

JOINT EVENT

24th International Conference on **PSYCHIATRY & PSYCHOSOMATIC MEDICINE**
&2nd International Congress on **FORENSIC SCIENCE AND PSYCHOLOGY**

October 12-14, 2017 London, UK

**Sally F Kelty***University of Canberra, Australia***Dismantling the justice silos: Flowcharting the role and expertise of forensic science, medicine and law in adult sexual assault investigations**

Forensic science is increasingly used by criminal justice personnel to assist in exonerating the innocent and establishing links to crime. With the increased use of forensic science the risk of unjust outcomes increases. One reason is the more serious the matter the more likely practitioners involved in a case are multi-disciplinary (police, medicine, law, forensic science), and multi-organisational in the private and government sectors (Health, Justice, legal, police). The importance of identifying effective multi-organisational information sharing is to prevent the 'justice silo effect'. This is where practitioners from different organisations operate in isolation (with minimal or no information/expertise sharing). In this presentation the findings from a large Australia-wide project will be discussed. This project explored the extent of justice silos within Australia. We interviewed 121 police, scientists, lawyers, judges, coroners, and forensic medical practitioners. Two key findings from an initial analysis were that investigative meetings were rare in adult sexual assault cases, and further, many medical practitioners were invisible in investigative decision-making with this low level of visibility being due to lawyers, forensic scientists or police not being aware of the expertise these practitioners offer. The aim of the current aspect of this project was to develop a flowchart that mapped the forensic and evidentiary process from initial reporting by an adult victim of sexual assault to the trial preparation stage. The flowchart would map the different agencies and practitioners involved in each step and include forensic feedback loops to advise practitioners of the quality of the evidence they collected/analysed. The rationale for creating this flowchart was to provide a visual aid that would identify the range of different agencies. By highlighting who was involved in a typical adult sexual assault investigation this flowchart could act as a means of preventing agency and practitioner silos.

Biography

Sally has three areas of research interest. She has a published track record in each interest area – the association between urban design of the built environment and various impacts on health and wellbeing, such as increases and decreases in social cohesion, physical activity decision-making, delinquency and adolescent obesity; the psychological profiles of emotionally resilient emergency management, defense, forensic science and police practitioners after repeated exposure to occupational stressors and critical incidents as part of their work. This work is specifically interested in stress management and resiliency in these highly stressful occupations; and interagency collaboration in serious criminal investigations. This research looks at how police and lawyers use forensic science, forensic psychiatry and psychology, and forensic medicine in serious criminal cases. This research has a specific aim to discover how well understood the various forensic health disciplines are to police, lawyers and judges and to look at ways to make valuable expertise more readily understood and utilised in the criminal justice system

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