

## OPTN Ad Hoc International Relations Committee

### Meeting Summary

March 19, 2024

Conference Call

**Pramod Bonde, MD, Chair**

**Peter Stock, MD, Vice Chair**

### Introduction

The Ad Hoc International Relations Committee (AHIRC), the Committee, met via WebEx teleconference on 3/19/2024 to discuss the following agenda items:

1. Welcome and Announcements
2. Public Comment Presentation: *OPTN Strategic Plan 2024-2027*

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

#### 1. Welcome and Announcements

OPTN contractor staff provided the Committee with reminders and announcements.

##### Presentation Summary:

- Public comment cycle is open from January 23, 2024, to March 19, 2024
- The objective of today's meeting is to provide public comment feedback on the OPTN Strategic Plan 2024-2027 proposal

##### Summary of discussion:

This was not an agenda item that required a decision; no decisions were made by the Committee.

#### 2. Public Comment Presentation: *OPTN Strategic Plan 2024-2027*

A representative of the OPTN Executive Committee provided an overview of the *OPTN Strategic Plan 2024-2027* proposal<sup>1</sup>.

##### Presentation Summary:

- This strategic plan is not an exhaustive list of the OPTN's work, but rather serves as a high-level framework to guide the OPTN's strategic focus.
- The Committee intentionally selected goals with greater specificity to allow for a focusing of resources on key opportunities, driving action to ultimately benefit patients.
- Proposed Goals:
  - **Improve Offer Acceptance Rate:** Increase opportunities for transplants for patients in need by enhancing offer acceptance.

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<sup>1</sup> "OPTN Strategic Plan 2024-2027," OPTN, Public Comment Proposal, available [https://optn.transplant.hrsa.gov/media/nwrksrgl/exec\\_2024-2027-strategic-plan\\_pcjan24.pdf](https://optn.transplant.hrsa.gov/media/nwrksrgl/exec_2024-2027-strategic-plan_pcjan24.pdf).

- **Optimize Organ Use:** Maximize the use of organs for transplantation for waitlisted patients, while maintaining or improving upon past equity gains.
- **Enhance OPTN Efficiency:** Increase the efficiency of the OPTN through improvement and innovation to serve the greatest number of patients.

#### Summary of discussion:

This was not an agenda item that required a decision; no decisions were made by the Committee.

The Vice-Chair raised a notable concern regarding the current approach to continuous distribution, expressing uncertainty about its status given the significant deviations observed in the proposed strategic plan compared to previous years. He questioned whether continuous distribution had been sidelined considering these differences.

He expressed confidence in the Committee's ability to adapt and operate effectively within the framework of the proposed plan, particularly highlighting AHIRC's ongoing efforts. The Vice-Chair touched upon the committee's current focus, emphasizing its dedication to increasing living donors, which he deemed to align well with the objectives outlined in the strategic plan.

Another member highlighted the absence of continuous distribution as a goal or objective in the strategic plan. Another member expressed appreciation for the simplicity of the plan, particularly praising its concrete, specific, and narrow measures, which she found appealing. Additionally, a participant emphasized the necessity of a mid-term assessment for the plan to effectively track progress towards goals and priorities. Furthermore, another member voiced confusion regarding the language used under the second goal of the proposal, explicitly referencing aspects of maintaining equity improvements. She sought clarification on whether this implied maintaining the current status quo rather than striving for further enhancements.

During the discussion on organs categorized as having the highest risk of non-use, a member pointed out that kidneys with a higher Kidney Donor Profile Index (KDPI) are more susceptible to non-use. He emphasized the importance of understanding the role of machine perfusion in the transplantation process to identify organs at the highest risk of non-use. Another member highlighted the impact of technological advancements in reducing the perceived risk associated with certain organs, suggesting the need for a dynamic definition that accommodates these changes.

When asked about the prioritization of projects undertaken by AHIRC within the strategic plan, a member advocated for the prioritization of the Committee's project on the Management of International Living Donors in the U.S., emphasizing its significance and alignment with the strategic plan's objectives. This project aims to enhance equity and increase the pool of living donors. In agreement, the Chair of the Committee asserted that this project should be accorded the highest priority within the strategic plan. He underscored its potential to yield substantial positive impacts on transplantation and the number of living donors.

#### Next steps:

The Committee leadership will gather and synthesize the discussion and feedback concerning the OPTN strategic plan and subsequently submit a public comment on behalf of the committee.

#### **Upcoming Meeting**

- April 23, 2024

## Attendance

- **Committee Members**
  - Peter Stock
  - Pramod Bonde
  - Cynthia Forland
  - Scott Sanoff
  - Taryn Shappell
  - Abby Ruiz
  - Angele Lacks
- **HRSA Representatives**
  - Jim Bowman
- **SRTR Staff**
  - Avery Cook
- **UNOS Staff**
  - Tamika Watkins
  - Susan Tlusty
- **Other Attendees**
  - Trish Jaison