

NACPFMT's

Practical Medicolegal Manual in Forensic Pathology

is an outcome of a collective effort put in by various members of faculty in forensic medicine and toxicology and pathology. They have unmatched experience in their field over years of hard work.

It aims to provide a helping hand to experts connected directly or indirectly with medicolegal work, i.e postgraduate students of forensic medicine and toxicology, medical officers entrusted with medicolegal postmortems, police officers, magistrates, lawyers, and members of judiciary.

The contributors and editors of the book have focused on providing brief, practical field-based information to deal with the subject in a simple and easy-to-understand manner with photographs, wherever possible.

NACPFMT believes that this type of publication is not available currently and the *Manual* is needed to properly guide issues related to forensic pathology in a uniform manner across the country.

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To his credit are a few books, several book chapters contributed in multi-authored books, papers published in national and international journals, guest lectures and presentations made at the national and international seminars.



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Editor-in-Chief
Agarwal



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Medical Officers, Postgraduate Medical Students,
Police Officers, Lawyers and Members of Judiciary

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If you can't explain it simply, you don't understand it well enough.



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Foreword

Greetings from the Noble Action Consortium for the Progress of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology (NACPFMT) India, which was started in 2013 as a non-political academic organization to uplift the specialty of forensic medicine and toxicology in India, with the main objectives of encouraging private medical institutes to undertake medicolegal work, to get the new MBBS curriculum (Graduate Medical Education Program-2012 or GME-2012) released, to form uniform guidelines for medicolegal work in India, to enhance the importance of clinical forensic medicine; forensic pathology; and clinical toxicology, to improve the facilities in mortuaries, to approach government to provide risk allowance and protection to FMT faculty and proportionately to increase faculty strength.

The first step was to get the new MBBS curriculum released which had not been revised since 1997. We, the NACPFMT gave representations, in person, to the Union Health Secretary, Union Health Minister, Union Law Minister, MCI officials, etc. to release the new curriculum, i.e. GME-2012. But in the meanwhile, MCI was replaced by National Medical Commission (The National Medical Commission Act, 2019). The new regulatory body has taken up the initiative of revising the curriculum in the form of CBME. With the poor state of medicolegal services in India and the lack of uniformity in such services, we planned to bring out a practical medicolegal manual which would help medical officers and others handling medicolegal cases to serve as a ready reference to examine and document such cases properly to help the judiciary in deciding medicolegal cases justifiably. For this purpose, committees were formed, and various chapters were distributed to FMT faculty across India. Various meetings were held to discuss and finalize the editing part. This practical medicolegal manual is aimed at guiding all medical professionals in handling medicolegal cases in a uniform manner across the country. At present, there is no single book at a national level to accurately guide doctors in the performance of their medicolegal duties, though there are numerous regional manuals and theoretical textbooks.

Hence, NACPFMT decided to take-up the initiative to bring out an up-to-date, high-quality, multi-author manual on medicolegal practices covering all aspects at a practical level without too many theoretical concepts. This manual contains practical information on handling medicolegal cases, authored mainly by professionals with experience and expertise in the respective area, and will serve as a ready reckoner for basic (MBBS) doctors, non-forensic specialists, clinical specialists, and also forensic experts and postgraduate students belonging to any stream, on all medicolegal issues relating to clinical forensic medicine, forensic pathology, medical ethics, and toxicology.

I would like to record my sincere appreciation for the effort put in by Dr Swapnil Sudhirkumar Agarwal, the Editor-in-Chief for this manual supported by advisors, editors, co-editors, and contributors, in completing this project, and we are expecting the same cooperation in future in updating and editing the future editions.

I would also like to acknowledge the support of all the contributors and supporters of NACPFMT and our friends for their invaluable encouragement and assistance in completing this task.

“Take risks in your life, if you win, you can lead! If you lose, you can guide!”

Swami Vivekananda

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Preface

It is an irony that with more than 500 medical colleges currently in India and plans to have at least one in each district (in some states), most of the medicolegal work including postmortem examination has been left to be undertaken by undergraduate medical officers (even in medical colleges). This is despite the fact, that an undergraduate student hardly has any practical exposure to postmortem examination during his/her MBBS tenure. Upon joining the service, these medical officers follow what their senior colleagues have been practicing for years without realizing the authenticity or validity of the work undertaken. With no revenue to be generated from this important work, there is a total apathy on part of the administrators to provide the required manpower and resources too.

A textbook of forensic medicine/medical jurisprudence/toxicology cannot help these medical officers in practice. This is where this book is intended to help. The book covers routine medicolegal issues related to forensic pathology along with the procedure of postmortem examination in detail. The contributors have tried their best to put the text simply and lucidly. The treatment of the topics is designed to offer practical advice when confronted with these autopsy issues. It is designed to provide brief and essential assistance in day-to-day work of a medical officer during his/her conduct of medicolegal postmortem examination.

The book does not provide exhaustive details of the topics covered, as it is beyond the scope of this book. While readers may feel that a lot has been missed, we believe that a lot has been put in for those it is aimed at. Constructive criticism is always welcome as it is a genuine effort from all authors to guide untrained medical officers who form the backbone of our medicolegal system. All the authors/editors/contributors are thankful to NACPFMT for providing them the opportunity to come out with this manual. It is a sincere attempt to share our knowledge from treatises on forensic medicine and toxicology written by eminent authors to whom we are grateful, the guidance of our teachers, and practical experiences gained by all of us over the years.

“Books like friends should be few and well-chosen.”

Samuel Johnson

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