

## E16 Forensic Awareness of Emergency Service Nurses in Turkey

Merve Eyiüp, BSc\*, Üsküdar University, Altunizade Mah. Haluk Türksöy sok. No:14 Üsküdar, Istanbul 34662, TURKEY; Inci Yağmur Tezbasan, BSc, Üsküdar University, Altunizade Mah. Haluk Türksöy sok. No:14 Üsküdar, Istanbul 34662, TURKEY; Hatice Yılmaz, BSc, Üsküdar University, Altunizade Mah. Haluk Türksöy sok. No:14 Üsküdar, Istanbul 34662, TURKEY; and Sevil Atasoy, PhD, Uskudar University, Institute of Addiction and Forensic Science, Haluk Türksöy sok. 14, Uskudar, Istanbul 34662, TURKEY

After attending this presentation, attendees will better understand the forensic cases most frequently encountered by emergency services staff in Turkey. This presentation will detail the necessary level of knowledge needed by the nurses intervening in these cases as it pertains to keeping records and guarding and preserving evidence.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by examining the awareness of the emergency service nurses, who are the first medical staff encountered during forensic cases, and by emphasizing the knowledge levels of the emergency service nurses in Turkey, the deficiencies in the area, and the required improvements, thus affecting forensic studies.

Emergency services have special importance because they are involved in forensic cases and their contributions have the potential to change the course of an investigation. It is a legal obligation to provide required emergency medical care for every individual who applies to the emergency service. The acts of the emergency team, which consists of physicians, nurses, and emergency medical technicians, during this care are even more important in forensic cases. The priority of medical personnel is the care and treatment of the patient; however, it is also quite important to guard the evidence because the detection of the crime and the criminal, the relief from the victimization, and the role of the medical staff as patient's advocate are the nature of the task. The emergency team should ensure the collection and guarding of evidence in forensic cases while providing life-saving health care.<sup>1</sup> In such cases, the awareness and knowledge of the health care personnel will prevent failure to preserve evidence and ensure correct collection. This can only be achieved by training the medical staff.<sup>2</sup>

It is known that nurses cannot perform the necessary tasks in forensic cases in Turkey because of their inadequate knowledge and experience in forensic studies, although they frequently encounter such forensic cases. Proper evaluation of forensic cases will contribute to the resolution of the case. This can be ensured by the presence of emergency department nurses who have been specially trained in forensic studies.<sup>3,4</sup> There are forensic nurses in emergency services in many countries; however, forensic nurses who have had training after graduation cannot as yet be employed in emergency services in Turkey. For this reason, emergency services nurses perform tasks such as preserving, keeping, and recording of the belongings of the patient, which should be performed by a forensic nurse.<sup>5,6</sup>

Health care personnel at emergency services need training in forensic cases to ensure avoiding decay of biological materials that may be evidence and to collect them properly. Nurses with different education levels work in emergency services in Turkey. The differences between nurses cause some disadvantages. One of these disadvantages is the assignment of nurses to the emergency services who do not have adequate training support regarding forensic cases. Some nurses working at emergency services do have training in the field, through vocational training, in-service training, or certification programs, in the collection and safe-guarding of evidence, the creation of chain of evidence, and keeping records, but other nurses have no training on these issues.<sup>1,2,6,7</sup>

By examining studies conducted on this issue in Turkey, it is observed that some emergency nurses do not perform these tasks, and some conduct these tasks incompletely or incorrectly. Examples of such shortcomings determined in this study will be presented.

This presentation will illustrate the forensic cases most frequently encountered by staff at emergency services in Turkey and the level of knowledge of nurses intervening in these cases who are responsible for keeping records and guarding and preserving evidence.

### Reference(s):

1. Karadayı B., Kulusayın M.Ö., Kaya A., Karadayı Ş. Collection and transfer of biological materials from forensic cases in emergency units. *Marmara Medical Journal*. 2013;26(1):111-7.
2. Özden D., Yildirim N. Nurses' approach of forensic cases. *Nursing Journal of Health Sciences Faculty*. 2009; 16: 73-81.
3. Yelken N., Tunali N., Gültekin G. The status of forensic nursing in Turkey. *Sted*. 2004;13:171-72.
4. Çilingir D., Hintistan S. The scope and legal aspects of forensic nursing. *Journal of Nursing Education and Research*. 2012;9(1):10-15.
5. Pakış, Işıl. Forensic Case Approach in Emergency Care. In: Aslan F.E., Olgun N., editors. *Emergency Care in Adults*. Ankara: Academician Medical Bookstore, 2014:181-91.
6. İlçe A., Yildiz D., Baysal G., Özdoğan F., Taş F. Analysis of the knowledge and practices of health care workers in Emergency Departments regarding the protection and preservation of evidence in forensic cases. *Journal of Trauma Emergency Surgery*. 2010;16:546-51.
7. Kulusayın M.Ö., Karadayı B., Kaya A., Doğan M.B., Karadayı S., Dastan K., Zorlu T., Islek D.S., Ozar E., Erkan I., Yükseköğlü E.H.. Evaluation of Awareness for Emergency Unit Workers in Collecting, Keeping and Transferring of Biological Evidences from Forensic Cases. *Medicine Science*. 2015;4(1):1912-26.

### Forensic Nursing, Emergency Nursing, Training