International Forensic Pathology Outreach and Exchange Group

Local Teaching Program and International Symposium
University of Stellenbosch Faculty of Medicine/Tygerberg Hospital
Western Cape Province, Republic of South Africa
27 February – 3 March 2018

Organizers
Prof. Johan Dempers and Dr. Rebecca Folkerth

Faculty
Prof. Johan Dempers (Western Cape, RSA)
Dr. Rebecca Folkerth (New York City, USA)
Dr. Monica Smiddy (New York City, USA)
Dr. Jay Stahl-Herz (New York City, USA)
Dr. William Stewart (Glasgow, UK)
Dr. Dan Zaharie (Western Cape, RSA)

Attendees
Forensic Pathologists, Anatomical Pathologists, Pediatric Pathologists, Cardiac Pathologists, Neuropathologists, Mortuary Technicians, Medicolegal Investigators, trainees at all levels

Description of Program
This is a two-part activity, consisting of a local teaching program for trainees in Anatomical Pathology and Forensic Pathology, and allied technical personnel, followed by a formal international symposium of workshops and lectures. The intent of the effort is to strengthen existing ties among forensic practitioners from the United States, Europe, and South Africa, and to forge new relationships with those from other countries, in order to share strategies for optimal forensic pathologic investigations in resource-constrained settings.
Faculty biosketches

Johan Dempers, MD, is Professor and Head of the Division of Forensic Pathology and Medicine, Department of Pathology and Western Cape Forensic Pathology Services, Health Science Faculty, Stellenbosch University, Cape Town, South Africa. He was a key participant in the grant-funded Safe Passage study, the world’s first and only prospective study of Sudden Unexpected Death in Infants, working closely with Drs. Folkerth and Zaharie and colleagues. Prof. Dempers is a highly respected instructor, and recipient of teaching awards by medical students and registrars. He has testified in connection with many high-profile forensic cases in South Africa.

Rebecca Folkerth, MD, is a broadly trained Neuropathologist, certified by the American Board of Pathology, with over 26 years experience in an academic hospital practice setting. In 2016, she joined the New York City Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (NYC OCME), and consults with Drs. Smiddy and Stahl-Herz and other agency Medical Examiners on traumatic brain injury, pediatric abusive head trauma, and other cases with neurologic disease. She worked from 2004-2017 with Prof. Dempers and Dr. Zaharie on a grant-funded prospective study of maternal alcohol exposure and sudden fetal and infant death, and with them developed practice guidelines and protocols for case evaluation. She works with Dr. Stewart on a grant-funded study of long-term effects of traumatic brain injury and chronic traumatic encephalopathy. Dr. Folkerth has extensive experience with outreach and capacity-building efforts in South Africa and Rwanda, traveling as a volunteer to these sites for many years.

Monica Smiddy, MD, MPH, specializes in Forensic Pathology and Public Health. Since 1993, she has worked as a New York City Medical Examiner and participated in the forensic examination of multiple high-profile events, including the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks. She is a senior faculty member of the NYC Forensic Pathology Fellowship Training Program, which has trained over 100 Forensic Pathologists (fully 20% of all those in the US). Her interests include infant fatalities, child abuse and neglect, domestic and gender-based violence. She testifies frequently as an Expert Witness in US criminal and family courts. Dr. Smiddy has lectured and provided hand-on training on various forensic topics for mortuary science and health care professionals, law enforcement, military, court attorneys and judges. She has participated in Forensic Medicine training programs in Jordan and China, and in Global Public Health projects in Uganda and Rwanda.

Jay Stahl-Herz, MD, is a practicing board certified forensic pathologist. He holds appointments at the NYU and SUNY Downstate Schools of Medicine. His training included internships in Peru and Sri Lanka. Dr. Stahl-Herz has acted as a consultant to the United Nations Medical Services Division on autopsy performance standards and routinely testifies as an expert witness. He recently assisted the Clark County Coroner’s office following the Route 91 Harvest Festival Shooting in Las Vegas. Research interests include opioids and emerging drugs of abuse including the
meteoric rise of unintentional overdoses in NYC (which have increased by 143% in the last six years).

William Stewart, MBChB, PhD, DipFMS, FRCPath, is Consultant and Lead Neuropathologist at the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital, Glasgow, and holds honorary Associate Professor status at the University of Glasgow (Institute of Neuroscience and Psychology) and the University of Pennsylvania (Department of Neurosurgery). He trained in Neuropathology in Glasgow, where he developed subspecialist interest in Forensic Neuropathology under the direction of Prof David I Graham and in a recognised center of excellence in the field. His current research is supported by funding from the NIH, US DoD, the FA and UEFA, among others, and describes the range of pathologies encountered in acute and long term survivors of traumatic brain injury, with reference to the association between TBI and neurodegenerative disease.

Dan Zaharie, MD, is an Anatomical Pathologist, also fully trained in Forensic Pathology, who currently practices Neuropathology and Surgical Pathology at Tygerberg Hospital and is a member of the Stellenbosch University Health Science Faculty. He was trained by the late Prof. Richard Hewlett, and by examination in 2013 became a Fellow of the European Confederations of Neuropathology. He contributed to the neuropathologic analyses in the Safe Passage study of fetal and infant death in collaboration with Dr. Folkerth and Prof. Dempers and others. Dr. Zaharie teaches locally and has also lectured at University of the Free State Faculty of Health Sciences.
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2018 Symposium Faculty

Prof. Johan Dempers, RSA (Co-Organizer)

Dr. Rebecca Falkerth, USA (Co-Organizer)

Dr. Monica Smiddy, USA

Dr. Jay Stahl-Herz, USA

Dr. William Stewart (Scotland)

Dr. Dan Zaharie, RSA