



National Association of Medical Examiners

Hic locus est ubi mors gaudet succurrere vitae

National Association of Medical Examiners

The National Association of Medical Examiners (NAME) is the national professional organization of forensic pathologists, physician medical examiners, medical death investigators and death investigation system administrators who perform the official duties of the medico-legal investigation of deaths of public interest in the United States. NAME was founded in 1966 and currently has over 1000 members.

Organizational Achievements: Advances were made in 2012 to (1) further ties between professional medical and pathology organizations, (2) address work-force issues; (3) continue Federal and national initiatives (4) support members in state and local issues; (5) advance knowledge in forensic pathology, medicine and forensic sciences.

1. Updates from 2011 initiatives:

- a. The new journal for NAME, Academic Forensic Pathology continues to exceed all expectations. The quality and content of the themed journal is outstanding. The journal is produced by Drs. Evan Matshes, David Dolinak and Emma Lew. The inaugural Editor in Chief is J. Keith Pinckard, MD. Application for indexing by NLM was made and we are awaiting a decision.
- b. Tara Snethen of the ASIP continues as our meeting manager and we are already learning how to improve our annual meetings. We held a successful national meeting in Baltimore in 2012 and the 2013 NAME meeting will be in Milwaukee, WI. After 2013, our meeting manager will be more active in site selection which previously was the home city of the program chair.
- c. NAME finished re-organized in 2012 as a 501c3 organization to best serve membership and final approval from IRS was achieved.
- d. NAME Facility and Accreditation / Inspection: The voluntary I&A program for forensic systems continues to improve and expand. Currently NAME is exploring accreditation for the NAME accreditation process and exploring potential partnerships to accomplish ISO accreditation. This is challenging for a small, subspecialty organization.

2. Work-force issues: NAME is concerned with the relatively static numbers of FP Fellows and Pathology residents / residencies. NAME is partnering with APC for examining these workforce issues and wrote letters of support for the IOM panel considering GME issues and funding. FP fellowships are invariably funded from local governments and/or FP practice income, further complicating the GME issues and stability. It is estimated that over 1,000 full time FP will be needed for realizing the medicolegal death investigation systems advocated in the 2009 NAS report. Current numbers are approximately half that number. Several reports with public comment period are available at the SWGMDI website. Most members of this committee are NAME members. **Several drafts concerning a wide variety of workforce and facility issues will be up for public comment this spring and following. ICP member and ICP Societies are encouraged to view and comment on these reports and recommendations.**

3. Education and Research issues:
 - a. NAME is participating in two nationally funded educational programs:
 - i. NAME has an educational grant in partnership with RTI to provide death investigation training on line. This training is on-line and free to participants with funding from the National Institute of Justice.
 - ii. NAME and the American College of Medical Toxicology (ACMT), through the University of New Mexico convened an expert panel on Opioid deaths and death investigations. A position paper for both professional organizations on dealing with this increasing epidemic of deaths from these substances. This should be published in March, 2013 in Academic Forensic Pathology and will guide practitioners in this evolving and difficult area on opiate related deaths.
 - b. NAME continues active CME, CE and SAMs programs for its members. CME, CE and SAMS were offered at the NAME Annual meeting in Baltimore in October, 2012, where a record number of attendees and credits were offered. In Feb 2012 and again in 2013, NAME provided SAMS credits for four additional workshops of the AAFC. Partnering with ASCP, the "RISE" examination for forensic pathology fellows continues strong performance.
 - c. NAME continues support and increases involvement with scientists and researchers in several areas of sudden and unexpected death including SIDS, SUDI, SUDC and SUDEP.
4. National and Federal level initiatives
 - a. Six NAME members participated as advisory members on five National Science and Technology Council (NSTC) Subcommittee on White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, Committee on Science, Subcommittee on Forensic Science.
 - b. NAME members are active participants in several Scientific Working Groups (SWG) convened by FBI, NIJ, NIST and other Federal partners as a resource and to define expected standards and best practices in respective forensic science areas.
 - c. Sponsored / supported motions at AMA meeting regarding D-85.994 Strengthening Medicolegal Death Investigations and Hospital autopsy communication.
 - d. Continued to support "Leahy" bill with forensic science improvements.
5. Assistance with legislation: NAME was active in providing assistance to several states regarding a variety of legislative issues. In most of these, CAP and ASCP were also active in efforts. These included:
 - a. Washington State bills, SB 6037 and SB 6068 - HB 2429, all concerning autopsy images. These did not pass but will likely be introduced.
 - b. Tennessee, a variety of bills regarding parental visitation and viewing prior to autopsies.
 - c. Federal:
 - i. Veterans bill, HR 5948: Notification of VA prior to cremation of a veteran;
 - ii. Rockefeller bill, S 3378: The Forensic Science and Standards Act of 2012 introduced by Senator Rockefeller.
 - iii. Drug Overdose bill, HR 6311
 - iv. Supporting increased participation and funding for the CDC Medical Examiner/Coroner Information Sharing Program (MECISP)

- v. Of note, most CDC programs and efforts to accurately track and study gun and other violence in this county have been fiscally curtailed, leading to inaccurate and a missing database of knowledge as violence measures are currently considered nationally and at various state levels.
6. Amicus briefs: NAME was asked and is providing several amicus briefs for various judicial appeals in basic issues for forensic pathology and medicolegal death investigation systems.
7. Awards for NAME in 2011 included the Milton Hepburn Award Memorial Lecture given to Dr. Ed Donahue, previous CME of Chicago and currently in Savannah. The Outstanding Service Award given to Mary Ann Sens. Outstanding lifetime Service "Iceberg" awardees were Mary Case, MD.

NAME continues to grow and thrive in its mission of promoting excellence in medical legal death investigation and to promote and enhance the role of medical examiners in society. We are a small professional society, with just over 1000 members and 1.2 staff, however, our contributions to improvement of death investigations, forensic pathology and collaborations with scientists and researchers in several areas of sudden death, trauma and mental health programs are significant, sustained and growing.

Respectfully submitted,



Mary Ann Sens, M.D., Ph.D.

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Vice-President: Gregory G. Davis, M.D. (Alabama)
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Officers (2012)

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