

OPTN Liver and Intestinal Organ Transplantation Committee

Meeting Summary

April 2, 2021

Conference Call

James Trotter, MD, Chair

James Pomposelli, MD, PhD, Vice Chair

Introduction

The OPTN Liver and Intestinal Organ Transplantation Committee (the Committee) met via Citrix GoToMeeting teleconference on 04/02/2021 to discuss the following agenda items:

1. Update National Liver Review Board (NLRB) Guidance and Policy Clarification: Public Comment Review
2. Calculate Median MELD at Transplant (MMaT) around the Donor Hospital and Update Sorting within Liver Allocation: Public Comment Review

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

1. Update National Liver Review Board (NLRB) Guidance and Policy Clarification: Public Comment Review

The Committee reviewed public comment feedback submitted on the NLRB proposal and discussed if any post-public comment changes are needed.

Summary of discussion:

A member noted that in their region they received feedback that hilar mass should be defined with limits. Members confirmed that "if not less than or equal to 3 cm in radial diameter" and "the mass exceeds size criteria and the candidate is not eligible for a standardized exception" should be stricken from language because it is repetitive and unclear. They advised keeping "or extension into liver parenchyma". The Committee supported the following clarification language: "Hilar mass, which is less than or equal to 3 cm in radial diameter without extension into liver parenchyma".

Next steps:

Staff will write up and circulate clarified language for committee approval.

2. Calculate Median MELD at Transplant (MMaT) around the Donor Hospital and Update Sorting within Liver Allocation: Public Comment Review

The Committee reviewed public comment feedback and updated data on the MMaT/Sorting proposal. The Committee discussed if any post-public comment changes are needed.

Summary of discussion:

The Committee heard a data presentation on the potential impacts the proposal could have on pediatric deceased donor candidates. UNOS research presented a slide that displayed pediatric waitlist removals by candidate age at listing, exception status, removal reason and era. A member noted that the 0-11 age group had a similar number of removals pre and post implementation. A member stated that the OPTN Pediatric Transplantation Committee (pediatric committee) is concerned that if lab candidates are

sorted ahead of exception candidates with the same MELD or PELD and blood type compatibility, pediatric exception candidates will receive fewer offers and reduce their access to transplant. Another member added that there is not much evidence to support the pediatric committee's concerns but if pediatric patients were provided priority over adults of the same MELD or PELD and blood type compatibility, the impact on the adult candidates would be minimal. A member voiced that the goal for pediatric transplantation is to eliminate waitlist mortality, so any change that could potentially increase mortality is a concern. Another member commented that providing pediatric candidates with the first opportunity for these livers could disadvantage small women. Members agreed that if the split liver variance was applied nationally, more small women and pediatric candidates could be transplanted.

The Committee reviewed post- public comment sorting options. The Pediatric Committee has expressed their preference for option 3. Option 3 sorts (after MELD/PELD and blood type): 1. Pediatric lab candidates 2. Pediatric exception candidates 3. Adult lab candidates 4. Adult exception candidates. Members agreed with option 3. They discussed an idea that would require pediatric programs to split more livers. UNOS Staff reminded the Committee that requiring livers to be split is outside the scope of the project, but that they would be able to monitor the number of split liver transplants. Overall, the Committee voiced support for option 3.

The Committee began a discussion on applying a similar sorting order to Status 1A. They will continue this discussion at the next meeting.

Next steps:

The Committee will vote on post- public comment changes at their next meeting.

Upcoming Meetings

- April 14 (virtual) in-person @ 10:00 AM- 3:30 PM ET

Attendance

- **Committee Members**
 - Peter Abt
 - Diane Alonso
 - Alan Gunderson
 - Bailey Heiting
 - Jennifer Kerney
 - Ray Lynch
 - James Markmann
 - Greg McKenna
 - James Pomposelli
 - Jorge Reyes
 - James Trotter
- **HRSA Representatives**
 - Jim Bowman
- **SRTR Staff**
 - Christian Folken
 - Ray Kim
 - John Lake
 - Andrew Wey
- **UNOS Staff**
 - Matt Cafarella
 - Julia Foutz
 - Betsy Gans
 - Jennifer Musick
 - Samantha Noreen
 - Kelley Poff
 - Matthew Prentice
 - Liz Robbins
 - Leah Slife
 - Niyati Upadhyay
 - Karen Williams
- **Other Attendees**
 - Scott Biggins (Incoming Vice Chair)
 - Samantha Delair
 - James Sharrock