

OPTN Liver and Intestinal Transplantation Committee

Meeting Summary

May 7, 2021

Conference Call

James Trotter, MD, Chair

James Pomposelli, MD, PhD, Vice Chair

Introduction

The OPTN Liver and Intestinal Transplantation Committee (the Committee) met via Citrix GoToMeeting teleconference on 05/07/2021 to discuss the following agenda items:

1. Calculate Median MELD at Transplant (MMaT) around the Donor Hospital and Update Sorting within Liver Allocation: Additional Policy Clarifications
2. Policy Oversight Committee (POC) Update
3. National Liver Review Board (NLRB) Subcommittee Update
4. Liver Committee Charge Review

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

1. Calculate Median MELD at Transplant (MMaT) around the Donor Hospital and Update Sorting within Liver Allocation: Additional Policy Clarifications

The Committee reviewed and voted on additional policy clarifications for the *Calculate Median MELD at Transplant (MMaT) around the Donor Hospital and Update Sorting within Liver Allocation* proposal.

Summary of discussion:

The Committee confirmed the following policy clarifications:

- Liver-intestine candidates with a calculated Model for End-Stage Liver Disease (MELD) or Pediatric End-Stage Liver Disease (PELD) score are considered to be calculated candidates for the purposes of sorting.
- For liver- intestine candidates with a calculated MELD or PELD score, liver- intestine points are included in time at score or higher.
- Calculation of time since submission of earliest approved exception should include time spent at an inactive status.

The Committee voted on the following: Do you support sending the *Calculate Median MELD at Transplant around the Donor Hospital and Update Sorting within Liver Allocation* proposal as presented today to the OPTN Board of Directors for consideration?

Vote: 10- Support, 0 – Abstain, 0- Oppose

Next steps:

The *Calculate Median MELD at Transplant around the Donor Hospital and Update Sorting within Liver Allocation* proposal as presented will go before the OPTN Board of Directors for consideration in June 2021.

2. Policy Oversight Committee (POC) Update

The Vice Chair presented an update on the current work of the POC.

Summary of discussion:

A member confirmed that the Committee will start working on continuous distribution for liver in the near future. A member asked how long it will take to develop liver continuous distribution. Another member responded that while the OPTN Lung Transplantation Committee has provided a framework, the Committee will need to decide upon weights for attributes specific to liver. A member asked if the POC had mentioned that any liver projects would be put on hold to work on continuous distribution. Another member responded that they had not heard the POC announce this.

3. National Liver Review Board (NLRB) Subcommittee Update

The NLRB Chair provided an update on the work of the Subcommittee.

Summary of discussion:

A member asked about the impetus for adding a statement on immunotherapy to NLRB guidance. The presenter responded that reviewers reported they were unsure of how to react to cases involving immunotherapy and had requested its inclusion in NLRB guidance.

A member voiced support for the 12 month waiting period for those with HCC beyond down-staging criteria who have successfully down-staged based off intuition, but reported that there was not sufficient evidence to make a recommendation for the revision of guidance.

Next steps:

In June, the Committee will complete final review of all changes and vote to send the guidance to public comment in August.

4. Liver Committee Charge Review

The Committee discussed potential revision to their current charge.

Summary of discussion:

The Committee's current charge:

"The Liver and Intestine Transplantation Committee considers medical, scientific, and ethical aspects related to liver and intestine organ procurement, distribution, and allocation. The Committee considers both the broad implications and the specific member situations of these liver or intestinal issues and policies. The goal of the Committee's work is to develop evidence-based policies aimed at reducing the burden of liver disease in transplant patients (candidates and recipients), increasing liver utilization, improving access to liver transplantation, and improving the health outcomes of liver transplant recipients."

A member explained that the Committee would discuss whether or not they wish to broaden their charge from "transplant patients (candidates and recipients)" to "patients with end-stage liver disease".

A member supported broadening the charge in order to address additional disparities in the future. Another member noted that access to healthcare, including access to healthcare providers that refer patients for transplant and providers that list patients for transplant, for patients who live in rural areas and/or with low-income is heavily influenced by Medicare and Medicaid and suggested, while the OPTN does not have the ability to influence these issues that are primarily controlled at a state level,

perhaps the OPTN could propose a national evidence-based solution for issues related to accessing transplant.

A member asked what projects the Committee could pursue with an expanded charge that could not be pursued with the current charge. A member responded that the Committee could look at the change in availability of organs relative to the burden of disease and characterize the change in volume relative to the area being served. A member responded that they believe MELD is an accurate measure of disease severity, but agreed that access for patients in rural areas is limited due to lack of transportation. This member continued that the OPTN should seek to understand the impact of varying access on different areas of the country.

Next steps:

The sentiment of the Committee will be summarized and provided to OPTN leadership for further discussion.

Upcoming Meetings

- June 4, 2021

Attendance

- **Committee Members**
 - Peter Abt
 - Sumeet Asrani
 - Alan Gunderson
 - Julie Heimbach
 - Chandrashekhar Kubal
 - Ray Lynch
 - Peter Matthews
 - Greg McKenna
 - Mark Orloff
 - James Pomposelli
 - James Trotter
- **HRSA Representatives**
 - Jim Bowman
- **SRTR Staff**
 - Michael Conboy
 - Ray Kim
 - John Lake
 - Andrew Wey
- **UNOS Staff**
 - Nicole Benjamin
 - Roger Brown
 - Matt Cafarella
 - Chelsea Haynes
 - Betsy Gans
 - Rebecca Murdock
 - Jennifer Musick
 - Samantha Noreen
 - Kelley Poff
 - Matt Prentice
 - Niyati Upadhyay
 - Liz Robbins
 - Susie Sprinson
- **Other Attendees**
 - Samantha Delair
 - James Sharrock
 - Samantha Taylor