

To: Liver transplant program directors
Liver transplant program administrators
OPO executive directors

From: Julie Heimbach, M.D.
Chair, OPTN/UNOS Liver and Intestinal Organ Transplantation Committee

Subject: Liver Committee update, May 2018

We want to continue to update you on the status of major projects involving the OPTN/UNOS Liver and Intestinal Organ Transplantation Committee.

Implementation timetable for NLRB

UNOS is in the process of planning and programming both the National Liver Review Board (NLRB) and enhancements to liver distribution. While formal dates have not been established, the NLRB is anticipated for October implementation, with liver distribution enhancements to be implemented near the end of 2018.

On May 16, a training module will be available in [UNOS Connect](#) summarizing the new MELD/PELD exception scoring that will be implemented with NLRB. UNOS will continue to develop a detailed set of training offerings to help you prepare for the changes. We will update you with more specific information as it becomes available.

NLRB transition plan

At the time of NLRB implementation, a number of liver candidates will have pre-existing exception scores. Our committee has determined to allow all exception candidates as of the policy implementation date to keep their existing, pre-NLRB score until their next extension is due. At the time of their next extension:

- Candidates who meet standard exception criteria in policy will be scored according to provisions of the new policy, based on the median MELD/PELD score at transplant
- Candidates with non-standard exceptions, who had received scores through their regional review board (RRB), will have their exception request reviewed by the NLRB.

In addition, as of implementation, the NLRB will consider any exception requests submitted for RRB consideration prior to the implementation date but not yet decided by the RRB.

Reviewers sought for NLRB participation

Liver transplant programs received an e-mail in March for submission of NLRB reviewers. It is not too late to respond. The NLRB will be comprised of three specialty review boards:

- HCC
- Adult – other
- Pediatric (Open to liver programs that transplant any volume of pediatric candidates)

Each liver program must submit a National Liver Review Board Interest Form to indicate the specialty review boards on which it will participate. Programs that choose to participate must nominate a primary reviewer and an alternate for each specialty review board selected. Participants can serve on multiple specialty review boards, but the same person may not represent more than one transplant center on the same specialty review board.

All primary and alternate reviewers are required to complete an updated version of the UNOS Confidentiality Agreement prior to serving on the NLRB. Review board members and other interested individuals will have the opportunity to participate in NLRB training beginning in May 2018. If you have additional questions about the NLRB, please contact reviewboardstaff@unos.org.

For questions or further information

If you'd like to know more about existing policies or public comment items, please visit our committee's [page](#) on the OPTN website and/or contact your Regional Administrator. If you'd like to know more about projects or proposals our committee continues to discuss, contact your regional representative to the committee or send an e-mail to liver@unos.org.