



E75 Forensic Doctors and Clinical Forensic Medicine: Should or Could?

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Learning Overview: The goals of this presentation are: (1) to question whether or not forensic doctors have an interest in being involved in Clinical Forensic Medicine (CFM), (2) to evaluate if the appropriate training is obtained, and (3) to assess where forensic nurses fit in this field.

Impact on the Forensic Science Community: This presentation will impact the forensic science community by describing how the French medicolegal system allows CFM to be integrated into the daily practice of forensic doctors thanks to close collaboration with forensic nurses.

Even if statistics are lacking, there are two reasons to support the general feeling that the number of “traditional” forensic doctors is not increasing: (1) a decline in the autopsy rate due to the rapid development of imaging techniques (so called “virtopsy”) and also to “ethical,” legal, and political opposition, (2) the attractiveness of a much more lucrative private practice for highly trained forensic doctors (i.e., forensic pathologists).

In countries with no Anglo-Saxon forensic tradition, the examination of living victims of violence (mainly “ordinary” violence but also torture) by forensic doctors who are not always specialized in histopathology (but rather in performing autopsies) is developing rapidly, sometimes in association with the examination of people in custody and bodily damage evaluation.

Forensic doctors have an interest in being involved in CFM as the activity related to living victims has a huge potential for development and, consequently, will result in an increasing number of forensic doctors. To be able to practice CFM, forensic doctors should have a basic General Practice (GP) training as well as special training in drug addiction, gynecological examination, child abuse evaluation, basic psychiatric knowledge, etc. Those who specialize only in histopathology would need additional specialized training in CFM.

In some countries facing a lack of availability of forensic doctors and a much higher cost of medical intervention in emergencies, trained and dedicated forensic nurses can provide adequate service in the narrow field of CFM. Since 2011, France has benefited from a new state-funded national medicolegal system, encompassing all aspects of forensic medicine (autopsy, histopathology, CFM).

In this presentation, the French organization in which forensic doctors and forensic nurses collaborate in the best interest of justice, patients, and our professional bodies will be presented and analyzed. The literature data on the organization of CFM worldwide from a medical and nursing point of view will also be discussed.

Clinical Forensic Medicine, Forensic Doctors, Forensic Nurses