



Fact Sheet:

“Cops and Docs” Program

NIBIN Branch, Firearms Programs Division, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives

The NIBIN system is at its most effective when the maximum evidence is entered. In Atlanta, Georgia, medical personnel are working with law enforcement to ensure that a crucial category of evidence—projectiles from victims of gunshot wounds—becomes available for comparison in NIBIN.

Through the “Cops and Docs” program, an evidence drop box has been installed in the operating room at Grady Memorial Hospital. When bullets are recovered from gunshot victims, they are packaged with identifying information, then placed in the box. Each week, the bullets are retrieved and taken to a Georgia Bureau of Investigation laboratory for entry into the NIBIN system.

The program began as an ATF laboratory initiative to increase the amount of bullet evidence entered into NIBIN from the Atlanta metropolitan area. When ATF learned that bullets extracted from gunshot victims were not being submitted for forensic analysis, it worked with Emory University’s Dr. Arthur L. Kellermann, professor and director of the Center for Injury Control, and with Grady Memorial Hospital staff to create the “Cops and Docs” program. The program has been in operation since August 1998, and many valuable investigative leads have resulted, including case linkages such as the one below:

- One person was wounded in a shooting. In the course of treating the victim, medical personnel removed the bullet and submitted it for NIBIN entry through the drop box. Three months later, a suspect was shot as he attempted an armed robbery. At the scene, his firearm was seized, and some spent bullets and casings were recovered. The seized firearm was testfired, and the results entered into NIBIN. Correlation highlighted a potential link between the two incidents, and firearms examiners later confirmed that the firearm seized during the second armed robbery incident had been used in the first shooting.

If you have additional questions about the NIBIN Program or the “Cops and Docs” initiative, please visit www.nibin.gov or contact ATF’s NIBIN Branch at 202-927-5660.