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*News from the Society of
Medical Biochemists of Serbia*

XX CONGRESS OF MEDICAL BIOCHEMISTRY AND LABORATORY MEDICINE AND 12TH EFLM SYMPOSIUM FOR BALKAN REGION

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On May 25–27, Society of Medical Biochemists of Serbia (SMBS) and Faculty of Pharmacy of the University of Belgrade organized the 20th Congress of Medical Biochemistry and Laboratory Medicine with international participation. The congress was organized under the auspices of International Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (IFCC), European Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (EFLM), Balkan Clinical Laboratory Federation (BCLF), Ministry of Education, Science, and Technological Development, and Ministry of Health of Republic of Serbia. It had five sessions dedicated to the current findings in different areas of clinical chemistry and laboratory medicine, and their application in patient care.

During the opening ceremony, after the review of the past congresses through photos presentation, the traditional reward of the »Magistra Milica Marković« Foundation, intended to laboratories that advanced the most in the past two years between the two congresses, was awarded to the laboratory of the Community Health Centre »Palilula« from Belgrade. The reward was Alifax Test 1 BCL fully automated analyzer for determination of erythrocytes sedimentation rate, donated by the company Promedia. Also, on the occasion of the jubilee of the 20th Congress, SMBS delivered Diplomas and Acknowledgments to individuals and organizations that contributed significantly to the work of the SMBS and to the development of medical biochemistry in Serbia.

The working part of the 20th Congress officially started with the opening plenary lecture entitled »Quality assurance in clinical chemistry: a touch of statistics and a lot of common sense« held by the distinguished professor Elvar Theodorsson, from the Linköping University, Sweden. The first session was dedicated to the new biomarkers in laboratory medicine – the role of genome-wide association studies

in new biomarkers discovery in the case of osteoporosis, paraoxonase enzymes in cardiovascular disease, LC-MS/MS for analysis of cholesterol synthesis and absorption markers, and adiponectin in coronary artery disease. Toxicological, pharmacokinetic, and biochemical aspects of the application of drugs were the topics of the second session. The talks comprehended the influence of environmental pollutants cadmium and polychlorinated biphenyls on thyroid hormone levels, the recommendations on application of therapeutic drug monitoring, diagnostic and therapeutic possibilities in familiar hypercholesterolemia, and monitoring of biochemical parameters in the assessment of immunosuppressive therapy safety. The third session was dedicated to contemporary methodological approaches in laboratory medicine – application of HPLC-MS/MS techniques, PCR methodology implementation in pathogen detection and human genomics, implementation of the recommendations of the World Health Organization in standardization of spermogram making, and pharmacogenetics testing, biochemical and therapeutic monitoring as the basis of personalized medicine. The fourth session elaborated the role of oxidative stress in contemporary diseases, as risk factor for the development of eye disease, in prediabetes, then the role of genetic polymorphisms of glutathione transferases omega class in end-stage renal disease, and the role of reduced antioxidant defense and obesity in the development of cardiovascular disease in young people. The closing, fifth session was dedicated to molecular biomarkers of diagnosis and monitoring of therapeutic response in immune diseases – multiple sclerosis, liver fibrosis and celiac disease.

As part of the 20th Congress, the 12th EFLM Symposium for Balkan Region was organized by the SMBS and EFLM on May 26 and 27. This year's Symposium was entitled »Harmonization of the total

process: Influence of the extra-laboratory phases«. The Symposium was opened with the plenary lecture of the distinguished professor Mario Plebani, the leading expert in this field, entitled »Extra-analytical phases quality management – new achievement«. During the four part program, European and Serbian lecturers presented different aspects of important issues in extra-laboratory phases. The topics covered rational ordering of laboratory parameters, harmonization and external quality assessment of preanalytical phase, quality indicators, application of biological variability, drug interferences, systematic automated sample interferences testing, management of processes in the preanalytical phase, the impact of laboratory test results, management of critical-risk results as a tool for improvement clinicians' decisions, urinalysis, critical values reporting, solutions in monitoring performance in pre-pre and post-post analytical phases, managing laboratory demand, clinical awareness about pre and post analytical phase, and the level of communication between clinicians and medical laboratory. Next to prof. Plebani, the participants had the pleasure to hear about these issues from the eminent lecturers, members of EFLM and IFCC working groups – prof.

dr Gustav Kovac, dr Zorica Šumarac, prof. dr Ana-Maria Šimundić, Laura Sciacovelli, prof. dr Tatjana Cvetković, prof. dr Dunja Rogić, prof. dr Éva Ajzner, prof. dr Svetlana Ignjatović, prof. dr Mercèdes Ibarz, dr Pinar Eker, and ass. dr Snežana Jovičić; as well as from national specialists in this field – ass. dr Neda Milinković, dr Vera Lukić, dr Drina Topalov, dr Biljana Glišić, and dr Zorica Reljić.

The congress program also included two industrial workshops and poster session, with notable participation of students of medical biochemistry at the Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Belgrade, with their research results.

The 20th Congress and 12th EFLM Symposium for Balkan region were marked with significant attendance of medical biochemists and laboratory specialists from mostly Serbia, but also from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Croatia, Macedonia, and Turkey. With the closing of these events, SMBS has announced the 13th EFLM Symposium for Balkan Region for September 2017, which will be dedicated to laboratory medicine management and leadership skills for effective laboratory.



Participants on the XX Congress of Medical Biochemistry and Laboratory Medicine and 12th EFLM Symposium for Balkan region (Belgrade, May 2016)



Prof. dr Elvar Theodorsson with members of the Scientific and the Organizing Committee of the 20th Congress (from left to right – prof. dr Nada Majkić-Singh, prof. dr Elvar Theodorsson, dr Zorica Šumarac, dr Snežana Jovičić, dr Velibor Čanić)



President of SMBS, dr Zorica Šumarac, and Executive Director, prof. dr Nada Majkić-Singh, with the laureates of the »Magistra Milica Marković« Foundation Award and the representative of Promedia company.



Lecturers of the opening session of the 12th EFLM Symposium for Balkan Region, from left to right: dr Zorica Šumarac, dr Laura Sciacovelli, prof. dr Mario Plebani, prof. dr Nada Majkić-Singh, prof. dr Ana-Maria Šimundić, prof. dr Gustav Kovac.



Students of medical biochemistry at the Faculty of Pharmacy, University of Belgrade, with prof. dr Nada Majkić-Singh, dr Zorica Šumarac, and dr Snežana Jovičić.



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