

**OPTN/UNOS Ad Hoc Geography Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
May 30, 2018  
Conference Call**

**Kevin O'Connor, MS, PA, Chairman**

**Introduction**

The Ad Hoc Committee on Geography met via teleconference on 05/30/2018 to discuss the following agenda items:

1. Welcome and Roll Call
2. Next Steps for Principles
3. UNOS Staff Analysis of Distribution Policies

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

**1. Welcome and Roll Call**

The Committee Chair reported the news of Chad Southward's passing on Sunday. Chad was a force of nature with an unbelievable drive and capacity to make a real contribution every day and was a major driving force of the work of this committee. Another committee member summarized how everyone feels; Chad defied the overwhelming odds against him and always made the best of a terrible situation. If any of us need inspiration to maintain a positive professional attitude and remain committed in our work in spite of tremendous adversity, we need to look no further than Chad Southward.

**2. Next Steps for Principles**

In April the committee voted to recommend 1) the proposed principles go out for public comment, 2) distribution frameworks go out for public comment, 3) perform a policy analysis of current organ allocation policies and their relation to geographic distribution, 4) to maintain this committee through remainder of calendar year. The OPTN/UNOS President of the Board of Directors, in her capacity, approved the fourth recommendation to maintain this committee through 2018.

The Chair proposed that the committee recommend to the Board they approve the principles as written and ask them to send the frameworks out for public comment and direct the organ-specific committees to perform the gap analysis.

The recommendations have been amended to reflect the principles are in full alignment with the final rule and therefore, there is no need for them to be sent out for public comment. Another Committee member suggested an addition of a recommendation for the Board to move to a vote right away.

The Board will be provided with a report that includes recommendations and detailed background information on the models. There are some comments relating to variations in the DSA but there is no recommendation for the dissolution of the DSA relating to geographic distribution nor is the committee advocating for moving away from DSA's as an organizing principle.

Over communication is emphasized to provide information to the general public about the why and what of the work conducted by the committee regarding the principles. There will be short podcasts or video casts on each of the frameworks illustrating how the committee moved from

the requirement to the principles. There will be a series of communications leading into the public comment period.

Vote: 100% Yes.

### **3. UNOS Staff Analysis of Distribution Policies**

An update was provided by a UNOS senior research staff member on work that's been done looking at existing policies to see if they could be mapped into a point-based framework. With respect to gap analysis, this committee will provide guidance, recommendations, and oversight to organ-specific committees about taking a holistic approach for using this points-based approach and other analytics that may help in performing the gap analysis. The end result is to have a smooth, continuous score-based allocation system consisting of a medical priority score added to a proximity score resulting in the allocation priority score.

Lung policy zones were used as an example of how existing point systems may serve as an anchor approach for mapping policies. Allocation sequences were created and proximity points were added with the whole process being a very basic and mechanical approach. The example of the lung policy expressed in points provides the ability to compare points across organs. Conducting this exercise showed it could be potentially useful, there are limitations, and there should be a holistic approach that includes other types of analytics. This gives a framework for having a more continuous type of approach for allocation and distribution. Examples of heart, liver, and kidney have been prepared but will be presented another time.

#### Gap Analysis

Gap analysis should result in a determination of the extent each organ-specific allocation policy, as it relates to distribution, is aligned with the codified principles. These are the types of questions that would inform what kind of analyses need to be performed. Holistic analyses can be included and what is learned from going through the points mapping exercise may be useful in work towards achieving consistency with the goals. Other information collected was used to illustrate how things such as organ shipping distances, local versus regional versus national, have changed over time and how it can differ per organ. Factors like distance and cost can also be included. The inequity in access framework may also answer questions and some preliminary results for specific organs will be shared at a later time. Supply and demand metrics may have to be part of the equation and the point mapping exercise may also add value.

A density plot was produced showing distributions by organ by percent local, regional, or national. This breakdown may or may not be useful, but the information looking at how far organs are shipping along with median percentile information will allow for sub-metric analysis.

#### Next Steps

A follow-up call will be scheduled for June to continue this discussion. A report on the June Board meeting will be shared along with a report on anything coming up related to liver.

A copy of the briefing paper will be provided to everyone once it is finalized.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending today and supporting the vote to approve the recommendation plan for the Board meeting.