

## Meeting of the EMD Executive Committee ZOOM videoconference call

**Wed, December 2<sup>nd</sup> 2020: 14:00-15:20 (Milan time)**

**MINUTES prepared by Andre Ziegler, Secretary**



### Participants from the “Education and Management Division”- Executive Committee (EMD-EC):

NAME	POSITION	COUNTRY	TERM	TIME IN OFFICE	NOTES
Leslie Lai (LL)	Chair	MY	2 <sup>nd</sup>	2018 01 - 2020 12	
Nader Rifai (NR)	Member & VLP Chair	US	1 <sup>st</sup>	2018 01 - 2020 12	
Vanessa Steenkamp (VS)	Member	ZA	1 <sup>st</sup>	2018 06 - 2020 12	
Sedef Yenice (SY)	Member	TR	1 <sup>st</sup>	2020 01 - 2022 12	
André Ziegler (AZ)	Corp Rep & Secretary	CH	1 <sup>st</sup>	2018 01 - 2020 12	
Silvia Cardinale (SC)	IFCC Office				

### Invited members from the IFCC Executive Board and Council (EB):

- Prof Khosrow Adeli (KA), IFCC President, 14:00-14:35

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## 1. Welcome and Introductions

LL welcomed the members of the EC and Prof Khosrow Adeli.

- The meeting was again conducted using the Zoom platform due to the COVID-19 pandemic and related travel restrictions.
- IFCC President, Prof. Khosrow Adeli (KA) joined the meeting (14:00-14:35)

## 2. Notification of other business and finalization of the agenda

- Agenda: No changes to the agenda which was kindly prepared by SC and LL.
- Other business:
  - Discussions with KA (14:00-14:35):
    - 2.1. Impact of COVID-19 especially on the VLP. The current solution is to conduct VLP symposia as webinars temporarily until travel restrictions are lifted. The VLP is going to be implemented complementary to the e-Academy and its global e-Learning Webinars.
    - 2.2. New Task Force (TF) on Global Lab Quality (TF-GLQ) – under EB guidance.
- NR reported good news from the latest edition of the Tietz textbook: it went into production early this week; he is now working on ancillary and educational material (1,300 cases; >1,000 Multiple Choice questions; animation films, podcasts, etc.) with appearance likely in February 2022.
- Finalization of EMD-EC meeting minutes (8-Oct-2020): Accepted with a few modifications.

### More details on 2.1 and 2.2:

#### 2.1. Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on VLP:

- Common understanding between EB and EMD: the VLP is a very valuable program to the countries and thus complements the global Webinars (e-learning) conducted by Divisions and the IFCC and uploaded onto the eAcademy:
  - For the VLP, the speakers are selected by the national societies based on the local needs of that country. The VLPs are often held at local conferences and national events. Support from IFCC is required, especially to provide an established network with global experts and support for the (economy) travel costs.
  - In the global Webinars, in turn, the speakers are selected by the global and functional units of the IFCC Division(s): Typically, many more (global) participants are registered for these global webinars (for example, in the 4 pilot webinars held in 2020, there were more than 1,000 registrants from >100 countries per event). Webinar mode: Mainly online broadcasting. Having had 4 highly successful pilot webinar in 2020, the EB is encouraging that each Division and/or committee organizes 1 webinar in 2021 – either as a live or pre-recorded session (but not replacing the VLP), so that 2 live meetings per month might be feasible if all IFCC Divisions help. This is a new attempt to make the webinars more regular and IFCC more visible. A key priority for the IFCC is to become one of the biggest providers

of Lab Medicine e-Learnings in the next years. A training course and certificate program may follow.

