



G38 Dental Forensic Identification Information: How to “Get” What We Require

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After attending this presentation, attendees will have had a thorough review and new information concerning: (1) the challenges and obstacles presented to the forensic odontologist in obtaining requested information from medical examiner investigators, as well as the victim's family dentist; (2) how to recognize and evaluate inaccurate and improper data submissions from the medical examiner investigator and/or the victim's dentist; (3) protocol for improving communications between the victim's dental office and the forensic investigator (this protocol will benefit in circumventing dental office objections and assist those requesting the information to receive the data required, accurate, and in the proper format to achieve the desired identification); and, (4) protocol for improving communications between the medical examiner forensic investigator and the inquiring forensic dentist. A newly designed informational worksheet will assist the medical examiner forensic investigator when interacting with the victim's dental office and handling objections, thus receiving the correct data for presentation to the forensic dental investigator.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by enabling the forensic dentist, through organized interaction systems with the dental office and medical examiner investigator, to acquire precise and accurate victim data to achieve correct and timely victim identification.

One of the most frustrating things for investigating odontologists is not receiving the requested information that is necessary to perform investigations efficiently and correctly. Information that is received is often inaccurate, incomplete, non-legible, or labeled incorrectly. The many forms of inaccurate submissions making evaluation difficult will be identified and discussed. Revelations with respect to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) objections will be presented as well.

Victims' dental offices and even many medical examiner investigators are unfamiliar with how to present and format information that the forensic dentist requires. Dental offices and medical investigators do not understand how to digitize radiographs and paper records for presentation. Four to five cases will be presented demonstrating illegible records, mislabeled records, confusion as to what records were submitted vs. what were requested, and HIPAA objections. Specific repeated areas of difficulties will be identified.

This will be followed by: (1) HIPAA objections and solutions; (2) techniques to discuss with the victim's dental office as well as the medical examiner investigator regarding how to digitize records for proper presentation and evaluation; and, (3) a worksheet designed for the medical examiner investigator to standardize what to request and how to request it.

The goal of this presentation is to assist and upgrade communication between the investigating forensic dentist, the medical investigator, and the victim's dentist. Thus, information transfer will be what the forensic dentist requires. This will avoid the difficulty of back-and-forth requests between parties and the waste precious time ... time that will delay the goal of the investigating forensic dentist for successful completion of the identification process.

Dental Identification, Medical Examiner, HIPAA