

**OPTN/UNOS Ad Hoc Geography Committee
Meeting Minutes
March 20, 2018
Conference Call**

Kevin O'Connor, MS, PA, Chair

Introduction

The OPTN/UNOS Ad Hoc Geography Committee met via teleconference on 03/20/2018 to discuss the following agenda items:

1. Review polling results for organ distribution frameworks
2. Overarching principle discussion

The following is a summary of the Committee's discussions.

1. Review polling results for organ distribution frameworks

Summary of discussion:

The Chair introduced the polling results used to rank the different distribution frameworks in terms of their alignment with the principles identified by the Committee. The Committee used a level of 60 percent as a measure for identifying consistency with the principles. The Chair stated that there were 4 models that reached this threshold, population density bubbles, optimized districts, distribution without boundaries, and neighborhoods but the other frameworks below 60% were still up for discussion. A committee member asked if the population density framework utilizes the total population, or the number of donors. The Chair responded that this was open for discussion in the future as future groups discuss the specifics, but at this point the group may consider actual organs when discussing population based distribution frameworks. It was noted that both the concentric circles framework, and the hybrid approach frameworks did not rank high in alignment, and both of these models represent the recent changes to heart, lung, and liver distribution. A committee member stated that any static boundary will always lead to issues. A committee member responded that although a static boundary may not be ideal, it's more important that any distribution framework needs to be consistent and rationally determined. Another committee member reiterated that a fixed boundary around a donor should remain a framework to be discussed.

A committee member stated that the conversation the group was having highlights a broader concern that trying to reach consensus may delay the most equitable system from being implemented. A committee member asked for clarification on what happens if a current distribution system does not meet the Committee's draft principles. The Chair and others stated that the deliverable for this Committee is to develop a set of recommendations to the Board of Directors to support future discussions by the Board and organ-specific committees. A committee member stated that one of the most important details of the work of this Committee is to identify the DSA as not being a unit of distribution in OPTN policy. Several committee members commented that the survey methodology utilized by the committee to rank frameworks should not be used too strictly, because the details of several frameworks that ranked low, could be adjusted to make the framework more in alignment with the principles.

A committee member stated that the marginal frameworks that were below the 60% threshold, should be included in future discussions. These include the concentric circles framework and the hybrid approach. There was overall support by the Committee to include these frameworks in the future discussions in Chicago.

2. Overarching principle discussion

Summary of Discussion

The Chair stated that the overarching principle identified by the committee was not included in the polling that was done to align the distribution frameworks with the Committee's draft principles. A committee member stated that this was critically important because the need to be rationally determined and consistently applied is essential in terms of legal challenges to our organ distribution policies. A committee member stated that it would be beneficial to understand how the Committee's final recommendation to the Board of Directors will be structured. It was emphasized that there will be clarity provided on the structure of the recommendation during the in-person meeting. A committee member stated that additional discussion in Chicago will be valuable because each concept needs to be discussed in detail. A committee member commented that the ethical principles of equity and utility are not mutually exclusive and there are distribution frameworks that can benefit both equity and utility. The Chair agreed and stated that this comment can be discussed further during the in-person meeting.

Upcoming Meetings

- March 26 and 27, 2018 in-person meeting in Chicago
- April 13th, 2018 Teleconference