- Technical assistance (infrastructure, preparation and broadcasting) is provided through a Task Force team of 3 coordinators (chosen from 2 members of Distance Learning), plus the IFCC office (S. Colli Lanzi) and WorkCast (one of the biggest global webinar companies).
- In the past years, there were primarily pre-recorded meetings for the eAcademy. The 4 pilots show that “live” meetings cover an additional need and there is a high demand. Hence, such interest must be addressed accordingly.
- For the VLPs during the COVID-19 pandemic (e.g., travel restrictions), it is thus encouraged to keep the original purpose and focus, to adapt the educational activities to the local needs and local events, but to find ways to maintain the contacts via temporary live (online) meetings by “borrowing” the infrastructure of the global webinars.
  - For example, “COLABIOCLI”:
    - Local needs and interests for 2021: Quality Control and Quality Insurance.
    - Accordingly, the Country Associations and the Division(s) could collaborate and approach 3 global expert speakers and adapt the event to the local needs under these special COVID conditions with virtual meetings.
    - When the COVID-19 pandemic has been brought under control and travel restrictions lifted, physical VLP meetings will be conducted again to facilitate much more interactive questions/answers, live demonstrations/workshops and the creation of long-term relations. In summary, such webinars under VLP will be only a temporary solution in the first few months of 2021.
- Action: For the VLPs, NR thus proposes to draft a communication letter to the national societies explaining how he envisions the VLP will be conducted in the interim during (and beyond) the COVID pandemic, as well as to advertise the VLP.
  - Potential content and clear focus of the VLP: to establish physical and cultural relationships in order to exchange lab medicine expertise relevant to the local needs and local events. During COVID-19 times, webinars might be the mode for the VLP (either live or pre-recorded), and such webinars would not interfere with, but complement, the global e-Learning program. The Task Force on Global e-Learning/eAcademy itself will also have a vision statement to provide regular, free webinars in lab medicine as a part of global, regular program of the IFCC.
  - Estimated costs: For the first 6 webinars of the global program (each webinar was a 90-min session with 2-3 speakers; panel discussions; technical preparation and assistance included; live or pre-recorded), the IFCC subscription fees for the global webinar provider was not more than 10-12 kUSD per year. If the VLP adopts this platform for webinars (~100 participants) the cost per participant would be very reasonable.
  - The use of the professional webcast platform is encouraged, because it contains more necessary features than regular Zoom meetings (e.g., panel discussions). The EB encourages that during COVID-19 times the VLP and the IFCC Professional Exchange Programme (PEP) should be conducted using this platform. Physical meetings can be resumed once the COVID-19 situation allows for it. KA emphasized again the importance of the VLP and PEP and that both programs should increase (including advertising of these two programmes), rather than decrease.

## 2.2. Task Force on Global Lab Quality (TF-GLQ).

- A new TF has been created (also with the help of LL) under the direct guidance of the EB.
- A lot of interest with more than 20 nominations, linking several committees.
- Will have 2 separate arms:
  - External EQA and internal QC (iQC) with the following 2 foci:
    - EQA: comparing to a source outside the laboratory (e.g., reference lab).
    - iQC: in particular, a training program for developing countries; providing software and monitoring quality in the lab.

- Co-Chairs are Profs. Egon Amann and Qing H. Meng with 10 Members, 2 Corporate and 9 corresponding members (listed under <https://www.ifcc.org/executive-board-and-council/eb-task-forces/task-force-on-global-lab-quality/> )
- The TF will not be limited to producing consensus papers, but instead be very active and provide support on the ground. It will be divided into two tactical teams of 2-3 members each, focusing on different countries.
- Vision: to visit countries with need (e.g., Nigeria) to implement the QC programs with 1-people for 1-2 weeks in each country. Software will be provided to help install the QC and to do (regular) training on the ground. Once this has been established, then the EQA comes into play. Particular needs: to have EQA companies on-board to provide EQA external samples. All are under the umbrella of IFCC.
- There is, apparently, great interest and support from the national societies: a call for expression of interest might help to prioritize.
- First months in 2021 are to be used to provide the infrastructure (partners, software and samples). After COVID-19 times, then activities will go live.

