

# Duties of Forensic Scientists

- **Evidence collection-**

- general observation of the crime scene, photography
- Identification of evidence,
- proper collection of samples,
- documentation of evidence collected,
- preservation of samples,

- **Analysis-**

- presumptive/confirmatory tests as per the expertise.
- Collaborations with other labs
- Conduction of Lab tests with appropriate sample size/number and positive and negative control,
- reproducible experiments if the evidence is ample

- **Communicating the test results with authority-**

- Objectivity
- Clear and detailed report, supported by electronic data if available
- Conclusion
- Testifying in court
- Confidentiality and disclosure

# **Code of conduct of Forensic Scientists**

The 4 basic ethical principles that apply to forensic activities are:

- 1) Respect for autonomy,
- 2) Respect for beneficence,
- 3) Respect for nonmaleficence, and
- 4) Respect for justice

Other ethical principles are honesty, fairness, leadership, integrity, compassion, respect, responsibility, loyalty, law-abiding, transparency, and environmental concerns.

## **Respect for Autonomy**

Respect for autonomy is a norm that obliges us to respect the decisions (self-determination) of adults who have decision-making capacity. Three conditions must exist for autonomous action :

1. Intentionality
2. Understanding
3. Absence of controlling influences that determine their action.

The following moral rules or obligations are derived from the application of the principle of respect for autonomy:

1. Tell the truth.
2. Respect the privacy of others.
3. Protect confidential information.
4. Obtain consent for interventions with patients.

# **Respect for Beneficence**

The principle of beneficence is a moral obligation to act for the benefit of others. There are 2 aspects of beneficence:

1. Providing benefits
2. Balancing benefits and risks/harms.

The principle of beneficence supports the following moral rules or obligations:

1. Protect and defend the rights of others.
2. Prevent harm from occurring to others.
3. Remove conditions that will cause harm.
4. Help persons with disabilities.
5. Rescue persons in danger.

# Respect for Nonmaleficence

The principle of nonmaleficence holds that there is an obligation not to inflict harm on others. It is closely associated with the *maxim primum non nocere* (first do no harm). The principle of nonmaleficence supports the following rules:

1. Do not kill.
2. Do not cause pain or suffering.
3. Do not incapacitate.
4. Do not cause offense.

# **Respect for Justice**

The principle of justice obliges us to equitably distribute benefits, risks, costs, and resources. The following arguments (rules) are supported by the principle of justice:

1. To each person an equal share
2. To each person according to need
3. To each person according to effort
4. To each person according to contribution
5. To each person according to merit.

The following Code of Conduct is proposed for everyone belonging to The Chartered Society of Forensic Sciences by the Council of The Chartered Society of Forensic Sciences.

1. This Code of Conduct is applicable for everyone belonging to The Chartered Society of Forensic Sciences.

2. All have a duty to:

- \* observe the provisions of the Charter & Bye Laws [www.csofs.org/Charter-Bye-Laws-](http://www.csofs.org/Charter-Bye-Laws-) and Code of Conduct of the Society and any regulations made there under,
- \* promote to the utmost of their power the interests of the Society,
- \* maintain the dignity and welfare of the Society,
- \* conduct themselves honourably in the practice of their profession,
- \* have special regard at all times to the public interest and to the maintenance of the highest standards of competence and integrity.