

OPTN Liver & Intestinal Organ Transplantation Committee

Meeting Summary

July 2, 2020

Conference Call

James Trotter, MD, Chair

James Pomposelli, MD, PhD, Vice Chair

Introduction

The Liver & Intestinal Organ Committee (the Committee) met via Citrix GoToMeeting teleconference on 7/2/2020 to discuss the following agenda items:

1. Committee Orientation
2. Acuity Circles and National Liver Review Board Data Reports
3. Subcommittee and Workgroup Update

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

1. Committee Orientation

New committee members were informed of the policy development process, committee structure, committee purpose, and committee member expectations.

2. Acuity Circles and National Liver Review Board Data Reports

The Committee reviewed data from the National Liver Review Board Policy (NLRB) Monitoring Evaluation Report and the Acuity Circles Three Month Post-Implementation report.

Summary of Data

The NLRB Monitoring Evaluation Report concluded:

- Process time is significantly lower in the NLRB era post-acuity, compared to comparable regional review boards period
- Larger percentage of forms are auto-approved in NLRB era
- Percentage of "Other specify" diagnoses reported on exception forms has decreased, while "Hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC)" has increased
- In this period, continued trend of lower percentage of forms approved seen in earlier post-NLRB reports

Summary of Discussion

The Chair commented the data suggests the NLRB is working as intended and is decreasing variability across the country. The Committee plans to continue monitoring the data.

Summary of Data

The Acuity Circles Three Month Post-Implementation Report concluded:

- Three month metrics suggest no apparent national changes in trends during the post-policy period compared to trends seen in similar pre-policy periods with respect to:
 - Number of deceased donor livers being recovered

- Number of deceased donor liver transplants
- Discard rates
- Removals from the waiting list due to too sick to transplant or death
- Three month metrics suggest national changes in trends during the post-policy period compared to trends seen in similar pre-policy periods with respect to:
 - Increased distance between donor hospital and transplant hospital
 - Increased regional and national sharing
 - Increased MELD or PELD scores/status at transplant
 - Decreased percentage of exception candidate transplants
- The impact of COVID-19 pandemic will continue to be a confounding factor in analyzing this policy change in the coming months

Summary of Discussion

The Committee requested to have up-to-date data to present at the regional meetings.

3. Subcommittee and Workgroup Update

The Committee received updates on the work of liver subcommittees and workgroups.

Summary of Data:

PELD/Status 1B Workgroup

The Workgroup is focused on reducing pediatric waitlist mortality through refining criteria for Status 1B candidates and evaluating and updating the current PELD scoring system. The Workgroup has met twice and has a goal of preparing a proposal for public comment in August 2021.

NLRB Subcommittee

The Subcommittee is working on changes to the Pediatric Guidance to include:

- Portal hypertension: 1B Guidance
- Portal hypertension: MELD/PELD Guidance
- Growth failure/nutritional insufficiency
- Metabolic liver diseases

Additionally, the Subcommittee is drafting a template to assist in writing hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC) narratives. The Subcommittee sent a survey out to past NLRB reviewers to get their feedback on ways to improve the NLRB.

Acuity Circles Subcommittee

The Subcommittee has two ongoing projects:

- Sorting within liver allocation classifications
- Updating median MELD at transplant calculation

The projects are being developed and the Subcommittee will provide recommendations for the full Committee to consider.

Upcoming Meetings

- August 7, 2020
- September 4, 2020