



The Royal Belgian Society of Forensic Medicine, already founded in 1889, unites and represents the small world of not only physicians, but also dentists, toxicologists and geneticists, who are active as forensic scientists and legal experts in Belgium.

From the beginning, the main aim of the Society is the development of forensic (bio)medical sciences and the promotion of scientific initiatives and contacts among their members. Furthermore, the Society aspires to be the professional representation of forensic (bio)medical experts within the national and international (forensic) community.

Since the start, a lot of distinguished members were and are involved in significant developments, scientific as well as in daily practice, concerning forensic medicine, odontology, toxicology and genetics.

Our predecessors succeeded to improve the level of education of forensic medical experts by the installation of a new medical specialty in 2002, among all other existing specialties such as internal medicine, surgery, emergency medicine... An official 5-year-long specific training programme, acknowledged by the government and the universities, was installed in recognized academic forensic medical departments. During their residency, these physicians are trained in forensic pathology and clinical forensic medicine, including the evaluation of corporal damage. After fulfilling the well-defined requirements, these trained forensic physicians will be entitled specialists in forensic medicine by the Ministry of Health. So far, a new generation of residents in training and qualified young colleagues, from now on referred to as 'specialists in forensic medicine', has become member of the Society and are even represented in the new Board.

This important step towards professionalization of our specialty, however, is still not translated in an acceptable professional environment because of e.g. the lack of a correct payment method or of a formal recognition by the Ministry of Justice concerning the specific duties of this specialty.

In the light of recent developments, not in the least the increasing importance of guaranteeing quality in forensics and the necessity of a multidisciplinary approach, now more than ever, our Society is challenged to meet the expectations of obtaining the well-respected recognition and representation of our profession in the eyes of the government, the magistrates, the police, and the universities.

Therefore, our Society has to engage in the promotion of the application of forensic biomedical science as a profession, and must stimulate and contribute actively in the training and continuous education of professional forensic physicians, dentists, toxicologists, geneticists... The Board has the high strung desire to fulfill these intentions but is also well aware that we can only succeed with the support of all of our members. We therefore invite you to engage as an active member in our Society, not only by paying your contribution but also by communicating and participating in working groups, training programmes, symposia... The Board will be happy to read your suggestions, propositions, advices, reactions... and invites you to, regularly, consult this renewed website. The interaction with other forensic scientists, magistrates, lawyers, police etc. will also be appreciated.

There is still a long way to go, but together we hope to finally succeed in achieving the appreciation we deserve.

For the Bureau,

Prof W. Van de Voorde (former president 2014-2016)

Dr F. Beauthier (actual president 2020-2021)