Dear Colleagues,

I look forward to welcoming you all in Antalya, October 10-13, 2018.

Yours sincerely,

Prof. Dr. Ozkan Alatas
Chair Congress Organizing Committee
President of Turkish Society of Clinical Biochemistry

Laboratory medicine – challenges and opportunities

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The changes occurring in laboratory medicine imply that there is a risk of it becoming more a service and less an academically oriented profession. The main forces currently driving clinical laboratory organization involve outcomes-based healthcare with the goals of improving quality and patient safety, containing costs and delivering more value for money. Further factors are technological advances, including laboratory automation, digitalization, molecular diagnostics, and new Point-of-Care solutions. Economic pressures result in increasingly limited budgets with consolidation and regionalization of laboratory services. Consequences of healthcare cost reductions include fewer positions for academic clinical laboratory directors, downsizing of post-doctoral training programs, and less time for research because of increased clinical service demands. These developments pose major structural risks, as laboratory medicine may be viewed by health policy makers primarily as a service unit. The development of value-based strategies is important to reverse these trends. Value in healthcare is described as “outcomes relative to costs”. Advanced diagnostics (molecular and genetic tests) will contribute to a move from a volume- to a value-based system. As an example, genotype-directed cancer care is gaining increasing importance, as noninvasive genotyping of circulating cell-free tumor DNA in plasma can be used for personalizing therapy. In transplantation, graft-derived cell-free DNA can be used to detect rejection episodes at an early, actionable stage and help to personalize immunosuppression. The concept of Value Proposition for laboratory medicine allows for the assessment of the contribution of laboratory tests to economic efficiency in healthcare. Value Proposition for laboratory medicine is expressed in terms of outcomes; from guiding clinical decision making, process of the care delivered, and resources required to deliver that care. The role of laboratory medicine should be enhanced through participation as an integral member of the healthcare team instead of being only a service provider. Laboratory medicine should implement scientific innovations into diagnostics, develop value-based strategies for advanced diagnostics, take leadership in how tests are used, and generate the Value Proposition. Laboratory medicine should be a driver that ensures multi-disciplinary cooperation to best promote personalized medicine. This would benefit patients and the healthcare system by shifting the emphasis in medicine from reaction to prevention, facilitating targeted therapy, reducing trial-and-error prescribing, reducing adverse reactions, and increasing the cost-effectiveness of healthcare.

Regarding the future of laboratory medicine, we can be optimistic that, despite all challenges, the current pace of innovation will provide an environment in which our discipline has a chance to grow as an academic profession. EFLM-UEMS Joint congresses are an important platform for communication of innovations and value-based strategies, as well as for increasing the visibility of laboratory medicine.
IMPORTANT INFO and DATES

ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

We would like to remind you that registration and abstract submission is already open at:
http://eflm-uems-antalya2018.org/

Abstracts can be submitted only via the website Abstract Submission System.

Deadline for abstracts submission: May 20th 2018
Guidelines for authors:

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Looking forward to seeing you all in Antalya!

Santa Claus (St Nicholas) was born in Patara, Turkey.

Santa Claus

Saint Nicholas, known throughout the world as Santa Claus, was born in the ancient Lycian city of Patara, an important city on the Mediterranean coast of Turkey.

Around 300 A.D., during a prosperous era for Patara, a rich wheat merchant had a son and named him Nicholas. His birth was accepted as a gift from the Heavens, the fruit of his parents’ prayers and vows and a savior for the poor people. It is believed that he performed miracles even as a young man. According to one legend, Nicholas was trapped under the wreckage of an old church and he survived, while his mother was crying and calling out for him.

After the death of Nicholas’ father, he inherited a large estate, which he decided to use to aid the poor. At around the same time, one of Patara’s wealthiest men fell into poverty to such an extent that he lacked the means even to gather together dowries for his daughters. He felt so desperate that he even considered selling his daughters, when Nicholas decided to help them. One night he entered the their house, secretly, in order to remain anonymous and also to spare the family’s honor. While the family was asleep he dropped into the open window of the eldest daughter a bag of gold, enough to cover her dowry. In the morning, the daughter was overjoyed to the find the gold which would save her from this desperate situation.

Later, Nicholas also decided to help the two younger daughters, but since their windows were closed, he dropped the money for them in a bag from the chimney. This started the legend of Santa Claus distributing presents at Christmas time. This story also explains why he is depicted in pictures and iconographic representations bearing three balls made of gold.