

Poster 13

Assessing awareness of human identification techniques among professionals and students at Fernando Pessoa University

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Abstract

Background: The identification of cadavers is one of the main areas of Forensic Medicine (FM), particularly in cases of advanced decomposition or mass disasters [1]. The use of radiographs can also be useful, as it allows us to observe changes that would otherwise not be visible [2]. Primary identification methods include DNA, fingerprint analysis, and dental examination. In the case of Forensic Dentistry (FD), techniques such as cheiloscopy, palatal rugoscopy and bite mark analysis can be used as effective identification methods [2]. Maintaining a legible and updated dental record over time is highly valued. **Objective:** This study aimed to assess the knowledge of these techniques among fifth-year students, recent graduates, and faculty members of the Fernando Pessoa University (UFP). **Methods:** An online questionnaire was used, targeting fifth-year students of the Integrated Master's Degree in Dental Medicine, recent graduates, and members of UFP. Inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied allowing data analysis through Microsoft Excel version 14.1.0 and the statistical software IBM SPSS Statistics version 22.0. **Results:** A total of 50 responses were obtained, with 7 responses excluded due to being incomplete or unanswered. Participants in this study were characterized according to their age group, being the majority between 20 and 30 years old. We had 17 answers from fifth-year students, 15 from newly graduated and 11 from professors. The first aspect examined was if any participants had taken any course or subject on FM, to which the majority responded affirmatively [3]. Concerning knowledge of different FM techniques, DNA was the only method known by all individuals, followed by fingerprint analysis [3]. Among the FD techniques, bite marks and palatal rugoscopy were the most well-known, while cheiloscopy was less familiar, with only 8 respondents reporting having used any of these techniques. Regarding radiographs and clinical records, it was generally considered that all respondents acknowledged their importance in FM, particularly in FD [3]. Some difficulties were encountered due to the small sample size; however, the authors intend to conduct a broader study on the topic. **Conclusions:** FD plays a significant role in human identification. The results showed that most respondents understood the different identification methods. Additionally, radiographs and clinical records were given great importance, which is highly beneficial for future evaluations in the field of FD [1-3].

Keywords: forensic medicine; human identification; forensic dentistry

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