



June 2013

OBJECTIVE

*EFLM Executive Board are concerned at the proposals in the IFCC document: “Shaping the Future of Laboratory Medicine” In this document it is proposed **that IFCC membership no longer be restricted to one society per country, instead any organisation with an interest in Laboratory Medicine be eligible to join IFCC and this right could be extended to a range of companies from IVD to informatics to pharmaceutical.** The proposal is to be voted on at the IFCC Council in Istanbul in June 2014.*

*As the European IFCC Region, EFLM want to know your views. We have attached a summary of the IFCC proposal and EFLM board view at the end of this document; there is also a brief questionnaire which we would ask you to complete. We need your responses and comments, please send to my email is: president@efcclm.eu **by July 26th 2013.** The complexity of the issue is reflected in the length of this document, but I have tried to be brief and clear.*

Thank you.

Background

The EFLM Executive Board (EB) discussed the IFCC proposal and commented at the EFLM General Assembly in Milan in May 2013.

The EFLM EB offers the following observations:

1. We recognise the need for inclusivity of all involved with Laboratory Medicine
2. Better engagement of laboratory professionals in the face of the many changes happening to clinical laboratories is necessary.
3. Speaking as a united professional group enables more effective communication with globally significant organisations.

EFLM Executive Board recognise the following difficulties with the proposed multiple membership per country:

4. The different interests of different societies will weaken the professional voice we currently have i.e. we do not wish to see our standards of science and clinical practice diminished.
5. It is very unclear what criteria will be applied to ensure an organisation meets the educational and practice standards that we expect from IFCC members and in particular in Europe.
6. There is a lack of recognition of the potential impact on member society status in some countries. This could undermine their relationship with their governments and regulators.
7. There are potentially very significant consequences within the European Union that could undermine many years of work on professional qualifications.
8. Many EFLM member societies have conflicting views with organisations within their own countries for a range of reasons.

These may be resolvable in some cases, in others not, so how can a country vote in IFCC with such conflicts? Proportional voting from each society (based on what?) has been suggested with the sum being one i.e. 100% vote [e.g. 3 societies have 0.4, 0.25 & 0.35 of the vote; if the first votes yes and the others no then the vote is 0.4 v 0.6]

EFLM EB submits that this is unworkable, especially as so much IFCC Business is electronic voting resulting in less clarity.

In some European countries haematology, immunology, microbiology, genetics are already integrated under the laboratory medicine umbrella, which broadens the message. However certain disciplines might see this as an encouragement to disintegrate and separate themselves from clinical biochemistry; a move which is counterproductive and unhelpful.

9. We understand the desire to work with companies, but fail to see why they would have the same status as a professional society, nor what the criteria for acceptance would be.
10. In some countries there are different organisations for private and public laboratories and for medical technologist and medical laboratory specialists, sometimes with competing interests. IFCC would open up its gates to any laboratory organisations and this may cause tension in some countries.
11. As an IFCC region EFLM is expected to comply with changes that IFCC makes to its statutes; this could be at odds with our newly granted status as an independent entity (AISBL) under Belgian law.

EFLM Proposal

According to the statutes of both IFCC and EFLM, regional organisations represent IFCC in their own geographical region and vice versa. After discussion within the Executive Board of EFLM, we have decided to suggest an alternative proposal to broaden the discussion field in IFCC. The proposal is to *create a Forum for Laboratory Medicine to include other societies, disciplines and companies, but **not** as IFCC members.*

ACTION BY EFLM NATIONAL SOCIETIES

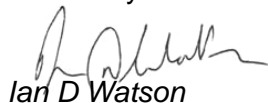
The EFLM EB provides this paper for the information of our member societies to consider as it is they who will have the vote at the IFCC Council, the triennial opportunity for member societies to hold IFCC to account.

EFLM EB believe that while the recognition of the drivers and the aims of the IFCC proposal are right, the mechanism proposed is fundamentally flawed; allowing swamping of our current voice: it may be a louder voice, but it will not be our voice. Furthermore EFLM EB believes that such fundamental changes need to be driven from the bottom-up, not top-down.

EFLM EB would suggest consideration of the following by member societies: that the IFCC proposals be carefully scrutinised for their practicality and impact both in their own countries and in Europe, and that they actively participate at the IFCC Council and vote according to their view.

The EFLM President and other EB members are willing to discuss this with member society EBs and we would like to hear your views either through email, conference call or face to face should you wish.

We wish you careful deliberation and a wise decision!



Ian D Watson

EFLM President [president@efclm.eu]

June 2013

Summary

IFCC Proposal

1. IFCC want to open up membership to any society or business involved in Laboratory Medicine on the grounds of inclusion and a 'single voice'.

EFLM Executive Board View

1. Voting from a country could be confusing and in conflict.
2. Our current standards of practice may be undermined
3. The voice of laboratory medicine will change and not be representative of current members' views.
4. The IFCC proposal may encourage division rather than integration of the various disciplines and organisations representing professionals with differing qualifications in laboratory medicine.

EFLM Proposal

5. IFCC should preserve its current membership and regional structure and create a Forum for Laboratory Medicine to include other societies, disciplines and companies as strategic or collaborative partners, but not as full members.

National Society Action

6. Discuss the "Shaping the Future of Laboratory Medicine" document issued by IFCC.
7. Consider the EFLM Executive Board View
8. Consider the EFLM Executive Board Proposal
9. Please inform the EFLM President and Executive Board members to discuss these matters.
10. Decide how to vote at the IFCC Council at Worldlab 2014 on the IFCC 'Shaping the Future of Laboratory Medicine' strategy and the proposed changes to membership.
11. If you agree with the EFLM Proposal, please make a proposal and seek seconders from other National Societies in sufficient time for this to be on the IFCC Council Agenda at Worldlab 2014.