

Response to: A Retrospective Forensic Review of Unexpected Infectious Deaths

Dear Editor,

We read with interest the article by Dr. Sehgal and coauthors regarding unexpected deaths due to infection in a cohort of forensic patients from Ontario, Canada. [1]. Their article was very similar in scope and conclusions to an article that we published in 2015 [2]. Both articles retrospectively reviewed about 7000 cases of unexpected deaths and found a substantial proportion died of infections (6% in the Canadian experience and 3.4% in our study from central Florida). Gram-positive organisms (*Staphylococcus aureus*, *Staphylococcus pneumoniae*, and β hemolytic streptococci) were the most frequently identified pathogen in both forensic series, and pneumonia the most lethal infection. Pyelonephritis was an infrequent cause

of death (5% vs 2%). The proportions of infectious unexplained deaths related to illicit drug use were also remarkably similar (17% vs 24%) in the 2 studies. Our study differed in some important respects, however. It was a longer look at a smaller geographic area (Orlando, Florida, and surrounding area, population ~2 million, vs 14 million for Ontario, Canada) but had more standardization, as all death investigations and autopsies were done out of 1 medical examiner's office rather than through multiple coroners' offices.

We commend Sehgal and colleagues for their hard work and advancement of our understanding of infectious diseases in forensics.

Acknowledgments

Potential conflicts of interest. Both authors: no reported conflicts of interest. Both authors have submitted the ICMJE Form for Disclosure of Potential Conflicts of Interest. Conflicts that

the editors consider relevant to the content of the manuscript have been disclosed.

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Received 5 June 2019; editorial decision 12 June 2019; accepted 25 June 2019.

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