### 3. Renewal of terms

- EB will meet on 8-Dec-2020:
  - 2 topics from the EMD-EC requested:
    - SY as new VLP chair.
    - AZ for 2<sup>nd</sup> term of secretary.
- The EMD-EC chair LL will retire at the end of the year. An appointment for the EMD EC vacancy has been advertised to national societies. Action: SC to provide list of candidates and compile the separate and confidential rankings of the EMD-EC.

### 4. VLP Symposia

- NR will draft a letter to the countries to explain the suggested activities during the COVID-19 pandemic (see 2.1) with the next steps for next year until the end of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- VLPs should continue and increase under different settings, temporarily.
- SC will disseminate the letter to the national societies.
- The societies will request for VLP symposia support from SY, the new Chair of VLP from 2021.

### 5. New TF-GLQ (under EB) & Termination of 3 EMD-Cs (DQCML, C-AQ and C-PT to serve for new TF)

- See also 2.2. for more details.
- Many EMD Committee members have been appointed to serve on this new TF (the Chair of C-AQ, the Chair and 2 committee members of C-PT and the Chair of DQCML) .

### 6. EMD Symposia proposals for COLABIOCLI 2022

Congress organizers asked for proposals from the IFCC Division Chairs, including the EMD, and received 2 proposals from the EMD:

- C-EBLM: Evidence-based laboratory medicine in the times of COVID-19 (Chair: Prof. Annalise Zemlin); with 4 speakers: Nuria Gimenez, Rami Helmy, Annalise Zemlin, and Seema Bhargava.
- C-CLM: Sustaining high quality clinical laboratory services in a rapidly changing world (Chair: Prof Praveen Sharma); with 4 speakers: Sedef Yenice, Prasenjit Mitra, Ed Randell, and Praveen Sharma).

If one is paid by the organizers, then the other one would need to be supported by other means such as the VLP (VLP has to be applied for by the local society). Thus, the need to clarify with the

Chair of the Congress Organising Committee to find out if the local society wishes to apply for a VLP.

## 7. Any other business

- Budget 2021 has not been approved yet.
- Translation of the AACC PEARLS of Lab Medicine into the Spanish language with the help of IFCC: 2 have been published so far on the web, and 4 will follow shortly. Direct link: <https://www.ifcc.org/ifcc-news/2020-06-30-aacc-covid-19-first-pearl-of-laboratory-medicine-c%C3%A1psulas-en-espa%C3%B1ol/>
- The Roche-supported travelling fellowship program, PEP (young scientist to spend up to 3m in another lab to learn new techniques): requests will be reviewed by the chair of EMD, President of IFCC and IFCC Treasurer.
- For the annual report 2020 (and also work plan 2021), SC has already asked all the EMD Chairs to send their reports.

Future meetings:

- The new date of IFCC EFLM EuroMedLab: Munich, 28-Nov-2021 to 2-Dec-2021.
- New date of IFCC WorldLab: Seoul, June 26-30 2022.  
(The 16th APFCB congress will be moved from Oct-2022 to 2024).
- Date and location of next EMD-EC meetings (usually mid Jan in Milan):
  - Zoom call EMD-EC: 27-Jan-2021 14:00 to 16:00 Milan time.

## 8. Actions noted

- NR to draft a VLP communication to the countries explaining the interim mode for the VLP. For example, more online meetings instead of physical meetings; but neither replacing the e-learning webinars of the Divisions or IFCC, VLP physical meetings will resume when the COVID-19 pandemic allows it; the draft letter is to be reviewed by the EMD-EC before sharing a copy to KA and sent to national societies (see 2.1).
- Action: SC to provide a list of candidates nominated to fill the vacancy due to the expiration of LL's term (SC has sent invitation for nominations to the national societies) to the EMD EC who will rank them confidentially and return the rankings to SC for compilation (see 3.).
- SC to send out invite for next EMD-EC Zoom call: 27-Jan-2021, 14:00-16:00 Milan time
- (see 7.).
- LL to produce the EMD annual report for 2020.
- NR to produce the EMD work plan for 2021.

The meeting was closed by thanking LL for his numerous contributions to the IFCC and, in particular, to the EMD – and wishing him good luck for his retirement.