



August 25, 2014

RE: WSLH Forensic Toxicology –Task Force on Improving Services -- **UPDATE**

Dear Task Force Members,

I want to take this opportunity to introduce myself as the new WSLH Forensic Toxicology Director and provide an update on the recommendations made by the Task Force on Improving Services for the WSLH. The Task Force provided a final report with recommendations in 2012 and many positive changes have occurred which have resulted in drug and alcohol turnaround times (TAT) as follows:

Operating While Intoxicated Cases		
	2012	2014 YTD
TAT Ethanol (Days)	<5	<5
TAT Drug (Days)	263	69

(~18,000 ethanol tests, ~4,000 drug tests per year)

- The WSLH Forensic Toxicology Section successfully completed the recommended LEAN Six-Sigma process improvement initiative in February of 2014 which identified inefficiencies in the workflows and appropriately eliminated virtually all bottlenecks in the drug testing paradigm.
- Since the Task Force completed the final report in July of 2012 our Chemists have testified by phone in approximately 30% of the total number of cases and appeared by videoconference approximately 8% of the time. We continue to suggest appearances by telephone and videoconferencing to the courts.
- Cancellation of comprehensive drug testing following detection of a Restricted Controlled Substance (RCS) has reduced TAT for THC cases of up to 6 weeks.
- Two Chemist positions have been added. This recent increase in Chemists has significantly contributed to the decrease in TAT and allowed for greater efficiencies in all drug testing workflows.

We continue to encourage the use of breath alcohol testing by law enforcement, especially in first offenses, and look to collaborate with the Chemical Test Section of the Wisconsin State Patrol on ways to more effectively communicate this goal. The WSLH has been communicating with the Wisconsin State Crime Laboratories to maintain a cohesive working relationship and share standard operating procedures to increase laboratory efficiencies.

The continuous partnership and grant opportunities between the Wisconsin Department of Transportation – Bureau of Transportation Safety, the University of Wisconsin and the WSLH scientists will ensure we continue to maintain state of the art analytical technologies and workflows; and provide data of the highest quality upon which the law enforcement and public health communities can base their decisions. The WSLH-Forensic Toxicology Section remains committed to maintaining and improving the forensic services it provides to its various customers. We look forward to your continued input and consideration as members of the Forensic Toxicology Task Force.

Sincerely,

Amy Miles
Forensic Toxicology Director - WSLH

