

OPTN Ad Hoc International Relations Committee

April 22, 2021

Conference Call

Barry Friedman, RN, BSN, MBA, CPTC, Chair

Pramod Bonde, MD, Vice Chair

Introduction

The OPTN Ad Hoc International Relations Committee (the Committee) met via Citrix GoToMeeting teleconference on 04/22/2021 to discuss the following agenda items:

1. Presentation: Travel for Liver Transplantation: The U.S. Experience
2. Update: Citizenship Status Guidance Document

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

1. Presentation: Travel for Liver Transplantation: The U.S. Experience

The Committee received a presentation from a University of California San Francisco surgical resident on travel for liver transplantation.

Data summary:

The purpose of the research was to 1) describe groups of waitlisted patients who compete for liver transplant; 2) compare waitlist and post-transplant outcomes; 3) describe cohort of patients who travel abroad for transplant.

Research data showed that non-citizen/non-resident patients are more likely to undergo transplant compared to single-listed US citizens. Data showed that non-citizen/resident patients are more likely to die or be removed for being too sick (i.e. less likely to progress to transplant), but do well after transplant compared to single-listed US citizens.

Research data showed that Middle Eastern non-citizen/non-resident transplant activity was concentrated within certain regions.

The research presentation highlighted certain challenges such as citizenship classification, data on non-citizen/resident patients, and care for patients who travel abroad.

Summary of discussion:

A member asked why non-citizen/residents have better outcomes. The presenter responded that when non-citizen/residents are stratified by ethnicity, there is no significant difference in outcomes. The presenter added that there is a need for strong social support, which might have an impact. A guest attendee added that these patients have a higher incidence of living donors, which may explain the improved outcomes.

A guest attendee stated that migrant workers do not receive insurance, therefore resulting in minimal access to transplant. The guest attendee asked the Committee what is the transplant community's obligations to these individuals. A member stated that these patients contribute to the deceased donor pool, so it is justified to provide support to them as transplant candidates and recipients.

The presenter emphasized the issues surrounding citizenship status classification. A member agreed and stated that better definitions and validation of information by transplant programs is needed. The Chair agreed and stated that the Committee's goal in developing their guidance document is to help identify and clarify this information.

There were no additional questions or comments.

2. Update: Citizenship Status Guidance Document

The Committee discussed their project, *Guidance for Data Collection Regarding Classification of Citizenship Status*.

Summary of discussion:

The Committee reviewed the outline of the document and assigned sections. UNOS staff highlighted the Committee's SharePoint site and reviewed where to locate additional resources.

Next steps:

The Committee will continue to draft their assigned sections. A final guidance document will be compiled, and sent to the members for review. The Committee will vote on the final guidance document during their next meeting on May 27, 2021.

Upcoming Meetings

- May 27, 2021 (teleconference)
- June 24, 2021 (teleconference)

Attendance

- **Committee Members**
 - Barry Friedman
 - Howard Nathan
 - Min Zhou
 - Peter Stock
 - Sylvia Gonzalez
- **HRSA Representatives**
 - Jim Bowman
 - Vanessa Arriola
- **UNOS Staff**
 - Jen Wainright
 - Meghan McDermott
 - Robert Hunter
 - Supraja Malladi
- **Other Attendees**
 - Hillary Braun
 - Nancy Ascher