



SMBS

Society of Medical Biochemists of Serbia

Prepared by Nada Majkić-Singh¹⁾, *

The Society of Medical Biochemists of Serbia (former Yugoslavia – YuSMB) was established in 1955, although medical biochemists (clinical chemists) in Serbia had already joined together in professional associations after World War II. Even before 1950, the Pharmaceutical Society of Serbia hosted laboratory experts, among whom the most active were Prof. Dr. Aleksandar Damanski in Bromatology, Prof. Dr. Momčilo Mokranjac in Toxicology and Assistant Professor Dr. Pavle Trpinac in Biochemistry. Firstly, the Section for Sanitary Chemistry of the Serbian Pharmaceutical Society, combining medical biochemists, sanitary chemists and toxicologists, was founded on January 1st, 1951. Later on this Section grew to become the Serbian Section for Medical Biochemistry, the first President of which was Professor Dr. Pavle Trpinac. On 15 May 1955, during the Sixth Plenum of the Alliance of Pharmaceutical Societies of Yugoslavia held in Split, the decision was passed to set up Yugoslav Section for Medical Biochemistry of Yugoslav Pharmaceutical Society that was renamed into Yugoslav Society for the Medical Biochemistry during Society Meeting held on 15th May 1965 in Banjaluka.

In May 1971, the Society of Medical Biochemists of Yugoslavia became the 28th member of the International Federation of Clinical Chemistry (IFCC). At that time the president of YuSMB was Tatjana Plečaš-Drljača. The Society of Medical Biochemists of Serbia and Montenegro becomes also a member of the FESCC, now European Federation for Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (EFLM) and the regional Balkan Clinical Laboratory Federation (BCLF) organization.

In 2006 the Society was renamed to the Society of Medical Biochemists of Serbia (SMBS) (www.dmbj.org.rs). The Society is run by the Executive Board and the Assembly and acts through various committees for: science, education, standardization, organization and

technology of laboratory services, quality control, as well as quality management and accreditation, cooperation with industry, history of medical biochemistry and clinical chemistry, award committee, ethics committee, and committee for cooperation with IFCC, EFCC, BCLF, and related organization in country and abroad. On May 15th 2015 the SMBS celebrated 60-year Anniversary of existence and work and published the monograph, entitled SERBIAN MEDICAL BIOCHEMISTRY IN THE 21ST CENTURY – 70 YEARS LATTER (N. Majkić-Singh, SMBS, 2015), that contribute to the continuity of the monograph DEVELOPMENT OF MEDICAL BIOCHEMISTRY IN YUGOSLACVIA (written by Nada Majkić-Singh, J. Đurđević and J. Kavarić, SMBS, 1998).

Since its establishment the Society has undertaken significant activities in all fields of clinical chemistry according to the guidelines and orientation of the IFCC. The main activities of the Society are in the field of education, and the organization of laboratory services, external quality control, conferences and publishing. In collaboration with the Faculty of Pharmacy, the Society has devised education programs for undergraduate and postgraduate clinical chemists (master's degree and residency) through which fulltime 5-year studies for medical biochemists and subsequent 4-year advanced training are being successfully completed. A very important role in establishing the specialization of medical biochemistry in Yugoslavia was played by Professor Ivan Berkeš as the founder of medical biochemistry and clinical enzymology.

The Society of Medical Biochemists of





Serbia has collaborated with the Ministry of Health for the organization of laboratory services within all segments of the healthcare service (primary, secondary, and tertiary healthcare) in terms of implementing plans of action, education, organization, equipment, etc. In addition, a program of external quality control has been carried out since 1965 within the laboratories organized by the Yugoslav Society of Medical Biochemists, recently called the SNEQAS program. External quality assessment is implemented throughout our health system, which allows continual improvement of the workflow in all clinical biochemical laboratories in Serbia. To improve and maintain the quality of services, the Society, together with the Institute of Medical Biochemistry of the Clinical Center of Serbia and the Accreditation Body of Serbia and Montenegro (ATS), started working on the introduction of a quality management system according to standard ISO 9001, and accreditation to ISO 17025 and ISO 15189. In all this activities special role had Professor Nada Majkić-Singh, the Society President.

The Society is involved in significant publishing activity. Experts of the Society have participated in the preparation of published professional methodological guidebooks for the field of medical biochemistry through the Republic and Federal Ministries of Health. For over 20 years, the Society has published the journal "Jugoslovenska Medicinska Biohemija" (Yugoslav Medical Biochemistry), since 2007 known as Journal of Medical Biochemistry (<http://www.degruyter.com/view/j/jomb>), internationally recognized, as well as a series of books and scientific literature written by its members. It is worth mentioning that the Society published a monograph with the title "Development of Medical Biochemistry in Yugoslavia" (Majkić-Singh N, Đurđević J, Kavarić J, 1998) illustrating the development of medical biochemistry in our country since the Middle Ages.

