

2021 Summary of Non-U. S. Resident Transplant Activity

OPTN Ad Hoc International Relations Committee

The OPTN Ad Hoc International Relations Committee is charged with reviewing all citizenship data reported to the OPTN. Citizenship information is provided by transplant center and organ procurement organization staff filling out the data collection forms in UNetsm. *OPTN Policy 17.1: Report of Activities Related to the Transplantation of Non-U.S. Citizens/Non-U.S. Residents* states that the Committee “will prepare and provide public access to an annual report of transplant hospital activities related to the registration and transplantation of non-U.S. citizens/non-U.S. residents.” The current report is the Committee’s seventh fulfillment of this policy requirement.

Below is a high-level summary of the 2021 Annual Report. To obtain a copy of the full report, please submit a data request by completing the online request form at <https://optn.transplant.hrsa.gov/data/request-data/>.

Methods

OPTN data was used to calculate summary statistics for waiting list registrations, transplant recipients, and deceased and living donors who do not reside in the U.S. All candidate and recipient citizenship information is based on data provided by the transplant centers on the Transplant Candidate Registration (TCR) form at the time of listing on the waiting list.

This report examines the state of non-U.S. Citizen/Non-U.S. Resident (NCNR) registrations and transplants overall. The data is presented by organ, region, age group (pediatric vs. adult), and transplant candidate registration (TCR) citizenship. Most of the report focuses on 2021 alone or 2021 vs. 2020; some figures and tables go back through 2018. Since this report focuses on candidate and recipient citizenship, data with missing or not reported citizenship are removed from the analysis. The complete methods can be found in the full report. All analyses are based on OPTN data as of March 25, 2022.

Summary of Results

During 2021, a total of 65,926 adult and pediatric registrations were added to the U.S. solid organ transplant waiting list. Of those, 895 (1.4%) were indicated to be candidates not residing in the U.S., including 233 (0.4%) registrations for candidates in the U.S. specifically for the purpose of transplantation.

The percentage of Non-U.S. resident registrations added in 2021 varies by organ, from 0.9% (13) of kidney-pancreas registrations to 2.9% (4) of intestine registrations. The 648 kidney and 141 liver additions represent 1.5% and 1.0% of their total registrations, respectively. While 1.3% of adult registrations were non-U.S. residents, 2.8% of pediatric waiting list registrations were for this group of patients.

Approximately 52.4% (132) of the 252 transplant hospitals with at least 1 registration added to the waitlist in 2021 (all organs) had no registrations added where the candidate citizenship was reported as a non-U.S. resident. Of the 252 centers, 15.9% (40) listed 5 or more NCNR registrations.

During 2021, a total of 34,811 adult and pediatric deceased donor transplants were performed. Of those, 499 (1.4%) were indicated to be for recipients not residing in the U.S., including 126 (0.4%) for recipients in the U.S. specifically for the purpose of transplantation. Also, of these 499 NCNR deceased donor transplants, 5 were listed as non-resident aliens (NCNR candidates listed prior to March 2012). The percentage of NCNR deceased donor transplants in 2021 varies by organ, from 2.2% (1) heart-lung deceased donor transplants to 6.2% (6) of intestine deceased donor transplants. The 331 kidney and 80 liver deceased donor transplants represent 1.8% and 0.9% of their totals, respectively.

Approximately 62.4% (156) of all hospitals (all organs) had no deceased donor transplants during 2021, where the candidate citizenship was reported as non-U.S. resident.

Additionally, in 2021 there were 6,540 living donor transplants. Of these, 1.2% (76) were for NCNR recipients. 1.0% (62) of all living donor kidney recipients were NCNR, and of those, 14 were in the U.S. specifically for transplant. 2.5% of all living donor liver transplants were NCNR; of those, 11 were in the U.S. specifically for a transplant.