

**OPTN/UNOS Liver and Intestinal Organ Transplantation Committee**  
**Meeting Summary**  
**March 27, 2015**  
**Conference Call**

**David Mulligan, MD, Chair**  
**Ryutaro Hirose, MD, Vice Chair**

*Discussions of the full committee on March 27, 2015 are summarized below and will be reflected in the committee's next report to the OPTN/UNOS Board of Directors. Meeting summaries and reports to the Board are available at <http://optn.transplant.hrsa.gov/>.*

## **Committee Projects**

### **1. Redesigning Liver Distribution**

Following the September forum, the committee established three ad hoc subcommittees to further refine the metrics of access and disparity as well as ways to optimize distribution, to identify financial implications of alternative sharing methods, and to address transportation and logistical issues associated with broader sharing.

The Committee was updated on the planning already underway for the second Public Forum on Redesigning Liver Distribution, to be held in June 2015 at the Loew's Chicago O'Hare. The subcommittees are continuing their deliberations and review of data. Although the format of the forum and specific agenda items have not yet been finalized the Committee plans to have representatives from the subcommittees present the findings and recommendations to the community and to solicit further feedback.

### **2. National Liver Review Board**

In November 2013, the Board of Directors directed the Committee to develop a plan for a National Liver Review Board (NRB) for MELD/PELD Exceptions. At the June 2014 Board meeting, the Committee presented the preliminary construct for an NRB and requested Board feedback. The Board was supportive of the concept and urged the Committee to continue the work.

The Committee began drafting the policy and updating the associated operational guidelines with the intent to circulate the proposal for public comment in the spring of 2015. Despite making significant progress in policy development, the Committee felt that rather than a simple redistribution of the workload from the current Regional Review Boards to a National Review Board, a more complete overhaul to the system would better benefit the community.

The Committee requested feedback from the community during the Spring 2015 Regional Meetings in regards to the construct under consideration and concerns similar to those previously voiced resurfaced. After reviewing all of the feedback obtained in the Regional Meetings, the Committee is considering rather than one single National Liver Review Board, creating "Super Review Boards" by combining current Regional Review Boards into larger bodies. The Committee will continue to develop this concept and plans to present it to the Board for endorsement.

### **3. Guidance Document on MELD/PELD Exceptions, PSC Updates**

The first of two installments on the Guidance Document on MELD/PELD Exceptions was presented and approved during the June 2014 Board of Directors Meeting. The Committee has continued to develop guidelines for Regional Review Board (RRB) representatives in order to aid in the case review and approval of exception applications for common diagnoses, specifically for Primary Sclerosing Cholangitis (PSC) on this installment. Additionally, the Committee has requested to incorporate some guidelines and request some additional voluntary data collection for candidates applying for a Portopulmonary Hypertension exception. A revised template for exception application submission will accompany this guidance for the purposes of policy development.

#### **Other Significant Items**

### **4. 2015 Strategic Plan**

The Director of Policy presented the proposed 2015-2018 Strategic Plan, recently revised by the OPTN/UNOS Executive Committee, which will govern the organization. Feedback was collected from the community and considered in the development of each goal and objective. This revised plan clarifies each of the goals, prioritizes them, and establishes some framework for the allocation of resources to achieve each goal. The draft strategic plan will be available for public comment in April and submitted for consideration during the June 2015 Board of Directors meeting.

### **5. Disease Transmission Advisory Committee's Proposal to Require Another Match Run Based on Infectious Disease Test Results**

A representative from the Disease Transmission Advisory Committee (DTAC) presented the Proposal to Require Another Match Run Based on Infectious Disease Test Results, which is currently out for public comment. The Liver & Intestinal Organ Transplantation Committee expressed general support for the DTAC proposal but suggested that perhaps the multiple layer algorithms may be too complex. The Committee suggested that when serologies are finalized, the match simply be rerun. The Committee emphasized the importance of timing and did not want to see an increase in organ discards as a result of the additional time that would need to be spent following these algorithms.

Although some concern has surfaced in Regional Meetings or noted by other members of the community, the Committee felt that this policy would likely result in a change in behavior. The Committee stressed that if OPOs make an effort to complete serologies before making offers, it would limit the number of times that they would have to re-execute the match run as a result of positive results. Likewise, Transplant Centers will need to be held accountable for entering appropriate acceptance criteria in the Waitlist. The Committee agreed that as long as OPOs and centers keep open communication, there should not be increased frequency in these cases. The Committee thanks the DTAC for their presentation and opportunity to comment on this important proposal.

### **6. Presentation on the Construct of the Data Advisory Committee**

A representative presented the construct, main goals and current projects of the newly formed Data Advisory Committee (DAC). These goals include developing specifications for and advise the OPTN Board of Directors on collecting data pertinent to the operation of the OPTN and SRTR and further the state-of-the-art in organ transplantation, including continuous quality and patient safety improvements. The Committee commended the efforts of the DAC and offered support for the forthcoming efforts.

## **7. Policy Oversight Committee Requested Feedback on Extending Committee Service Terms**

Many members have expressed interest in remaining on a committee for an extended term as the first year is often spent learning the functions of the Committee and the role of the representative and in order to finalize projects or to offer historical perspective for newer members.

A representative from the Policy Oversight Committee presented and requested feedback on a potential proposal to extend committee service terms from the currently designated two years to three years.

Overall, the Committee agrees with extending terms to 3 years for the organ specific committees. They would, however, like to see a process by which members who are not contributing may either opt to roll off or be replaced at leaderships request and vote.

The Committee would also entertain the idea of the Chair and Vice Chair being appointed a two year term with the possibility for one year extension in addition to the one year Ex Officio position. The Committee stressed the importance of educating nominees and/or appointees about their service responsibilities.

### **Upcoming Meeting**

- April, 2015