



B133 The Mother of All DNA Contracts - 16,000 Sexual Assault Kits and Counting (Part I)

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The attendee will learn the trials and tribulations associated with a very large casework DNA contract.

Since outsourcing seems to be on the upswing in order to reduce DNA analysis backlogs, presentation about the experiences of New York City may help others in a similar situation.

This presentation will describe the experiences of a large, two and one half year, outsourcing contract - the analysis of more than 16,000 sexual assault kits covering the years 1989 - 1998. These sexual assault kits had been stored by the New York Police Department; in 2000 the decision was made by New York City to contract out the analysis of these sexual assault kits to three vendor laboratories. The New York City Office of Chief Medical Examiner's Department of Forensic Biology, which did not have the responsibility to analyze sexual assault cases prior to 1999, participated in the contracting process. As a result, the Department of Forensic Biology took on many responsibilities of the contract, including reviewing the STR data generated by the contract labs for inclusion in CODIS.

There were many trials and tribulations encountered: setting up the contracts; working out the initial bugs; preparing "dummy" sexual assault kits for quality control purposes; developing methods of efficiently reviewing the data; confirming the performance of appropriate positive and negative controls; checking the results obtained on the "dummy" sexual assault kits; identifying and remediating problems in the vendor labs; tracking the progress of shipments; identifying local, state, and national database hits; notifying the necessary agencies; and appearing in court proceedings.

The presentation will also describe some of the interesting outcomes of the project, including the identification of well over three hundred sexual assault patterns of two cases or more and the freeing of a man incorrectly convicted of a sexual assault in 1992.

Part II of this presentation is a poster presentation which will present statistical information with regard to the analysis results, quality of the data obtained, number of hits generated, etc.

DNA, Sexual Assault Kits, Outsourcing