

OPTN Executive Committee

Meeting Summary

August 23, 2023

Webex

Dianne LaPointe Rudow, ANP-BC, DNP, FAAN, Chair

Introduction

The OPTN Executive Committee met via Webex on 08/23/2023 to discuss the following agenda items:

1. Welcome and Announcements
2. Special Public Comment Proposal from the Lung Transplantation Committee

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

1. Welcome and Announcements

Dianne LaPointe Rudow, Chair of the Executive Committee, welcomed the committee to the meeting and presented the agenda.

2. Special Public Comment Proposal from the Lung Transplantation Committee

Marie Budev, Chair of the Lung Transplantation Committee, presented the special public comment proposal from the committee to Modify Lung Allocation by Blood Type.

The purpose of the proposal is to provide more proportional access to lung transplants for candidates of all blood types and to improve access to lung transplant for blood type O candidates. The proposal from the Lung Committee includes scaling up the points assigned for blood type so that blood type O candidates receive 5 points, and the points assigned to other blood types would also be adjusted proportionally. The committee also proposes changing the shape of the blood type rating scale so blood type has more of an impact on the overall allocation for lungs.

The committee proposes a special public comment period as there has been an unexpected decrease in transplants for blood type O candidates. After investigation, the Scientific Registry of Transplant Recipients (SRTR) found that the original modeling did not incorporate incompatible blood type screening rules. This meant that the modeling was overestimating blood type O transplants and under the current policy, blood type O candidates are waiting longer for transplant and are more medically urgent at the time of transplant.

This proposal is expected to improve transplant rates for blood type O candidates, preserve reductions in waitlist mortality seen in continuous distribution relative to the previous allocation system, and limit increases in median donor-to-recipient distance relative to current policy.

Dr. Budev shared data from the three-month monitoring report to show the difference in blood type O candidates versus other blood type candidates under the model. Under the current model, blood type O candidates had a higher median medical urgency score at the time of transplant. Dr. Budev highlighted the research that the committee conducted to develop this proposal and noted that the most up-to-date proposal was available to the Executive Committee on SharePoint.

The committee will ask the public to consider the following questions during the special public comment period:

- Do you support implementing the proposed rating scale?
- Would you propose an alternative blood type rating scale or other adjustments to the lung composite allocation score (CAS)?
- What is most important to you as the Committee monitors this allocation change?

Summary of Discussion:

The committee discussed whether a three-month monitoring report was sufficient evidence to change the policy and modeling. Dr. Budev explained that because an error was found in the modeling report and due to concern from the lung community, the committee decided three months was a sufficient amount of time to consider.

The committee discussed the public comment timeline. Dr. Budev stated that the Lung Committee determined that the two-week timeline was appropriate given the urgency of the situation. Because the proposed change was not labeled as an expedited policy change or an emergency policy change, it did not have to follow the 30-day time period, but instead could follow a shorter time period. The OPTN Final Rule and OPTN Bylaws do not set a minimum number of days for proposals that are not distributed for emergency or expedited public comment. This was not considered an emergency policy change because it was classified as an access issue, not a patient safety issue. The committee and contractor staff noted that outreach would be done throughout the lung community to ensure feedback was received during the special public comment period.

The committee discussed exception requests and if patients were able to adjust their exception submissions due to this policy change. Contractor staff explained that they will provide additional information to the community on amending or withdrawing exceptions. It was noted that if a candidate has an exception score and a score without an exception, the system will always assign the higher score to patients.

The committee discussed how similar situations could be prevented in the future. The SRTR explained their process for developing the modeling for the policy, and how they identified the issue. It was noted that while the SRTR and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) both supported the Lung Committee in developing proposals through the use of models, exploratory work is performed by MIT and final execution of the modeling requested by the Lung Committee comes from the SRTR.

Vote:

The OPTN Executive Committee unanimously approved the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the OPTN Executive Committee approved the project Modify Lung Allocation by Blood Type.

FURTHER RESOLVED, the OPTN Executive Committee approved the distribution of the proposal for a special public comment period, to run from August 24, 2023 to September 7, 2023.

The meeting adjourned.

Upcoming Meetings

- September 8, 2023
- September 22, 2023
- October 10, 2023
- November 6, 2023

Attendance

- **Committee Members**
 - Andrea Tietjen
 - Dianne LaPointe Rudow
 - Ginny McBride
 - Jerry McCauley
 - Jim Sharrock
 - Linda Cendales
 - Melissa McQueen
 - Richard Formica
 - Silas Norman
 - Valinda Jones
- **HRSA Representatives**
 - Adrienne Goodrich-Doctor
 - Christopher McLaughlin
 - Frank Holloman
- **UNOS Staff**
 - Anna Messmer
 - James Alcorn
 - Jason Livingston
 - Kaitlin Swanner
 - Krissy Laurie
 - Liz Robbins Callahan
 - Maureen McBride
 - Morgan Jupe
 - Roger Brown
 - Susan Tlusty
 - Susie Sprinson
 - Taylor Livelli
 - Tiwan Nicholson
- **Other Attendees**
 - Marie Budev
 - Nick Wood
 - Ryo Hirose