

Venue: PYRAMID 2
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1700-1800 hr

Special Lecture

SL1. Meeting the challenges of globalisation and miniaturisation

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In the recent years, two trends emerged in the clinical laboratory: the miniaturization of equipments to provide point-of-care testing (POCT), and a concentration of laboratories through mergers and acquisitions. New technology has expanded both opportunities. POCT provides the benefit of a convenient test where it is needed, i.e. near the patient. For companies, it is easier and cheaper to develop such tests, since technical requirements are somewhat less stringent, being an interesting area for start-ups. Nanotechnology is one of the most fascinating technical advances, with some advocating a US\$1 trillion market-size for it. Laboratory tests and biomaterials will probably be greatly influenced by it, with new approaches for molecular diagnosis, with tests that can target both DNA and proteins in a process that eliminates PCR and allows multiplex analysis. On the other hand, there is a strong trend towards the globalization of clinical laboratories and that occurs in four areas:

- (a) Consumption of health services abroad
- (b) Movement of Health Personnel
- (c) Cross-Border delivery of trade
- (d) Commercial presence

Each of these areas presents new challenges and opportunities for clinical laboratories, what will certainly shape the way we work today.