

FORENSIC PATHOLOGY: Rotation Director: Martha J Burt, M.D. (District 8 Medical Examiners Office, Gainesville, FL)

1. Description of the rotation: This rotation is designed to acquaint the resident with the spectrum of autopsies handled by medical examiners, including deaths by homicide, suicide, accident, and natural causes. As part of this introduction, residents will become familiar with the external and internal appearances of trauma, thermal injury, and a variety of natural causes of death (ACGME competencies #1: Pt. care; #2: Medical Knowledge). Toxicologic evaluation will be presented in detail, with discussion of "chain of custody" issues. Medicolegal implications of unnatural and natural deaths are discussed on a case-to-case basis as well as during informal colloquia and slide presentations. Emphasis is placed on training the resident to recognize common manifestations of forensic pathology which will be useful in most pathology practice settings, as well as in forensic investigations.

2. Goals of the rotation: The goal of the Forensic Pathology Rotation is to teach residents to evaluate and correlate the types of injuries, disease manifestations and causes of death under the jurisdiction of the Medical Examiner (ACGME competency: #2: Medical Knowledge). The resident will become proficient at:

- i. Defining what types of deaths constitute medical examiner cases.
- ii. Evaluating and extracting medical, social, and personal information pertinent to the death investigation process
- iii. Evaluating scene evidence obtained from investigators or personal inspection.
- iii. Obtaining objective evidence and relevant information from complete autopsy examinations, including histologic and toxicologic evaluations, when appropriate.
- iv. Incorporating the above information in to clearly defined cause, manner and mechanism of death statements.

3. Duties and responsibilities of the residents: The resident will be integrated into the medical examiner office team as a working member (ACGME competencies #4: Communication; #5: Professionalism; #6: Systems-Based Practice) with duties and responsibilities to include:

- i. Attend morning conferences in which new cases are presented.
- ii. Attend death scenes with the attending physician.
- iii. Perform complete autopsies.
- iv. Prepare final autopsy reports.
- v. Complete assigned readings.
- vi. Participate in a research project and/or give a presentation based on a mutually agreed upon topic.
- vii. *Note: Forensic autopsies should complement the resident's autopsy experience (constituting roughly 10-15% of the resident's autopsies).*

4. Duration of the rotation: One 4-week rotation.

5. Teaching staff: Martha J. Burt, MD

6. i. Resident supervision: Provided by attending faculty.

ii. Resident evaluation: Written monthly evaluation. Revised 3-9-06.