

**OPTN Ad Hoc Disease Transmission Advisory Committee
Endemic Workgroup
Meeting Summary
March 9, 2022
Conference Call**

Ricardo La Hoz, MD, FACP, FAST, FIDSA, Chair

Introduction

The OPTN Endemic Workgroup (the Workgroup) met via Microsoft Teams teleconference 03/09/2022 to discuss the following agenda items:

1. Review of relevant data- endemic diseases
2. Workgroup discussion & potential for additional data

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

1. Review of relevant data- endemic diseases

The Workgroup reviewed West Nile Virus (WNV), Strongyloides, Chagas, and Tuberculosis (TB) data.

Summary of discussion:

A member asked for clarification on the overall goal of the Workgroup's recommendations, noting that they favor standardization of testing throughout the United States for common and preventable diseases for which there is reasonable testing. This member gave Strongyloides as an example, as sometimes the test for this disease is appropriate, but not performed by Organ Procurement Organizations (OPO). Another member responded that gathering data on endemic diseases could support future education and policy change recommendations.

A member asked for clarification on the recent resource considerations put forward by the Policy Oversight Committee (POC) in order to balance workgroup expectations with technical implementation feasibility. UNOS staff explained that the currently the OPTN is working on large projects that require much of the organization's implementation budget. The POC will present to the OPTN Finance and Executive Committees to propose an increase in the budget's technical implementation hours. Endemic disease guidance solutions that require less IT programming are encouraged, but a policy solution may also be possible, as some endemic testing data collection is already programmed into DonorNet.

2. Workgroup discussion & potential for additional data

Summary of discussion:

Members agreed they would begin their endemic disease work by discussing Strongyloides. A member asked if the Transplant Information Electronic Data Interchange (TIEDI) information in UNet could be used for the identification and test results of at- risk donors to investigate how frequently donors with this status are and are not undergoing testing. A couple of members noted the amount of readily available Strongyloides data and suggested the Workgroup may have enough evidence to support recommendations for change.

A representative from the CDC suggested that the Workgroup also consider making recommendations for WNV, as accurate testing and an existing algorithm are available. They added that TB may also be

considered a high priority due to the risk of secondary transmission and overall poor outcomes once contracted.

A member added that they did not feel the *Strongyloides* test results need to be available prior to recovery, while the Workgroup should consider a requirement for WNV tests results to be available prior to recovery. A member commented that their OPO located in the Midwest does not regularly test for *Strongyloides* and WNV, but does determine if a test is necessary based on history and risk factors. They added that OPOs could benefit from any endemic diseases education that is developed by the Workgroup.

A member noted that there could be differences in timing and processes for WNV screening between health departments and jurisdictions. The CDC representative responded that they would look into this. The Workgroup accepted an offer to have the CDC facilitate a talk on TB, including discussion on diagnostic test reporting and risk factors. A HRSA representative asked about any validated risk calculators for interpreting a positive TB skin test or blood test. A representative from the CDC responded that two such calculators do exist, but they expect quite a few challenges with using these in primary care or outpatient clinic settings.

Next steps:

The Workgroup agreed on the following next steps:

- Begin gathering existing *Strongyloides* data as evidence for recommendations.
- With the CDC's knowledge of blood donor screening for WNV, set up model that mimics existing algorithm.
- Analyze TB cases for risk factors and consider what education should be developed for the transplant community.

Upcoming Meeting

- April 5, 2022, 3pm ET (teleconference)

Attendance

- **Workgroup Members**
 - Sarah Taimur
 - Brychan Clark
 - Emily Blumberg
 - Raymund Razonable
 - Stephanie Marie Pouch
 - Pallavi Annambhotla
 - Lara Danziger-Isakov
 - Ricardo La Hoz
 - Gary Marklin
- **HRSA Representatives**
 - James Bowman
 - Marilyn Levi
- **UNOS Staff**
 - Courtney Jett
 - Cole Fox
 - Kelley Poff
 - Matt Cafarella
 - Susan Tlusty
 - Amelia Devereaux
- **FDA Staff**
 - Scott Brubaker
- **CDC Staff**
 - Rebecca Free
 - Noah Schwartz
 - Alfonso Claudio Hernandez- Romieu
 - Sridhar Basavaraju