

**OPTN Policy Oversight Committee
Provisional Yes Workgroup
Meeting Summary
July 7, 2020
Conference Call**

Craig Van De Walker, Chair

Introduction

The Provisional Yes Workgroup (the Workgroup) met via Citrix GoToMeeting teleconference on 07/07/2020 to discuss the following agenda items:

1. Research Data Update
2. Next Steps

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

1. Research Data Update

The Workgroup reviewed a proposed data request.

Summary of discussion:

The proposed data request included:

- At the transplant center level, percentage of transplant centers that put in a provisional yes for a match run by organ, year, and whether or not the organ in question was transplanted
- At the transplant candidate level, percentage of transplant centers that put in a provisional yes for a match run by organ, year, and whether or not the organ in question was transplanted
- For organs that do not get accepted for transplant, determine the number of match runs that had a provisional yes entered by organ type and year

The Chair noted that the workgroup may be interested in requesting data on the number of provisional yeses that ultimately turned into refusals by center as well as whether the organ was transplanted or discarded. The Chair explained that if this data was able to be obtained, then it would help show variability among transplant programs' behavior. A member requested data on the number of centers included in each group batch of offers that organ procurement organizations (OPOs) send out. Another member stated that they experience different amounts of offers from different OPOs. The Chair stated that OPOs have the ability to send offers to their local and regional centers, whereas UNOS sends out national offers. A member asked if regions are still relevant. The Chair responded that the process is moving towards allocation not defined by regions but it has not been implemented for kidney.

A member stated that they do not understand how the proposed data request will help the Workgroup have a better understanding of the problem. The member suggested that the Workgroup needs to understand if there are centers that are utilizing provisional yes in a way that decreases efficiency of allocation and thereby increases organ discards. The Chair asked if the member could think of a query that would help gather that information. The member responded that the data will potentially need to be transplant center centric. The member explained that some transplant centers outsource their organ offer review process which leads to an increase in provisional yes, and without finding out which centers

utilize this process then it will be hard to understand the data. Another member suggested that a survey might be the most effective way to capture the granularity of this data.

The Policy Oversight Committee (POC) Chair reminded the Workgroup that the goal is to view the provisional yes as an inefficiency in the transplant system and analyze the different ways to alleviate that inefficiency. The POC Chair stated that in terms of data, the Workgroup needs to analyze components of the provisional yes system which build and allow this practice to continue in inefficient ways.

A member asked if UNOS had any insights or research regarding proposed efficiencies to the provisional yes system. UNOS staff responded that IT has been working on increased filtering options which will impact the provisional yes system for more targeted offers. Staff stated that IT can be scheduled to give a presentation during a future meeting for more discussion on IT projects and limitations. The UNOS CEO stated that this inefficiency is driven by behavior, not by IT solutions. The CEO continued that the Workgroup should seek to find a balance between the goal of increasing organ transplantation and its broad benefits with the goal of each individual patient having as many options as possible, because these are often conflicting goals. A member agreed that the inefficiencies are a result of behaviors which is why they do not believe the data will lead to an understanding of the problem.

Another member explained time can also be a factor that leads to inefficiencies with provisional yes. A member suggested gathering data on organs accepted within the first ten offers to understand if they are offered differently than harder to place organs. Another member stated they need more background on how OPOs decide who and when to send an offer and how transplant centers decide when they are going to read the offer. A member mentioned they receive a lot of offers with incomplete information so they are unable to completely read the offer. The member further mentioned their center finds value in offers even when they are far down on the list because it allows them to be aware of the organ in case it ends up being refused in an operating room (OR) and then their center is ultimately prepared to accept it.

A member asked how this project fits in with other projects related to expedited allocation. The POC Chair responded that the Provisional Yes Workgroup is part of several workgroups that the POC initiated in direct response to the Board resolution of analyzing operational issues that drive inefficiencies. The POC Chair stated that the timing of the Workgroup coincides with the broader distribution project because these new practices amplify the current inefficiencies. A member asked if the solution should be education or guidance rather than policy. The POC Chair responded that the solution can take a lot of different paths and it is the Workgroup's job to decide what type of solution will be appropriate.

The Workgroup Chair stated an additional request for data regarding how many candidates were screened off of each donor's match run automatically by the preexisting electronic filters. The Workgroup agreed for the need for more comprehensive filters and machine learning. A member expressed concern over the current lack of filters and wondered why implementation of more specific filters has not yet happened. The Chair responded that there has not been a coordinated request from the profession for specific filters. The CEO of UNOS stated that IT has a pilot project studying filters and machine learning. The Chair asked if this was studied retrospectively and asked about the scope of the project. The CEO explained that the pilot allowed centers to apply filters and execute a match run against previous years of offers. This allowed participating centers to see how many offers would have been filtered and whether any of those offers had been accepted. A member suggested that the limitations of these filters need to be analyzed to ensure that relevant, robust clinical information is available. Another member asked where the clinical information is currently available. The Chair responded that clinical information is either hand entered by the OPO or uploaded by an OPOs

electronic medical record (EMR) into DonorNet. The POC Chair reminded the Workgroup that its purview is the provisional yes, not data entry.

2. Next steps:

UNOS staff will schedule IT to present offer filters pilot at next meeting.

Upcoming Meetings

- August 4, 2020 (teleconference)
- September 1, 2020 (teleconference)

Attendance

- **Workgroup Members**
 - Christopher Yanakos
 - Craig Van De Walker
 - Erica Simonich
 - Jill Campbell
 - Jillian Wojtowicz
 - Rick Hasz
 - Staci Carter
 - Steven Potter
 - Julie Heimbach
 - Marie Budev
- **HRSA Representatives**
 - Vanessa Arriola
- **SRTR Staff**
 - Jon Snyder
- **UNOS Staff**
 - Brian Shepard
 - Craig Connors
 - Elizabeth Miller
 - James Alcorn
 - Joann White
 - Kianna Stewart
 - Leah Slife
 - Matt Prentice
 - Meghan McDermott
 - Ross Walton
- **Other Attendees**
 - Alexandra Glazier
 - Nicole Turgeon