment* which carries out international surveys amongst general practitioners and investigates how doctors use and interpret laboratory tests commonly used for managing patients in primary care.

The Committee is also involved in the preparation, promotion and support of pan-European projects, such as the SPIDIA Project on standardisation of the preanalytical phase in molecular testing, and the EUMETALAB group on biobanking.

The **Quality Management Committee** supports the establishment of effective accreditation schemes and quality management systems in all European countries and liaises with ISO, CEN and the European Accreditation body (EA). The Committee currently has two WGs on:

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

The **Education and Training Committee** has general responsibility for the postgraduate training aspects of the work of EFCC, in liaison with the Congress and Conferences Division and the Education and Management Division of IFCC, and also with UEMS. The Committee organizes regional and sub-regional conferences, workshops and postgraduate continuing education courses in association with relevant national societies. The Committee operates two WGs:

- *Congresses and Postgraduate Education*, which is involved in the organization of EFCC's regional conference, Euromedlab, in collaboration with IFCC; joint European conferences with UEMS, national societies and subregional organizations, such as the annual EFCC Symposium for the Balkan region. It is also responsible for organizing the annual EFCC Continuous Postgraduate Course in Dubrovnik on specific clinical topics, and the Euro-regional scientific educational program involving universities in Aachen-Liege-Maastricht.
- *Distance education and e-learning*, with the first initiative being the EFCC/Bio-Rad Videoconference on Quality Management held in Paris in 2009.

The **Profession Committee** is responsible for matters of professional regulation and certification (via the EC4 EurClinChem Register), and the promotion of the profession in Europe at government level, and to patients and clinical users. It liaises with CEPLIS (European Council of the Liberal Professions) and the European Commission on professional matters, and takes the lead in developing pan-European professional and ethical standards. It also liaises with UEMS (The European Union of Medical Specialists) on the roles and responsibilities of medical and scientific practitioners of the discipline. The Committee currently has a permanent Working Group, the *EC4 Register Commission*. This operates the (EC4) Register of European Specialists in Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine to achieve recognition of professional qualifications under European Union legislation, based on the principles of free movement of professionals within

Europe. The EC4 Register and its finances are independently handled by the EC4 Foundation, a charitable Trust based in The Netherlands.

The **Finance Committee** is responsible for proper financial governance of EFCC, and for initiation and direction of fundraising activities and actions to support the work of EFCC.

EFCC has two awards:

- The *EFCC-Roche Scientific Award for Laboratory Medicine* is awarded every two years to honour an individual from an EFCC member country who has made unique contributions to the promotion and understanding of clinical chemistry throughout Europe or who has made one or more contributions that have had a major impact on clinical chemistry. The Award consists of a certificate and the sum of 10,000 Euros.
- The *EFCC-Labs Are Vital Award for Excellence in Outcomes Research in Laboratory Medicine* is sponsored by Abbott and will be presented to the author(s) of the best published paper, as judged by an independent panel of experts, which demonstrates the relationship between the application of an *in-vitro* diagnostic test or testing strategy and clinical and/or economic outcomes. The award will be presented for the first time at IFCC/Euromedlab 2011 in Berlin and thereafter every two years at Euromedlab conferences. The Award consists of a certificate and the sum of 15,000 Euros.

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

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