

OPTN Ad Hoc Disease Transmission Advisory Committee

Meeting Summary

July 26, 2021

Conference Call

Ricardo La Hoz, MD, FACP, FAST, FIDSA, Chair

Lara Danziger-Isakov, MD, MPH, Vice Chair

Introduction

The Ad Hoc Disease Transmission Advisory Committee met via Citrix GoToMeeting teleconference on 07/26/2021 to discuss the following agenda items:

1. Vice Chair Nominations
2. One Month Report: Lower Respiratory Testing for SARS-COV-2 for Lung Donors

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

1. Vice Chair Nominations

UNOS Policy and Community Relations staff presented on the new committee Vice Chair nomination process.

Summary of discussion:

Committee members had no questions or concerns.

2. One Month Report: Lower Respiratory Testing for SARS-CoV-2 for Lung Donors

UNOS Research staff presented on the one month post-implementation monitoring report on the policy to require lower respiratory SARS-CoV-2 NAT testing for lung donors.

Data summary:

Between May 27 and June 30, there were 252 deceased lung donors, and 100% of them received lower respiratory testing for SARS-CoV-2.

- 90.5% of results were entered in DonorNet before the day of transplant, 7.5% were entered on the day of transplant, 1.2% were entered after the day of transplant, and 0.8% did not enter the results in DonorNet discrete testing fields
- 98.9% of results were entered as Nucleic Acid Testing (NAT), and the rest were entered as "Other", with the free text indicating a type of NAT testing
- 53 OPOs recovered lung donors in this time, and all recovered donors had lower respiratory testing, even if the lungs were not ultimately transplanted
- Seven donors with positive SARS-CoV-2 lower respiratory test results were recovered, with kidneys, livers, hearts, and a pancreas transplanted. All of these donors had at least one negative upper respiratory tract test result.
- Eighteen donors had discordant test results where a lower respiratory test was negative, but an upper respiratory test was positive.

Utilization of non-DCD lungs went from 23% in May to 22.4% in June, and utilization of DCD lungs went from 5.5% in May to 3.9% in June. It's too soon to tell if this is a trend, or simply variability due to low numbers.

Summary of discussion:

One member was curious whether all of the non-lung organs with SARS-CoV-2 positive results were being utilized at one transplant program, or if there were multiple programs utilizing them. A few other members commented that it's likely more than one program, as they know of multiple accepting programs within their regions. Members discussed possibly comparing discard rates for COVID+ organs and COVID- organs as a way to see if a positive COVID test was causing increased discards for abdominal organs. One OPO member pointed out that this analysis would still be limited, as there are potentially cases shut down for positive tests that are never reported to the OPTN as potential deceased donors. In addition, the small numbers for donors with positive tests may make this data difficult to interpret.

OPO members discussed concern about the potential for transmission of COVID to procurement staff in the cases of abdominal organ procurement in SARS-CoV-2 positive donors. One member brought up that there's also a difference in exposure between DCD and BD donors, as DCD donors must be extubated and frequently cough.

One member suggested a webinar to get at the question of how many organs aren't being offered due to limitations in testing or positive testing for SARS-CoV-2. One member is working with a local OPO to have potential donors evaluated by an infectious disease physician, especially if they have a positive COVID test, and hopefully would have some data on the number of donors not pursued locally due to positive testing.

Next steps:

Research staff will present the two month post-implementation monitoring report in August.

Upcoming Meetings

- August 3, 2021, 3 PM EDT, Teleconference
- August 23, 2021, 12 PM EDT, Teleconference

Attendance

- **Committee Members**
 - Ann Woolley
 - Avi Agarwal
 - Charles Marboe
 - DongHeun Lee
 - Gary Marklin
 - Gerald Berry
 - Helen Te
 - Jason Goldman
 - Kelly Dunn
 - Lara Danziger-Isakov
 - Michelle Kittleson
 - Ricardo La Hoz
 - Sam Ho
 - Sarah Taimur
 - Stephanie Pouch
- **HRSA Representatives**
 - Jim Bowman
 - Marilyn Levi
 - Raelene Skerda
- **CDC Staff**
 - Ian Kracalik
 - Rebecca Free
- **FDA Staff**
 - Brychan Clark
 - Scott Brubaker
- **UNOS Staff**
 - Abby Fox
 - Cassandra Meekins
 - Courtney Jett
 - Darby Harris
 - Emily Womble
 - Leah Slife
 - Nicole Benjamin
 - Sandy Bartal
 - Sarah Booker
 - Susan Tlusty