

# August, 23 2022

EVALUATION OF THE NEEDS, AND POSSIBLE  
PLANNING FOR, A REGIONAL AUTOPSY FACILITY TO  
ADDRESS THE FUTURE REQUIREMENTS OF THE  
PUBLIC AND REGIONAL CORONERS

# WHAT ARE THE PROBLEMS?

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**How long do the hospitals want us in their facilities?**

**How long will the non-forensic pathologists want to help us with even simple cases?**

**Today most residency programs barely train the residents in autopsies**

**The majority of new pathologists have no desire to do autopsies even if reimbursed at a good rate. Many will refuse outright or leave in a short time for another autopsy free position.**

**Even hospital patient autopsies have fallen to nearly zero in community hospitals. I (Dr. Sikirica) cover hospital autopsies for both Saratoga and Glens Falls Hospitals and have not performed a hospital medical autopsy in 3 + years. Many morgues are now just used for storage and filled with junk**

Yes: There are hospitals still using hospital pathologists to do cases and it helps. But--

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Many are very selective in what they will do.

Only a few are board certified in Forensic Pathology.

They like vacations and a 9 to 5 schedule.

None of the major organizations in FP recommend using them for out of hospital deaths. Nevertheless there have been scandals a plenty in the M.E. universe

# Why a Regional Autopsy Facility?

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One county will not have the need for a facility and Forensic Pathologist full time.

By cooperation between counties a facility could sustain itself with 400 to 600 cases each year and utilize two certified Forensic Pathologists and support staff.

The previous County Jail facility in Warren County would be a good central location with easy access.

The cases being done would simply be billed to other individual counties at a set fee.

# Forensic Pathologists are few and far between and it's not getting better..!

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Each year only about 50 ever qualify to sit for the exam.

An estimated 10 to 20% never practice even if they pass.

Who wants to deal with the smells, the trauma, the misery, the bugs and even the lawyers.

Still some will and Warren County has a significant advantage in recruitment if the positions are advertised with a decent salary and benefit package. The attraction is—LIFESTYLE—A good place to raise a family, a wonderful outdoor experience, friendly people and a quieter pace of life.

# To attract good FPs

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They need support from the counties, police and community.

They need a good facility to work in.

They need a good wage.

They need time for family and continuing education.

# There are many facets to the issue that need to be explored

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The lack of qualified FPs and facilities are problems many NY counties are facing today.

Some counties with Medical Examiners facilities are now refusing to do work for outside counties for a variety of reasons.

Decedents are now being transported to distant counties for examination.

# Questions to consider???

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Resources at the state level are limited. How and where will we handle the next mini or full blown mass disaster?

Who will be there to assist the Coroners in their decision making process?

Who has the records for each coroner or each county?

Who is keeping good regional statistics on deaths like drug overdoses?

How can information about a decedent be shared across county lines?

Happy to provide my insights after over 20 years in the area in regards to:

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Costs, Staffing, Recruitment, Equipment, or any alternative ideas to address a problem that will be coming our way.

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