

OPTN/UNOS Liver and Intestinal Organ Transplantation Committee
Meeting Summary
November 20, 2015
Conference Call

Ryutaro Hirose, MD, Chair
Julie Heimbach, MD, Vice Chair

Discussions of the full committee on November 20, 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. National Liver Review Board

The Committee reviewed the draft operational guidelines for the National Liver Review Board (NLRB). The group decided not to create a national HCC guideline as part of this project but rather to pursue a separate project to revise the eligibility criteria in policy for HCC exception points. The MELD Exceptions and Enhancements Subcommittee will finalize the proposed policy and operational guidelines to establish the NLRB, and the Committee will vote to send the proposal to public comment on its December conference call.

2. Cap and Delay the Hepatocellular Carcinoma (HCC) Exception Score Assignment

On October 8, 2015, UNOS implemented the following changes to HCC policy:

- Candidates with a new initial HCC exception application submitted on or after October 8 must be registered at their calculated MELD or PELD scores for the first three months (initial application) and for the first three-month extension, as long as the candidate continues to meet the policy criteria. At six months (second extension), MELD candidates will receive a score of 28, and PELD candidates will receive a score of 34.
- HCC exception scores are now capped at 34 for any HCC exception application submitted on or after October 8. HCC exception scores for candidates with an accumulated HCC exception score of 35 or higher on that date were reset to 34. Note: this policy applies to all candidates receiving exception priority due to the HCC criteria outlined in policy, regardless of when the initial application was made.

For candidates meeting policy criteria for automatic approval in UNet™, these changes were made in the UNet™ system at the time of implementation and were transparent to the centers. In some cases, HCC exception applications are being submitted using the "Other Specify" dropdown when the center wishes to request HCC priority under the policy criteria. Committee leadership worked with the UNOS Communications Department to distribute a memo on November 2 that explains how transplant centers should submit and Regional Review Board (RRB) members should evaluate these requests.

Upcoming Meeting

- December 18, 2015