F8 Universal Standards for Charting in the Dental Office Using WinID

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The goal of this presentation is to recommend universal dental charting standards based upon the WinID computer program symbols and odontograms, and to encourage complete dental charting and radiographs for patients of the dental office.

Adopting Universal Standards for dental charting and accepting the responsibility for completely charting and radiographing patients' oral environment will impact the forensic community and/or humanity by streamlining identifications in the cases of future disasters. Terrorist attacks, as well as natural disasters, challenge resources to adequately identify victims in a timely fashion. By standardizing record keeping, this presentation will impact the forensic community and/or humanity by providing dentists a tool to provide a great service to humanity.

Universal standards for dental charting will ease the burden of identifications in mass disasters, missing persons, or unidentified bodies nationwide by providing the forensic odontologist with antemortem charts that can be readily interpreted and easily entered into the WinID computer program. Forensic odontologists must lead the way by setting the example for general dentists.

Any forensic odontologist who has made a dental identification, or worked a disaster is familiar with the difficulties of reading and interpreting antemortem dental records from the general dentist or specialist. Often den- tists have their own shorthand and charting techniques, which vary from area to area, dentist to dentist, and even country to country. This presents a major problem for odontologists when trying to compare antemortem and postmortem records.

Dental schools teach that the standard for recording information on patients in a dental office should be a complete charting of the head and neck, extra-oral, intra-oral, and dental regions. Included in this is charting of all present restorations and caries, and a full mouth set of radiographs. Unfortunately, many dentists do not completely chart patients for a baseline. Many only record the dental work needed to be done and chart the work completed.

Incomplete charting provides little or no information for the odontol- ogist to use in comparison. This travesty is a disservice to families of deceased or missing loved ones. Only complete head and neck, extra-oral, intra-oral, dental and radiographic recording in the chart can provide an adequate baseline from which a comparison can be made.

It is critical for forensic dentists to set the example to initiate universal charting standards and complete charting procedures. Using charting des- ignations based upon the WinID computer program standardizes records making interpreting and translating these records into the WinID program antemortem chart significantly easier and faster.

The WinID program, designed by Dr. James McGivney, has been used in many disasters including: commuter plane crash in Guam in 1996; Korean Air disaster in Guam in 1997; Alaska Air disaster in Ventura, CA; Bourbonnais, IL Amtrak train wreck; AirEgypt in Rhode Island; and the World Trade Center in 2001. It was reported that WinID was also used in Madrid on March 11, 2004 (known as 3/11) and in Bali at the bombing.

WinID is available in several languages, including English, Spanish, French, and German. An improved French and Italian version is expected soon. The charting's simplicity makes it attractive for use by general dentists, and its ease makes it straightforward to incorporate into the dental record.

The WinID Antemortem Chart provides odontograms and a descriptors list of primary and secondary codes for charting the oral cavity. The new NCIC dental codes (NCIC2000) are a subset of the WinID codes. Included on the page is personal and radiographic information. Using this chart can assist the dentist in assuring that the chart is complete and con- forming to universal standards.

When a dentist conscientiously charts a code for every tooth area using WinID's codes, minutes if not hours can be shaved from the time it takes the forensic odontologist to translate this information into the computer program. For instance, if a dentist charts teeth #17, 18, and 22 as EXT, CR and "nothing," respectively, the odontologist has to interpret and translate those designations into the WinID codes before entering it into the Antemortem Chart. However, if the dentist codes them X, MODFL/GCR, and V respectively, the codes can be immediately transferred to the Chart.

Disasters, as well as increased numbers of missing or unidentified persons, are occurring at an alarming rate. The ease and speed with which an odontologist can make identification is related to the ability to read and interpret records provided by the antemortem dentist. Establishing a uni- versal dental charting standard based upon the computer program WinID provides the forensic odontologist with records that can be quickly and easily added to the WinID database for comparison with postmortem data. Forensic dentists

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must set the example by implementing these standards into their own dental offices and encouraging non-forensic dentists to do likewise.

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