

Laboratory Management of Drug-Facilitated Sexual Assault Cases

REFERENCE: LeBeau MA: Laboratory management of drug-facilitated sexual assault Cases; *Forensic Sci Rev* 22:113; 2010.

ABSTRACT: Over the past two decades, cases of drug-facilitated sexual assaults (DFSA) have increased in forensic laboratories in many parts of the world. Investigators of DFSA allegations know of the many challenges associated with these cases, but forensic toxicologists find that delays in the reporting of such crimes to law enforcement and subsequent lags in specimen collection are particularly important concerns. These delays are usually a result of the traumatic experience of sexual assaults, as well as the amnesic effect of the drugs typically used to commit DFSA. Unfortunately, such a delay in specimen collection may be the difference between detecting traces of a drug (or metabolite) and reporting a negative result. Therefore, it is imperative for toxicology laboratories to properly prepare for DFSA cases by developing forms, policies, and procedures to ensure that truly meaningful analyses are performed. This article provides guidance in the steps laboratories may take to best prepare themselves to analyze evidentiary specimens from DFSA investigations.

KEY WORDS: Drug-facilitated sexual assault, investigation, management.
