

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

i. ASSISTING THE COURT OF LAW IN DISBURSEMENT OF JUSTICE:

The department of Forensic Medicine of this institute has a postgraduate course in MD Forensic Medicine and also a functioning mortuary. Many cases of medicolegal importance are referred for postmortems here. Qualified staff of the department is available round the clock for performing postmortems and all kinds of medicolegal work. This has made the department a unique medicolegal referral centre not only to the investigating police officers and the courts but also for other medical officers working at Primary Health Centers and Cottage hospitals in and around this area.

This fact has enhanced the standard of medicolegal work in this area as compared to the quality of medico legal work that is being carried out in any other area where the expert guidance and advice, as provided by this department, is not available. Thus, the investigating police officers are getting the advantage of scientific interpretations and opinions in cases under investigation. This has reflected positively in the quality of evidence they include in the charge sheets that are sent to the courts.

Thus, the services offered by the qualified staff of this department, who has vast experience of medico legal work in most of the major cities in the state of Maharashtra and neighboring states, has direct and positive effect on the quality of police investigations, which in turn helps in proper and speedy disbursement of justice.

ii. PROVIDING OFFICIAL ASSISTANCE TO THE POLICE INVESTIGATING AUTHORITIES IN RELATION TO VISIT TO THE SCENE OF CRIME:

In all instances of sudden, suspicious, violent, unexplained, unattended, unknown and all other unnatural deaths, the investigating police officers need to perform a detailed scrutiny of the scene of crime before preparing the 'Spot Panchanama'. However, in most of the cities and almost all rural areas there are obvious limitations on the part of the police officers because of lack of medical knowledge especially that of Forensic Medicine. This often leads to an incomplete crime scene examination. Many of the clues and evidentiary material existing on the scene of crime are either lost or not collected by the police officers.

To assist the police officers in examination and scrutiny of the scene of crime, the qualified staff of this department extends its services to the police officers. On request of the police officers, they officially visit the scene of crime and guide them to map the area, to carry out a detailed search of the crime scene, carefully collect suspected evidentiary material, preserve it properly and send for chemical analysis to the Forensic Science Laboratory as soon as possible. These services provided by this department to the investigating officers also help them to extract useful information from the witnesses while the police record their statements. In many instances, this has proved more than beneficial and helped the investigation to get completed in a short span of time.

We are also planning to extend our support to visit the crime scene even before the body is being shifted to mortuary. This will further help in preventing much information from being lost during shifting of the body to the mortuary and also solve the problem of misinterpreting the postmortem transportation artifacts.

iii. PROVIDING CONTINUING MEDICO-LEGAL ORIENTATION PROGRAMS TO DOCTORS THROUGHOUT THE STATE OF MAHARASHTRA:

The subject of medical jurisprudence has become relevant in the current scenario of medical practice because of fierce competition amongst the medical professionals coupled with the increased expectations of the patients from their doctor. This has

resulted in increased incidence of allegations against doctors which in turn has compelled the doctors to practice defensively.

However, defensive medical practice cannot be a long term solution and cannot do much to reduce the allegations against the doctors. Thus, it has become necessary for the doctors to introspect and go to the root of the problem.

The subject of Medical Jurisprudence which is taught to the undergraduate medical students in their IInd MBBS course has the potential to address this problem. However, it is long forgotten by today's practicing doctors. Hence a need was felt to re-orient them towards the concept of medical ethics, infamous conduct, medical negligence, defenses available for them in cases of frivolous and vexatious cases, various doctrines pertaining to medical practice and the acts and laws governing the medical profession.

The doctors generally meet under the banner of their association once a month in their respective towns and cities to discuss and address various issues concerning them and share their experiences. We have extended our services of orienting them to the above said concepts during the monthly meetings. The expert faculties of this department are invited by these associations to address the medico legal issues concerning them. On their invitation, the faculties go to various places all over state of Maharashtra and deliver guest lectures to members of these associations.

Till date the members of associations of Nasik, Pune, Aurangabad, Malegaon, various places in Mumbai, Kolhapur, Sangli, Satara, Nagpur, Akola, Buldhana, Jalgaon, Bhusawal, Alibaug, Sindhudurg etc were benefited by the outreach activity of this department.