



F2 Facilitating the Search for Antemortem Dental Records

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The forensic community will be presented with an aid in acquiring antemortem dental information. The goal of this project is to share a technique with the forensic community, including law enforcement and medical examiners that may help in identifying sources of antemortem dental information for the process of dental comparison in dental identification.

This poster exhibit will present a guide for the forensic odontologist, medical examiner/coroner, and criminal investigator for the interview process when attempting to secure antemortem dental information. The document is the *Antemortem Dental Data Collection Search Record*. This information-gathering tool has been developed over several years by the author, with the generous assistance of many professional colleagues, with the intent of sharing this information-gathering tool with other investigators. The document has been used successfully as an aid to investigators in collecting and documenting avenues for securing antemortem dental information as well as the records themselves. It is a standardized method of collecting information from the family and/or friends of a victim that may enhance the investigator's ability to secure antemortem dental treatment records from one or more sources. Additionally, this tool considers the collection of non-traditional information that may help in securing antemortem dental treatment records, radiographs, orthodontic or prosthodontic models or high quality facial photographs. The form suggests a variety of available sources for the necessary dental information that may not be immediately considered by a distraught next of kin or inexperienced interviewer, and a uniform concise method to document these potential sources of information. The document can be a valuable asset in assisting the investigator and the family of the victim to consider a variety of available sources for antemortem dental information and a concise method of documenting the potential sources of information.

It is suggested that the interview process associated with the use of the *Antemortem Dental Data Collection Search Record* be conducted in as relaxed manner as possible. It is best accomplished by a trained interviewer who is familiar with the importance of securing antemortem dental information in a concise, accurate, and compassionate manner. The *Antemortem Dental Data Collection Search Record* is a work in progress that has evolved over several years. The document is open for additions, corrections, and modifications. All comments and suggestions are appreciated. It is available to all interested individuals in a paper form as well as on diskette in MS EXCEL format. The document can be converted to MS WORD format. It can be easily duplicated.

The *Antemortem Dental Data Collection Search Record* can be an effective tool in helping Medical Examiners or Coroners and law enforcement personnel in identifying sources for current antemortem dental records. The identification process may be slowed considerably or halted completely if antemortem dental records are not available to the investigators. A postmortem dental examination may reveal significant dental information but the dental comparison can be stymied if the investigator receives a blank stare when the family is confronted with the single question "Who is the victim's dentist?" It is incumbent on the Forensic Odontologist to help guide law enforcement to the areas of investigation that may result in locating valuable antemortem dental records.

A tool is presented that may assist investigators in developing sources for the collection of antemortem dental information to aid in the comparison process for identification of an unknown human remains. It allows for gathering and documentation of multiple potential sources for

antemortem dental records and other ancillary dental artifacts in a clear and concise manner, opening avenues for investigation.

The author would like to see the use of the *Antemortem Dental Data Collection Search Record* in more widespread use to assist and guide forensic dental investigators, law enforcement, and medical examiners in identifying sources for antemortem dental information.

Antemortem, Dental Records, Forensic Odontology