

## Guidance to Organ Procurement Organizations for Allocation of Heart-Lung Blocks

### Summary and Goals

This document contains specific recommendations for use by Organ Procurement Organizations (OPOs) for allocating heart-lung blocks. The intent of these guidelines is to promote a consistent practice amongst the OPOs throughout the country. This is a continuation of previous efforts to clarify heart-lung allocation policy. This document summarizes the Thoracic Organ Transplantation Committee's recommendations to the OPTN/UNOS Board of Directors.

This resource is not an OPTN policy, so it does not carry the monitoring or enforcement implications of policy. It is not an official guideline for clinical practice, nor is it intended to be clinically prescriptive or to define a standard of care. This is a resource tool intended to provide guidance to OPOs and is for voluntary use by OPTN members.

### Background

For several years, Policy 6.5.E. (Allocation of Heart-Lungs) has generated considerable discussion because of its ambiguity in directing OPOs in how to allocate heart-lung blocks. The Thoracic Organ Transplantation Committee (the Committee) agreed upon an interpretation of current policy:

- **Current policy:** "When a heart-lung candidate is allocated a heart, the lung from the same deceased donor must be allocated to the heart-lung candidate."
- **Clarification:** If the OPO generates the heart or heart-lung match run, the heart will be offered in order of the match. If a heart candidate is eligible to receive the heart offer, but also needs a lung, then that candidate shall be allocated the lung from the same donor.
- **Current policy:** "When the heart-lung candidate is allocated a lung, the heart from the same deceased donor may only be allocated to the heart-lung candidate if no suitable Status 1A isolated heart candidates are eligible to receive the heart."
- **Clarification:** If the OPO generates the lung match run, and the next eligible candidate for the lung offer also needs the heart, the candidate will receive the heart-lung block offer unless there is a Status 1A isolated heart candidate in the same geographic zone as the heart-lung candidate.

For the purposes of heart-lung allocation, an "isolated" heart candidate is a candidate that is only registered on the deceased donor waiting list for a heart, and is not waiting for a heart-lung block. The candidate may be waiting for another organ besides a lung.

After agreeing upon this interpretation, the Thoracic Committee asked the OPO Committee to determine how to best put the policy clarification into practice. Representatives from various OPOs presented the manner in which their OPO allocates heart-lung blocks and found that each OPO allocates heart-lung blocks differently. The Thoracic and OPO Committees ultimately agreed upon the following allocation process for OPOs upon recovery of a heart-lung block.

### Instructions for Heart-Lung Block Allocation:

1. Generate both a combined heart-lung match run and a lung match run simultaneously
2. Using the combined heart-lung match run:
  - a. Within the donation service area (DSA), offer the heart to all status 1A heart candidates
    - i. If the status 1A heart candidate only needs a heart, the heart should be offered to that candidate
      1. The lung(s) will be offered from the lung match run
    - ii. If the status 1A heart candidate is also registered for a lung, the heart-lung block should be offered to that candidate
3. Using the lung-alone match run:
  - a. If there are no status 1A isolated heart candidates or heart-lung candidates, or if all status 1A isolated heart candidates and status 1A heart-lung candidates decline within the same DSA, then the lungs may be offered from the lung match run to isolated lung candidates and lung-heart candidates within the DSA
    - i. If the lungs are accepted within the DSA for an isolated lung candidate, the heart should then be allocated using the heart-lung match run
4. Repeat steps 2 and 3 for each successive geographic zone until the organs are allocated

The instructions above are depicted graphically below:

