

**OPTN Policy Oversight Committee
Meeting Summary
July 29, 2020
Conference Call**

**Alexandra Glazier, JD, Chair
Nicole Turgeon, MD, Vice Chair**

Introduction

The Policy Oversight Committee (POC) met via Citrix GoTo teleconference on 07/29/2020 to discuss the following agenda items:

1. Refusal Codes/Late Turndown Project
2. Fall 2020 Public Comment Review
3. OPTN Strategic Plan - Introduction

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

1. Refusal Codes/Late Turndown Project

The Vice Chair (VC) of the Data Advisory Committee (DAC) provided an overview of the refusal codes/late turndown project. The goal of the project is to improve data collection on organ refusals and turndown practices to inform efforts to improve the efficiency of the OPTN.

Summary of discussion:

The Chair led a discussion on the project, using a new approach to help the POC to assess the timing and sequencing of this project relative to the ongoing work of the DAC and the broader policy portfolio.

Strategic Plan Alignment

The primary goal of the project is to increase the number of transplants, though the project is also related to the strategic goal of promoting the efficient management of the OPTN.

Project Resources

The DAC project would be a "very large" resource effort, but several other projects in the pipeline would require more resources.

Alignment with Strategic Policy Priorities

This project falls under the "efficient donor/recipient matching to increase utilization" priority.

Collaborating Committees

The following committees have been identified as collaborating committees on the project: Membership and Professional Standards Committee (MPSC), Organ Procurement Organizations (OPO) Committee, Transplant Administrators Committee (TAC), and Transplant Coordinators Committee (TCC). The Chair asked if there are other committees that should collaborate on this project. The Chair suggested that the Operations and Safety Committee (OSC) should be a collaborating committee, especially since future projects based on this data collection may fall under the purview of the OSC or the OPO Committee. POC members agreed with involving OSC. A member suggested that the Pediatrics Committee should also be involved in the early stages of the project, noting that a great donor for an adult might be a poor

donor for a pediatric candidate. The Pediatrics Committee VC agreed and said that it can be a challenge to figure out the right refusal code when turning down an organ for a pediatric candidate. The Chair asked if the Pediatrics Committee needs to be involved as a collaborating committee, or if DAC should ensure that people with pediatrics expertise are involved in the workgroup. Members affirmed that DAC members have pediatric expertise, and UNOS staff affirmed they will ensure that pediatric expertise is represented on the workgroup, which is being formed now.

DAC Projects – Sponsoring & Collaborating

The Chair shared a list of other projects for which DAC is either the sponsoring committee or a collaborating committee so that the POC can consider the sequencing of this project relative to other ongoing efforts. This project would be the primary project sponsored by DAC. The only other project sponsored by the DAC has been approved by the OPTN Board and is pending implementation. DAC is collaborating on several other projects, but the Chair, the DAC VC, and UNOS staff agreed that this project will not sideline existing work. The Chair said it is important to move forward on this project since it is a strategic policy priority.

Project Timeline

The DAC expects to release a proposal for public comment in January 2021 for consideration by the OPTN Board in June 2021.

Discussion

The Chair asked the POC if this is the right timing for this project in the context of other work; if the project is sequenced appropriately; and if members have any additional feedback to improve alignment across projects. A member asked if the purpose of the project is to encourage programs to use existing refusal codes rather than creating additional codes. The DAC VC said the problem is that there are refusal codes that are used as catch-all buckets, and when one code is used 70-80% of the time, it is essentially meaningless. The goal of the project is to change the refusal codes and how they are displayed to encourage more accurate use of the codes. The member said that the DAC should ensure that there is not one easy option, particularly if a coordinator is entering the data in the middle of the night, as they will likely pick a general option unless it is easy to pick a more appropriate code. The Chair affirmed that the project seeks to address this issue.

2. Fall 2020 Public Comment Review

The Chair provided a brief overview of nine of the ten policy projects slated for public comment.

- Update on the Continuous Distribution of Organs Project (Lung Committee)
- Updated Cohort for Calculation of the Lung Allocation Score (Lung Committee)
- COVID-19 Emergency Policies and Data Collection (Executive Committee)
- Guidance and Policy Clarifications Addressing Adult Heart Allocation Policy (Heart Committee)
- Guidance Addressing the Use of Pediatric Heart Exceptions (Heart Committee)
- Further Enhancements to the National Liver Review Board (Liver & Intestinal Organ Committee)
- Modify Living Donor Policy to Include Living VCA Donors – (Living Donor Committee)
- Modify Data Collection on VCA Living Donors (Vascularized Composite Allograft Committee)
- Programming VCA Allocation in UNetSM (Vascularized Composite Allograft Committee)

The Chair of the Disease Transmission Advisory Committee (DTAC) presented an overview of the tenth proposal, entitled *Align OPTN Policy with U.S. Public Health Service Guideline, 2020*.

Summary of discussion:

Members did not have any questions on the proposals. The POC voted to recommend that the Executive Committee approve these projects for public comment (17 yes, 0 no, 0 abstain).

Next steps:

The Executive Committee will review and vote to approve the public comment proposals on 7/30/2020.

3. OPTN Strategic Plan - Introduction

The UNOS CEO presented on the role of the POC in the OPTN strategic planning process.

Summary of discussion:

The UNOS CEO explained that the OPTN is interested in gathering broad input from the Board, committee leadership, and the community to inform the next strategic plan, which will be in effect from 2021 to 2024. The OPTN will be seeking feedback from POC between now and November. Based on all of this input, the Executive Committee will prepare a draft for the OPTN Board to consider during their December 2020 meeting. The proposed strategic plan will be released for public comment in spring of 2021, and will then go back to the OPTN Board for approval in June 2021.

The proposed goals for the new strategic plan are the same as the goals in the current strategic plan. The UNOS CEO said that the POC will be provided with a summary of the Board's discussion to date, and the POC will be asked to provide their input at a high level, e.g., whether these are the appropriate strategic goals for the OPTN. The UNOS CEO said the Board is considering a shorter strategic plan that identifies the goals that are really the highest priority. The Board has identified two other main goals: improving efficiency in terms of matching the right organ to the right candidate at the right time to increase the overall number of transplants, and improving measurements for quality improvement for OPOs and transplant centers, potentially including measuring the interactions between OPOs and transplant centers.

The Chair asked how the strategic policy priorities identified by the POC fit into the broader strategic planning effort. The UNOS CEO said the strategic policy priorities are critical to this effort. In the current strategic plan, there are a number of initiatives that fall under each of the key goals. Some of the initiatives are broad and could encompass a number of different committee projects, and lend themselves to the strategic policy approach. Some of the initiatives are more narrow and could be addressed by one committee or in one project. The plan for the next three years will probably look more similar to the way in which the POC is prioritizing the most important work, based on identifying the big picture mechanisms necessary to improve efficiency and increase the number of transplants. The POC's approach to creating workgroups based on the strategic policy priorities is an indicator of what the next strategic plan will look like. The Chair said it was unfortunate that the strategic policy priority framework started in the middle of the strategic plan development cycle, but is looking forward to the POC's participation in this process so the POC can better align the timing of the strategic policy priority process.

Next steps:

UNOS staff will provide the POC with a summary of the Board's discussions prior to the next meeting on 8/12/2020. The UNOS CEO will ask the POC for feedback on the direction of the strategic plan, including the two, three, or four goals the OPTN should be focused on over the next three years.

Upcoming Meetings

- August 12, 2020
- September 9, 2020

Attendance

- **Committee Members**
 - Alexandra Glazier, Chair
 - Nicole Turgeon, Vice Chair
 - Sandra Amaral
 - Pramod Bonde
 - Marie Budev
 - Christopher Curran
 - Rocky Daly
 - Lara Danziger-Isakov
 - Alden Doyle
 - Garrett Erdle
 - Andrew Flescher
 - Rachel Forbes
 - John Lunz
 - Paulo Martins
 - Stacy McKean
 - Sumit Mohan
 - Emily Perito
 - James Pomposelli
 - Kurt Shutterly
 - Susan Zylicz
- **HRSA Representatives**
 - Vanessa Arriola
 - Arjun Naik
 - Shannon Taitt
- **SRTR Staff**
 - Jon Snyder
- **UNOS Staff**
 - Brian Shepard, UNOS CEO
 - James Alcorn
 - Kristine Althaus
 - Matt Cafarella
 - Scott Castro
 - Julia Chipko
 - Craig Connors
 - Shannon Edwards
 - Chelsea Haynes
 - Courtney Jett
 - Sarah Konigsburg
 - Lindsay Larkin
 - Maureen McBride
 - Eric Messick
 - Elizabeth Miller
 - Kelley Poff
 - Matt Prentice
 - Tina Rhoades

- Leah Slife
- Susie Sprinson
- Kaitlin Swanner
- Susan Tlusty
- Ross Walton
- Emily Ward
- **Other Attendees**
 - Ricardo La Hoz
 - Marian Michaels