

**OPTN Transplant Administrators Committee
Meeting Summary
February 17, 2021
Conference Call**

**Nancy Metzler, Chair
Susan Zylicz, MHA, BSN, RN, CCTC, Vice Chair**

Introduction

The Committee met via Citrix GoToMeeting teleconference on 2/17/2021 to discuss the following agenda items:

1. Membership and Professional Standards Committee (MPSC): Update Transplant Program Key Personnel Training and Experience Requirements
2. 2021 – 2024 Strategic Plan Update
3. Heart Committee: Develop Measures for Primary Graft Dysfunction in Hearts
4. Amnesty Policy Update
5. Other Business

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

1. MPSC: Update Transplant Program Key Personnel Training and Experience Requirements

The Chair of MPSC provided a presentation on a request for feedback document currently out for public comment. Feedback is being requested on changes being considered for the training and experience of key personnel bylaws.

Summary of discussion:

The Chair of TAC commented that she supports the proposed changes being considered overall as the current instructions and pathways can be confusing. She also supported the creation of exemptions for those who are primary surgeons and physicians in the last ten years and commented that once the primary is qualified, they should continue to qualify. She also supported removing requirements relating to the letter of certification but questioned the requirement for three procurement observations. She commented that observing one procurement may be adequate, especially with recent difficulties relating to COVID.

The MPSC Chair commented that the observation requirement was a recommendation of the subcommittee tasked with creating the request for feedback proposal. These observations are considered necessary for supporting strategic planning and overall awareness as procurement is a key part of being a primary physician and their administrative work.

UNOS staff commented that the subcommittee recommended that the MPSC consider reducing the number of observations to one transplantation surgery and one procurement. Those who have been primaries in the last ten years will be exempt. The Chair commented that three observations may be too many, especially for pediatric programs due to volume.

The Chair asked if there have been any considerations around the OPTN maintaining the required experience log data. The MPSC Chair commented that this data is not recorded in UNetSM forms. It was

acknowledged that there is an issue where the logs may be lost, but the OPTN is not the owner of this data. A member asked if a primary can transfer their logs when they transfer to a new program.

UNOS staff shared that UNOS is considering ways to assist members in maintaining the experience logs. There is an issue with data consistency when pulling this information from UNetSM because of use of text fields. This feedback is being considered as bylaw proposals are being developed.

The Chair commented that they have experienced issues with currency and provided an example of a pediatric surgeon who was not able to count a newly 18-year-old patient's liver transplant toward their volume of pediatric transplants which affected the required volume numbers and now the program is inactive. The Chair asked if these scenarios could be reviewed and discussed. The MPSC Chair commented that programs can petition the MPSC.

The Chair asked if the program director requirement is changing. The MPSC Chair commented that the program director may or may not also be the primary surgeon or primary physician.

A member commented that their program has a pediatric surgeon with extensive experience in Asia and Europe. Due to still needing credentialing, another surgeon is required to be present in the operating room which is creating staffing challenges. The member asked if there could be equivalent training accepted from other countries. The MPSC Chair commented that training and experience varies from country to country which is why curriculum has been developed.

Next steps

Members were encouraged to send additional feedback to the UNOS support team.

2. 2021 – 2024 Strategic Plan Update

UNOS staff provided a presentation on the 2021-2024 Strategic Plan currently out for public comment. The draft of the 2021-2024 OPTN Strategic Plan was developed with feedback from OPTN committee leadership and Board members. The OPTN Strategic Plan prioritizes initiatives and guides high level decisions and resource allocation for a three-year period.

Summary of discussion:

A member commented that they support the efforts to increase the diversity of the Board of Directors and committee members as well as initiatives relating to increasing equity in access to transplant.

UNOS staff shared that the members' feedback will be summarized and posted as a comment on the OPTN website. Members were invited to review the proposal and provide comment as an individual in addition to the comment posted on behalf of TAC.

3. Heart Committee: Develop Measures for Primary Graft Dysfunction in Hearts

The Chair of the Heart Committee provided a presentation on the *Develop Measures for Primary Graft Dysfunction (PGD) in Hearts* request for feedback currently out for public comment. The feedback received will inform a future data collection proposal that may include the addition of data elements to the Transplant Recipient Registration (TRR) form to identify PGD in heart transplant recipients.

