## H70 Autopsy By Videoconferencing

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The goal of this presentation is to demonstrate how thanatology by videoconferencing constitutes an easier way to perform investigations, providing many advantages over the current practices.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by explaining how this innovative project presents many logistical, pedagogical, and economic advantages and is part of a global media-judicial project.

Videoconferencing has existed in nearly all types of large and small business fields since the early 1960s; however, its use for forensic medicine has not been fully utilized to reach experts around the world. The initial objective of this study was to quantify the cost of transporting investigators to the Medico-Legal Institute in France during an investigation versus applying new methods to reduce expenses by finding ways to modernize and innovate forensic medicine.

This study covers a three-year period of evaluating the total expenses for the activities required to investigate crime scenes in the city of Rouen, France. The expenses include distances travelled by investigators, such as the local police and gendarmes (French police force) to be present at the forensic institute of Rouen to participate in an active investigation. Distances were estimated using the mapping features from the website Mappy.fr. The stipends, travel expenses, and material equipment used for the investigators were acquired using the audits from the French courts and tax offices.

Over three years, the investigators traveled more than 75,396km (46,849 miles) for a total of 2,720 hours of travel. This represents a minimum material cost of $33,000, a minimum human expense of $150,000, and vehicle downtime of 1,303 hours. These figures are minimal because they do not take into account the frequent presence of more than two investigators, multiple vehicles, or inherent traffic problems, which would increase the overall cost.

Thanatology by videoconferencing, while recording and encrypting data over secure networks channels, constitutes an easier way to perform investigations, which has many advantages over current practices. In addition to the indisputable cost restraints, the use of videoconferencing allows experts of different specialties to work together on the same case, even when separated by great distances. Delays due to travel are significantly reduced, allowing faster analysis. Judges can to take part from their offices during a live or recorded investigation. The investigator can solicit a forensic pathologist during a corpse discovery from his or her smart phone by an encrypted application dedicated to professional videoconferencing before he or she decides to solicit him or her for the crime scene investigation. Videoconferencing can also be an educational tool for the training and development of new investigators, judges, doctors, and students.

This innovative project presents many logistical, pedagogical, and economic advantages and is part of a global media-judicial project. Videoconferencing will quickly demonstrate its efficiency in view of the current high level of equipment required of police stations, the gendarmerie, and public prosecutor's offices. This system will greatly optimize the collaboration between justice and forensic medicine, and it will constitute a new teaching tool for our services while realizing savings for the Ministries of Justice and the Interior.

**Videoconferencing, Thanatology, Forensic Medicine**



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