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Current issues and trends in Forensic toxicology

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Abstract

It is without doubt that Forensic Toxicology has come far in recent decades. There is, however, no escaping of the fact that a lot still remains to be achieved. The current issues and trends facing those who practice one or both of the two main branches of Forensic Toxicology (Postmortem Forensic Toxicology and Human Performance Forensic Toxicology) will be addressed. Forensic Toxicologists are currently facing numerous new developments aimed to standardize the profession of forensic toxicology and to allow the criminal justice system as well as the public to count on consistent and comparable Forensic Toxicology services and expertise irrespective of jurisdiction. Examples of such developments that will be discussed include compliance with professional guidelines, accreditation of laboratories, certification of practitioners and adherence to minimum standards of practice. Additionally, Forensic Toxicologists face the need to incorporate in their profession increasingly sensitive analytical techniques, to understand novel approaches to drug testing, and to recognize the limitations in interpretations the profession suffers from. Concepts such as postmortem redistribution, postmortem interval and urinalysis interpretation in forensic toxicology will be used to demonstrate the current challenges Forensic Toxicologists are faced with.

Biography

Nikolas P. Lemos was born in Athens, Greece and currently lives in San Francisco where he is Clinical Professor in the Department of Laboratory Medicine, School of Medicine, University of California, San Francisco and Chief Forensic Toxicologist and Forensic Laboratory Director at the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner of the City and County of San Francisco. He is the holder of many scholarships, research and equipment grants and awards including a 2005 Proclamation of Achievement by the 109th Congress of the United States of America. He has co-authored over 50 peer-reviewed published papers, abstracts, and book chapters and has previously served as Science Editor of *Medicine, Science and the Law*, the official journal of the British Academy of Forensic Sciences. He continues to serve on numerous journal editorial boards and professional committees. He is Member of The International Association of Forensic Toxicologists, the Society of Forensic Toxicologists, the California Association of Criminalists, the California Association of Toxicologists, the American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors, the American Chemical Society, the British Academy of Forensic Sciences, and affiliate member of the National Association of Medical Examiners. He is Fellow of the Toxicology Section of the American Academy of Forensic Science and Fellow of the Royal Society of Chemistry.