Summary of discussion:

The Chair commented that she shared the list of proposed data elements with her heart team. Her team shared that that recipient data elements are already collected and would not be difficult to report. The team raised concern with the perfusion and donation associated data elements because these elements are harder to collect and asked if organ procurement organizations (OPOs) would be required to provide the data.

The Chair of the Heart Committee commented that either the surgeon or OPO will need to document this information to make it possible to fill out the form. The Chair commented that source documentation will need to be required. A member agreed and commented that there will need to be a process to collect the donor variables and provide validation through source documentation.

A member commented that with an increase in broader sharing, relationships with additional OPOs will need to be established in order to collect this data. The Heart Chair commented that OPOs may be responsible for inputting some of the determined data elements.

4. Amnesty Policy Update

UNOS staff provided an update on the relaxed data submission policy and requested members to provide feedback on returning to normal data submission requirements and considerations associated with requiring retrospective data collection. The members' recommendations will be shared with the Executive Committee.

Summary of discussion:

The Chair commented that programs need more time to recuperate following the impacts of COVID and raised a concern about having enough staffing especially since staff may begin using their accrued vacation time if allowed to travel. She proposed sunseting the amnesty policy this fall and then allowing several additional months to submit the retrospective data.

The Vice Chair commented that there is an interface issue between the forms in amnesty and their electronic health record (EHR) system. There have also been issues with staff's awareness regarding what forms are due and this policy has disrupted their workflow processes. She commented that her program has been struggling to complete the forms.

A member commented that having the amnesty forms removed from the expected form queue has been difficult for programs. It has also been hard for her staff to navigate to the forms after they have moved into amnesty status. She recommended keeping all forms visible so staff can see the full list of forms due. Members agreed that keeping all forms in the expected forms section would be helpful.

UNOS staff asked the members if the communications and amnesty reports been useful. The members commented that the reports and communications have been helpful. UNOS staff commented that UNOS IT can assist with EHR API issues being experienced relating to the amnesty forms.

UNOS staff asked how much time would be needed to complete all forms in amnesty. A member commented that this will vary by program and staff size. Another member commented that there is variation in COVID impact and surges. The Chair commented that different areas of the country have had different experiences with their patients' level of comfort for follow up. A member commented that a patients' willingness to complete testing needs to be considered when creating the timeline for required retrospective data submission.

The Vice Chair supports limiting retrospective data submission to patients transplanted within three years. A member commented that the community benefits from the data so there needs to be a compromise around what should be required.

UNOS staff summarized the comments of the members by reiterating that any kind of retrospective data collection will be difficult but there is an understanding that the data is important. Members have concerns about the timeline for required submission and believe there will be variation in ability to comply across the country. The timeline needs to be more than a month. Members were asked if they supported a six-month timeline and they agreed.

UNOS staff asked how much notice is needed before ending amnesty. Members commented that a 30 or 60 day advance notice is adequate to allow for staffing to be coordinated but only as long as the retrospective data submission timeline is six months.

5. Other Business

Summary of discussion:

The next TAC meeting will be scheduled prior to the close of public comment to allow for the review of additional public comment proposals.

Upcoming Meetings

- March 11, 2021

Attendance

- **Committee Members**
 - Andrea Tietjen
 - Deb Maurer
 - Denise Neal
 - Deonna Moore
 - Erica Seator
 - Jason Huff
 - Kelly Laschkewitsch
 - Kristina Wheeler
 - Melissa Porter
 - Michelle James
 - Nancy Metzler
 - Paul Myoung
 - Scott Wansley
 - Susan Zylicz
 - Travis Watson
 - Valinda Jones
- **UNOS Staff**
 - Chelsea Haynes
 - Elizabeth Miller
 - Eric Messick
 - Jadia Bruckner
 - Kaitlin Swanner
 - Peter Sokol
 - Sally Aungier
 - Sarah Konigsburg
 - Sharon Shepherd
 - Susan Tlusty
 - Tameka Bland
- **Other Attendees**
 - Ian Jamieson
 - Shelley Hall