

**OPTN Policy Oversight Committee
Meeting Summary
September 14, 2023
Conference Call**

**Jennifer Prinz, BSN, MPH, Chair
Erika Lease, MD, FCCP, Vice Chair**

Introduction

The OPTN Policy Oversight Committee (the Committee) met via Cisco WebEx teleconference on 09/14/2023 to discuss the following agenda items:

1. Achieving Efficiency in Allocation

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

1. Achieving Efficiency in Allocation

Committee leadership and Staff presented information on the efficiency work that the OPTN Board is beginning and how the Committee can become involved in this work and help develop it further.

Data summary:

The Committee viewed slides and visual representation about the current deceased donor kidney non-use rates depict and increase over the past 35 years as well as the rise in allocation out of sequence. The objective of refining efficiency work is to address these issues, among others, and find out how else efficiency in allocation can be improved for the whole transplant community. The ongoing commitment to improving efficiency in allocation practices was emphasized. The Chair mentioned that the Committee aims to collaborate with the efficiency task force and highlighted the multi-faceted challenges of the allocation process. Six key areas were identified for increasing efficiency, some of which may fall under the purview of the committee, while others could involve other committees or task forces. The primary goal is to support the efficiency task force in improving organ allocation processes.

Summary of discussion:

No decisions made during this meeting; it was discussion only.

A staff member provided further insights into the efficiency task force initiative. They emphasized the need for community engagement, comprehensive evaluations of current data and recommendations, and the importance of transparency and open communication. They outlined the timeline for the task force's formation and activities, mentioning the potential engagement with the community during regional and annual meetings and the compilation of data and recommendations. Further highlighted was the task force's role in evaluating data and implementing policy changes.

Emphasis was placed on the importance of community feedback and the need for flexibility to adapt to evolving priorities. The staff member clarified that the task force's role is advisory, with the aim of making potential future projects community-driven and responsive to challenges. The task force's role and composition were explained, emphasizing diversity and representation from various organ groups and regions.

Additionally, the relationship between the Committee and the task force was addressed, with the Committee continuing to coordinate and approve all policy and data collection efforts but not being directly involved in collaborative projects, managing focus groups, or operational improvements outside of policy projects. It was clarified that the Committee would continue to review policy initiatives and guidance documents.

Two efforts were brought up that the Committee could potentially weigh in on currently, the Data Advisory Committee's review of non-utilization data and the Lung Committee's efficiency work that has been underway since Lung Continuous Distribution was implemented.

Data Advisory Committee Review on Non-Use Data

The Vice Chair of the Data Advisory Committee (DAC) emphasized the importance of reviewing non-use data to understand why organs are not being utilized in transplant procedures. They pointed out that historically, the codes used to denote non-use or decline have not been very informative and often lacked specificity. The DAC's role is to evolve the OPTN system for collecting data that would be more useful for policy discussions, especially as allocation policies continue to change. A research staff member provided insights into the committee's timeline, stating that there isn't a firm schedule yet, but follow-up discussions will commence in the coming months. This delay is due to the extensive data request, which needs time for review and identification of actionable items.

The complexity of the data collection process was acknowledged and the DAC Vice Chair expressed a need for more valuable and real-time data. They urged that the work on evolving data collection systems for better policy discussions and continuous allocation be considered under the task force agenda goals.

A staff member highlighted the idea of conducting short-term pilot data collection to gather more granular information for evaluation. This approach would help in aligning the data collected with current practices.

Lung Committee Project on Efficiency

The Committee Vice Chair highlighted the challenges faced by transplant centers in dealing with an increased number of lung offers, particularly due to the continuous distribution policy that was implemented in the Spring of 2023. The need to develop advanced offer filters to streamline the allocation process and provide guidance to transplant centers for managing offers more effectively was emphasized. The Vice Chair noted that the Lung Committee efficiency group meetings focus on not just discussing advanced offer filters, but also the need for more complex offer filters that provide greater granularity in choosing potential organ offers. Additionally, the sequencing of offers has also posed a problem for transplant centers, creating more work for transplant coordinators and sometimes bogging down the system.

Next steps:

Committee members were reminded to submit three efficiency improvement ideas or current projects for discussion at the upcoming in-person meeting. These ideas should include assessments of the level of effort, the type of improvement, and the perceived urgency.

Upcoming Meetings

- October 20, in-person meeting

Attendance

- **Committee Members**
 - Jennifer Prinz
 - Jesse Schold
 - Stephanie Pouch
 - Kim Koontz
 - Erika Lease
 - Christine Brenner
 - Lisa Stocks
 - JonDavid Menteer
 - Gerald Morris
 - Rachel Engen
 - Lori Markham
 - Sanjay Kulkarni
 - Oscar Serrano
 - Scott Lindberg
 - Steven Gonzalez
 - Jason Huff
 - Peter Stock
 - Molly McCarthy
 - Ty Dunn
 - Arpita Basu
 - Matthew Hartwig
- **HRSA Representatives**
 - Marilyn Levi
- **SRTR Staff**
 - Jon Snyder
 - Ajay Israni
- **UNOS Staff**
 - Stryker-Ann Vosteen
 - Kaitlin Swanner
 - Lauren Mauk
 - Cole Fox
 - Ann-Marie Leary
 - Anne Zehner
 - Sharon Shepherd
 - Susan Tlusty
 - Laura Cartwright
 - Laura Schmitt
 - Krissy Laurie
 - Meghan McDermott
 - James Alcorn
 - Courtney Jett
 - Taylor Livelli