



B85 FORESIGHT 2020 Project: Connecting Labs, Laboratory Information Management Systems (LIMS), and FORESIGHT for Benchmarking Performance

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After attending this presentation, attendees will understand a project connecting forensic LIMS to a forensic industry benchmarking process named FORESIGHT that provides labs with data for process improvement, efficiency, and quality control.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by providing information regarding how the FORESIGHT 2020 project will make data submission to FORESIGHT and the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) grant compliance reporting easier, how analytics can improve laboratory performance and efficiency, and how using metrics increases accountability and cost effectiveness in both governmental and for-profit labs.

FORESIGHT 2020 is an information technology project that has developed software connecting forensic science LIMS to a forensic industry benchmarking process named FORESIGHT. Benchmarking is the comparison of an organization's processes and performance metrics to industry best practices from other organizations. Metrics can be descriptive (cases submitted or items tested, for example) or ratio based (reports per employee or tests per item, for example). Ratios allow for robust comparisons between laboratories providing a foundation for communication about better practices. FORESIGHT is the result of an NIJ award to improve the quality and quantity of industry information to forensic labs for process and quality improvement. FORESIGHT has been active for a decade in the forensic and public health industries, with hundreds of participating agencies worldwide. Forensic laboratories have used FORESIGHT data to improve efficiency, cut costs, reduce backlogs, and increase wages and compensation for employees.

The FORESIGHT 2020 software allows labs to submit data to the FORESIGHT process with a few clicks of the mouse, thereby easing data submission, improving the quality of the data, and increasing participation in FORESIGHT, resulting in broader representation of the nation's forensic laboratories' performances. The laboratories will have data to help with process improvement, efficiency, and quality control. In addition, the software helps achieve compliance with NIJ granting requirements and reports, and an analytical dashboard will assist the lab's self-awareness of real-time statistics, caseloads, and productivity.

The FORESIGHT 2020 software is currently in beta testing at laboratories around the country. Once beta testing is completed, the software will be made available for laboratories to download and install for use with JusticeTrax, STaCS, Porter Lee, or StarLIMS systems. The software is free under a grant to the American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors (ASCLD) from the Laura and John Arnold Foundation.

FORESIGHT, Benchmarking, Quality Assurance