

OPTN/UNOS Liver and Intestinal Organ Transplantation Committee
Meeting Minutes
October 1, 2018
Conference Call

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Introduction

The Liver and Intestinal Organ Transplantation Committee met via teleconference on 10/01/2018 to discuss the following agenda items:

1. Comment Summary
2. Discussion of Models
3. Public Comment Proposal Vote

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

1. Comment Summary

The committee examined summaries of comments received from committee members via email between meetings concerning the modeling data.

The chair stated that there was some support expressed for the B2C model, with some being in support of a threshold of 32 and some supporting a threshold of 35. Policy passed in December included a threshold of 32. The B2C model also yields the smallest increase in travel. The use of a cap would limit the number of exceptions in the B2C model. Some members expressed concern about the wide band of patients that would be included in this model under either threshold.

Some other members of the committee support the AC models because they perform the best in reducing disparity, which still improves on the policy passed in December. This model is also preferred by geographically larger regions.

2. Discussion of Models

The chair opened the floor for discussion on the feedback for the two models.

One member asked if any further modeling would be able to be conducted during the special public comment. The member suggested that perhaps the AC model would be more appealing if the amount of travel could be reduced by changing some of the variables. However, it was not possible to request further modeling to be conducted before going to the board.

Committee members expressed a desire to continue to evaluate the data that has already been provided in the modeling reports to ensure that the benefits and challenges of the proposed solutions are shared across geography in ways that make sense, and the models don't unfairly advantage or disadvantage candidates based on their location. Since the committee has not had as much time to develop this proposal as they typically do, it will be important to continue to evaluate the data as well as the feedback while the proposal is out for public comment. These continued conversations and considerations may lead to adjustments to the model that the committee chooses, either in the MELD threshold or the size of circles, or some other area.

The chair re-iterated that the committee needs justifications for the models and the thresholds that they choose. The chair believes that the needs for these justifications could provide reasoning to put forth two models for special public comment. The Final Rule considerations for

efficiency, preventing wastage, and similar access were carefully balanced by the committee as they evaluated what weight to give additional air travel, with its additional costs and risks against reducing variance in median MELD at transplant.

A member expressed concern about the B2C model because it could result in a candidate with a much higher MELD score from receiving an offer for a liver because of a difference in proximity of a single square mile. The concern is shared by other members of the committee.

3. Public Comment Proposal Vote

There was a straw poll to gauge the committee’s sentiments regarding which framework each member supported and whether the committee members would prefer to send a single model out for public comment or more than one option. The votes were as follows:

Model	Number of models to send out for public comment
B2C	
B2C 32	
B2C (any threshold)	
AC	
B2C 32	
B2C 32	
B2C 32	
AC or B2C with a lower threshold	
B2C 32 or lower	
B2C 29	
AC	2
B2C 32 (and would consider higher options)	
B2C 35 (or 32 with priority points)	1
AC	2
B2C 32	1
B2C 35 (put 32 out for discussion)	2
AC or B2C 32	2
B2C 35	2

Based on the straw poll, the committee moved forward with pursuing a policy proposal for public comment of B2C with a MELD 32 threshold. The committee then discussed whether to also seek public comment on another model. There was some support for B2C with a MELD threshold of 29, and others supported a threshold of 35. There were also some supporters of AC 250/500. However, the largest number of committee members agreed on the balance

achieved with the B2C 32 model. Given the split in opinion on the other options, the committee opted to ask for input on other options during public comment, but support just the one model.

A formal vote was conducted to vote to send B2C with a 32 threshold on to public comment. The majority of the committee members voted in favor.