

OPTN/UNOS Liver and Intestinal Organ Transplantation Committee
Meeting Minutes
April 19, 2018
Conference Call

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Introduction

The Liver and Intestinal Organ Transplantation Committee (Committee) met via teleconference on 4/19/2018 to discuss the following agenda item:

1. Tiebreaker for exception scores
2. NLRB implementation

The following is a summary of the Committee's discussions.

1. Tiebreaker for exception scores

Data summary:

Committee reviewed scenarios showing which candidates would receive offers first given this tiebreaker with respect to the changes occurring from the NLRB proposal.

Summary of discussion:

As part of the NLRB policy changes, candidates' exception scores will be adjusted with regards to the Median MELD at Transplant (MMaT) in the DSA every 6 months. All candidates' scores in the DSA will be updated at the same time on the day of the MMaT update. This creates the need to have an appropriate tiebreaker to rank candidates. Currently, waiting time at the candidate's MELD/PELD score is a tiebreaker used for ranking candidates at same MELD/PELD score, followed by total waiting time since registration date. Due to all candidates receiving an updated MELD/PELD score at the same time, total waiting time since registration date would be the tiebreaker among exception candidates in the DSA.

The Committee discussed the merits of current policy and how that would affect exception patients. The Committee stated that with current policy, a candidate with more total waiting time (registration date) but less time with an approved exception, could be prioritized over a candidate with more time with an exception but less total waiting time. The Committee reviewed several scenarios that depict this situation. The Committee stated that the tiebreaker needed to prioritize candidates with more time at an approved exception, instead of total waiting time. This was stated because time with an exception is more reflective of medical priority for a transplant, then total waiting time since registration date.

Next Steps:

UNOS staff will confirm the feasibility of using time at an approved exception score as a tiebreaker for exception candidates and the options for potentially making policy changes.

2. NLRB Implementation

Summary of Discussion

As part of the NLRB policy changes, exception candidates will be provided a score based on the MMaT in the DSA. The Committee discussed the different options on how to implement the new policies. The Committee was presented with the option that all candidates with approved standard exceptions would be converted at the same time on the date of policy implementation.

The other option is to allow candidates to maintain their scores until their next extension in which they would be converted to the new scoring. A committee member stated that they supported candidates maintaining their “pre NLRB” score until their next extension. It was stated that this could disproportionately affect candidates receiving exceptions pre-implementation, versus post-implementation. It was stated that allowing candidates to maintain their score until their next extension is easier for patients to explain and will likely cause the least disruption. There was consensus on the call to pursue the implementation decision to allow candidates to keep their exception scores following NLRB implementation, until their next extension.

Next Steps:

The NLRB subcommittee will meet to discuss the Committee’s feedback and additional details regarding the implementation of the NLRB policy changes.

Upcoming Meetings

- May 17, 2018