

**OPTN Ad Hoc International Relations Committee
Management of International Living Donors in the U.S Subcommittee
Meeting Summary
February 20, 2024
Conference Call**

**Pramod Bonde, MD, Chair
Peter Stock, MD, Vice Chair**

Introduction

The OPTN Management of International Living Donors in the U.S Subcommittee (the Subcommittee) met via Webex teleconference on 02/20/2024 to discuss the following agenda items:

1. Finalize Survey Questions

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

1. Finalize Survey Questions

The Subcommittee identified and discussed potential questions to include in the project feedback form that will be sent to transplant programs to help the Subcommittee better understand the barriers programs face when evaluating an international donor.

Data summary:

The following questions were identified and discussed to include in the project feedback form.

Non-U.S citizens/Non-U.S resident Questions

- Do you accept transplant donor **candidates** who are not US citizens who reside in the U.S. **without any** legal protections?
 - If **so**, which of the following barriers do you commonly run up against **and** how do you surmount them?
 - If **not**, which of the following are insurmountable barriers to donation by this population?
- Does recipients' legal status impact these donors' candidacy?
- Do you accept donor candidates who are not U.S. citizens who are residing in the U.S. with *some legal protection*?
 - If so, what level of legal status do you require?
- How do you categorize these donors in reporting to UNOS?

Risk of Coercion, Inducement, & Exploitation Questions

- Have you completed any transplants? (i.e. non-U.S citizen/ U.S resident and non- U.S citizens/non-U.S residents)
 - If yes, did the timing of the ILDA and social worker differ from U.S donors?
 - If yes, were there any additional support/resources that your team needed to ensure the voluntariness of the donor candidate?

- Does your center have access to linguistically and culturally appropriate resources to evaluate and support non-U.S. citizens/ U.S residents and non-U.S. citizens/non-U.S. residents?
- If you considered such a transplant but did not complete it, what was the reason?
 - If incomplete, were there any concerns about voluntariness?
- Comparing non-U.S citizens to non- U.S citizens/non-U.S residents - what was the difference, if any for these aspects (5-point scale much harder to much easier):
 - Communicating with the donor
 - Time change
 - Arranging donor's lab/pre-operative work up
 - Assessing voluntariness
 - Immediate post-operative care
 - Long-term follow up
 - Organizing logistics for patient travel
 - Ensuring patient understanding of risk of donation

Donor Follow-up Questions

- Compared to U.S living donors, the rate of follow-up in international living donors post-donation is: (rating scale) (higher, lower, or same)
- Compared to U.S living donors, the rate of follow-up in international living donors post-donation is: (rating scale) (higher, lower, or same)
- How do you contact the donors to retrieve lab work?
 - How do you get the orders to the international donors?
 - Where do the donors go to get the labs drawn?
 - How do you receive the lab results from the donor?
 - Who pays for the donor's lab work?
 - If the center pays, what is the billing mechanism?
- Are you conducting international telehealth follow-ups?
- Due to time differences between countries, how do international donors contact centers in a timely manner?
- If the complication requires the donor to travel back to the center, how do they handle visa considerations?
- Who covers the cost of international travel?

Communication Questions

- What is your center's preferred way to make initial contact with a potential living donor overseas?
- How do you get donation material to potential donors?
- How would you provide material to non-English or non-Spanish speakers?
- How would you discern non-verbal clues of coercion or ask in a culturally sensitive manner?
- How would you get potential donor medical records?

Logistic Questions

- When do you bring potential donors to your center for in-person evaluation?
- How does/would your center help a potential donor obtain visa?
- Who covers the cost of travel to the transplant center, lodging, and return home?

- How long does the donor remain for follow-up?
- What would your center do if a potential donor arrives at the center and is found after the fact to be histologically incompatible with the potential recipient?

Summary of discussion:

This was not an agenda item that required a decision; no decisions were made by the Subcommittee.

A member asked who would send the feedback form to centers. She explained that there may be a better response rate if the communication came from a familiar person rather than a generic email. UNOS staff replied that it would be sent from the UNOS/OPTN communications department. Another member asked who would receive the feedback form at the center and if multiple people from the same center would complete it. UNOS staff replied that it would be the Subcommittee's decision about who should fill out the survey or if they would like multiple people at the program to collaborate on and provide a response to the feedback for questions.

A member asked how the Subcommittee plans to use the information collected on the feedback to develop a guidance document. The presenter replied that it would be the Subcommittee's decision on how to approach the development of the guidance document.

Regarding tracking feedback responses, a member asked if there would be deidentification when collecting responses from programs. For example, if an institution fears state or federal retribution for using undocumented immigrants as donors, they may not want to answer the questions honestly. Relatedly, if the survey is deidentified, we may lose the opportunity to follow up with centers and ask further questions. UNOS staff replied that any information reported to the Subcommittee would be aggregated data. Additionally, respondents will not be required to provide their names.

Next Steps:

The feedback form will be finalized and sent to all transplant programs on behalf of the OPTN Ad Hoc International Relations Committee.

Upcoming Meetings

- March 19, 2024

Attendance

- **Subcommittee Members**
 - Peter Stock
 - Pramod Bonde
 - Cynthia Forland
 - Scott Sanoff
 - Taryn Shappell
 - Abby Ruiz
 - Ehab Saad
 - Angele Lacks
 - George Bayliss
 - Nahel Elias
 - Eliana Agudelo
- **HRSA Representatives**
 - Jim Bowman
- **SRTR Staff**
 - Avery Cook
- **UNOS Staff**
 - Joann White
 - Tamika Watkins
 - Jesse Howell
 - Laura Schmitt
 - Susan Tlusty
 - Brendan Cummisky