The first professional and scientific meeting of medical biochemists in Yugoslavia was held in 1955 in Zagreb, and the first Congress of Medical Biochemists of Yugoslavia was held in 1963 in the same town. Each new congress represented a step forward in the development of science and quality. At present, the Society is involved in the organization of congresses (biennial), and events such as Biochemical days (every year), and Innovations in laboratory medicine (every year, International Fair on Medical Equipment Medipharm, Belgrade). The XIXth Congress of Medical Biochemistry and Laboratory Medicine will be held this year in Belgrade (2014). The Society regularly organizes courses for continues medical education of clinical chemists. In addition, as a member of the Balkan Clinical Laboratory Federation, the Society of Medical Biochemists of Serbia organized three congresses of the Balkan Clinical Laboratory Federation, the Fourth Congress in 1996 in Budva and the 11th Congress (Belgrade, 2003) and 20th BCLF Congress (Belgrade, 2012). Plenary lectures presented at these congresses are published in the monograph *Advances in Laboratory Medicine* (YuSMB, 1996), "Yugoslav Medical Biochemistry" (2004), and

Journal of Medical Biochemistry (2012).

EFLM appointed the Society of Medical Biochemists of Serbia and Belgrade (Serbia) as the organizer of educational symposia for clinical chemists in the Balkan region and as a result of this decision nine symposia have been organized thus very successfully on different topics from the profession practice and laboratory medicine. The 10th EFLM Symposium for Balkan Region will be held this year (2014) under the title „Paediatric Laboratory Medicine: Some Aspects of Obesity, Metabolic Syndrome, Neonatal Screening, Reference Intervals and Critical Values“. The Congresses and Symposia are held under the auspices of the International Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (IFCC), European Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine (EFLM) and Balkan Clinical Laboratory Federation (BCLF), as well as the Ministry of Science and Health of the Republic of Serbia.

The Society established the "Professor Ivan Berkeš" Scientific Conference, devoted to the founder of clinical chemistry in Yugoslavia, which takes place in Belgrade every year (sixteen scientific conferences have been organized so far). The Society of Medical Biochemists of Serbia founded also Magistra Milica Marković Fund. During the scientific and professional conferences organized each year the Society awarded the best students of the Pharmaceutical Faculty and clinical chemists, Society members.

The Society has Centre for Continuing Medical Education who organized the education for medical and clinical chemists in Serbia. Ethics Committee takes care of personal and professional ethics or codes of behavior of the Society members. The Awards Committee recognizes and individual or organization who has made outstanding contribution to the Society, and promoting Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine in Serbia and globally.

The members of the Society of Medical Biochemists of Serbia actively participate in all IFCC and other relevant Congresses and Conferences in the field of clinical chemistry and laboratory medicine. This participation promotes the implementation of standard procedures for diagnosis, forming of protocol and implementing uniform organization in all laboratories in the country.

The purpose of the SMBS is to engage all medical biochemists in the development and improvement of all the branches of medical biochemistry and laboratory medicine in the health service. Its tasks are as follows: to standardize operations in clinical biochemical laboratories, the education of young biochemists at all levels, to encourage scientific research, to set up working standards, and to implement ethics codes and monitor the compliance of health workers. The SMBS is also involved in promoting systemized standards in the field of medical biochemistry with the relevant republican institutions and in facilitating exchange of experience between its members with the members of affiliate associations at home and abroad.

SMBS had the main role in the establishing and organization the Chamber of





Biochemists of Serbia (2006) responsible for giving the license to all medical biochemists working in health service in Serbia.

The Society of Medical Biochemists has a wide net of regular members (over 700), associate members and student members. There is a growing tendency for other experts from related natural and medical disciplines to become members as well. As a member of all the international expert and scientific organizations for clinical chemistry and related disciplines, i.e., laboratory medicine (International Federation of Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine, IFCC; European Federation for Clinical Chemistry and Laboratory Medicine, EFLM, and the Balkan Federation of Clinical Laboratory, BCLF) the Society is involved in cooperation on an international scale. Since year 1988 to 2012 President of the Society has been Professor Nada Majkić-Singh, who was also the National IFCC Representative, and the General Secretary was Primaries Olivera Janković, who was the FESCC Representative of the Society. Currently the SMBS President is Dr Zorica Šumarac, SMBS Director Professor Nada Majkić-Singh, who is IFCC and EFLM National Representative, and Professor Svetlana Ignjatović is BCLF Representative.

References

1. IFCC Handbook 2009 - 2011.
2. Lines J, Heeren J. IFCC Celebrating 50 Years. IFCC, 2002.
3. Majkić-Singh N. History of medical biochemistry in Yugoslavia. Clin Chem News 1990;32:43.
4. Majkić-Singh N. Clinical chemistry – an independent discipline. Jug Med Biohem 1992;11:1–2.
5. Majkić-Singh N. Razvoj medicinske biohemije. Jug Med Biohem 1993;12:65–70.
6. Majkić-Singh N. Društvo medicinskih biohemičara Jugoslavije. Jug Med Biohem 1994;13:77–9.
7. Majkić-Singh N. Položaj i uloga medicinske biohemije u zdravstvenoj službi. Jug Med Biohem 1995;14:1–5.
8. Majkić-Singh, Đurđević J, Kavarić J. Razvoj medicinske biohemije u Jugoslaviji. Beograd: DMBJ, 1998.
9. Majkić-Singh N. Society of Medical Biochemists of Serbia and Montenegro: 50-year anniversary. Clin Chem Lab Med 2006; 44(2): 234–235.

¹⁾ The author is Director of the Society of Medical Biochemists of Serbia.

*Corresponding author:

Prof. Dr. Nada Majkić-Singh,
Society of Medical Biochemists of Serbia
Vojislava Ilića 94B/7
11050 - Belgrade, Serbia
E-mail: singh@eunet.rs