

A roadmap plan of developing forensic odontology in UAE

Salem Altalie ¹
Mahmoud Alsharairi ¹
Patrick Thevissen ²

¹Medical Examiner Office, Forensic Evidence Department, Abu Dhabi Police GHQ, Ministry of Interior, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

²Forensic Dentistry, Department of Oral Health Sciences, KU Leuven & Dentistry, University Hospitals Leuven, Belgium

Corresponding author:
salem.altalie@gmail.com

ORAL PRESENTATION

J Forensic Odontostomatol
2017 Nov 1; Supp1(35): 6-7
ISSN :2219-6749

ABSTRACT

The aim of this presentation is to update the forensic dental and medical community on the recent Forensic Odontology (FO) developments in United Arab Emirates (UAE). The vision is to recognize and integrate the new field of FO into current forensic medicine and science and to implement the strategic roadmap plan which was presented at International Academy of Legal Medicine (IALM) conference in Turkey 2012. The roadmap plan aimed to apply FO using accessible recourses such as a forensic evidence lab and a morgue specifically to investigate dental evidence. The focus lies on the major subspecialty of FO which are dental identification, bite-mark investigation, dental age estimation and dental litigation.

The paper of Derek Clark published in 1986, identified some obstacles during the human identification of the Air Gulf crash flight 2P6-737 victims (112 victims, 26 of them children) in Abu Dhabi desert. He concluded that dental identification was of only limited application anticipating flight 2P6-737 victims. Moreover, in UAE dental age assessment was done using clinical evaluation only and bite mark cases have been proven by pathologist just in a descriptive way.

Dental evidence management in UAE started emphasis on reporting, analyzing and referring as reference to best practice cases according to standardized protocols (E.g. International Organization of Forensic Odonto-Stomatology (IOFOS) and American Board of Forensic Odontology (ABFO)). The case assessment implemented scientific research knowledge obtained at Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (KU Leuven). UAE employed multidisciplinary forensic medicine and science collaborations nationally within Emirates' country and internationally since its active membership of Forensic Odontology Scientific Working Group in Interpol DVI. The Working Group helped in reviewing and updating odontology quality assurance forms and procedures.

A vision of developing Forensic Odontology has been presented in a deliberate roadmap plan. Challenges anticipated by culture and time were overcome in an effort to deliver and apply the plan. Initially, recognition of Forensic Odontology as a specialty, was accomplished through official entities such as ministries of education, health and interior. Thereafter, knowledge and awareness have been increased by anticipated teaching and training such as education at Rabdan Academy state of the art facilities for forensic strategy development and evidence management.

Components of the strategic roadmap plan for Forensic

Odontology were achieved such as the establishment of a specific, validated UAE (Arab Ethnicity) dental age estimation database which makes a better scientific technique to be used systematically and legitimately. A UAE DVI team with an Odontologist on board was activated for the first time in Air Asia crash flight QZ8501 in Indonesia. Bite mark analysis was considered as a major evidence that required a specialist in the field for a suspected child abuse and neglect case in Dubai Police (UAE). Participation in the medical litigation committee, which involved dental liability claim activity to identify the risk factor in dental practice, has been stressed and promoted. The strategic plan presented at IOFOS, would be applicable to countries with underdeveloped Forensic Odontology specialty to provide crisis preparedness and secure environment similar to UAE roadmap model.