

Coroner System



Challenge and Opportunities

Vision Statement

- Provide the highest level of quality, timely, medicolegal death investigation to all jurisdictions.

Goal and Objective

- Increase the level of competency of medicolegal death investigations performed by Coroners.
- Provide quality, meaningful, training for Coroner offices nationwide.

Today's Situation

- 1998 Coroner/ME offices nationally
- 1590 Coroner offices
- 82 Large / >250,000 pop.
- 660 Medium / 25,000-249,999 pop.
- 848 Small / <25,000 pop.

1 Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Report June 2007 NCA216756



Today's Situations Cont.

- 316 Medical Examiner Offices
- 69 >250,000 pop.
- 172 / 25,000-249,000 pop.
- 75 <25,000 pop.

1 Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Report June 2007 NCA216756

How Did We Get Here?



- Coroners are constitutional offices.
- 82% elected, 18% Appointed. ²
- Inclusive - vs. - exclusive organizations
- 84% of Coroner Offices see a need for professional standards. ²
- Funding is always an issue.



2 Doctoral Research Murphy December 2004

Available Options

- Dissolve or replace the Coroner system nationwide.
- Increase the statutory requirements to be appointed or elected Coroner.
- Increase the capabilities of the current or newly elected Coroners.
- Do nothing.



Scholarships



Recommendation

- Create a system to identify each Coroner's office with special interest of newly elected officials.
- Establish a "Coroner College" that includes a funding mechanism.
- Utilize ABMDI training for death investigators with a scholarship component.

Recommendation

- Establish minimum equipment needs for every office and identify funding for grants.
 - Laptops, digital cameras, use of CDC, NamUs, records management.
Recommend one or more of the strategies
- Encourage accreditation and additional incentives for doing so.
- Establish MOU protocols to ensure use of FP's in the autopsy process.
- Other needs access to NCIC, AFIS (in the field, DNA timely).





Questions?

