

OPTN Executive Committee

Meeting Summary

March 25, 2024

Webex

Dianne LaPointe Rudow, ANP-BC, DNP, FAAN, Chair

Introduction

The OPTN Executive Committee met via Webex teleconference on 03/25/2024 to discuss the following agenda item:

1. Welcome and Announcements
2. Strategic Planning
3. New Project from the Policy Oversight Committee (POC)*
4. Updates for the Committee
 - a. Work Group Updates
 - b. eGFR Monitoring Update
 - c. Expeditious Task Force Update
5. Expedited Placement Variance Proposal*
6. Proposal to Address the Relationship of the OPTN and OPTN Contractor Boards Public Comment*

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

1. Welcome and Announcements

Dianne LaPointe Rudow, Chair of the Executive Committee, welcomed the committee to the meeting and presented the agenda.

2. Strategic Planning

Contractor staff shared that the objectives of the meeting were to review public comment feedback and sentiment, consider refining the strategic plan goals and objectives, consider refining metrics, and discuss strategic plan goal alignment and interpretation. Contractor staff presented the details and themes seen throughout public comment on the strategic plan. Contractor staff shared that the committee should follow logical outgrowth principles when considering changes to the strategic plan.

Contractor staff shared the three goals and the objectives that were submitted for public comment, and noted that based on public comment feedback, the committee might consider including equity and living donation in the strategic plan. The committee discussed including equity and living donation within the strategic plan. They considered including these themes in the introduction to the strategic plan, within the goals, and within the objectives of the plan. The committee decided to include equity in the OPTN vision in the introduction to the plan, and to amend the goal language on optimize organ use to more explicitly include equity. The committee discussed multiple ways to modify the objectives of the goal on optimizing organ use to focus on equity. The committee also discussed how they should increase living donation references in the strategic plan. The committee decided to include living donation within the first proposed goal, and to incorporate objectives relating to living donation within the first goal.

Contractor staff introduced the conversation on metrics as they relate to the strategic plan. The committee discussed how many metrics they would like to have in the plan and whether the metrics needed to be refined based on public comment feedback.

The committee participated in an activity to determine whether example past projects that have been implemented by the OPTN align with the draft strategic plan in its current state. During the activity, the projects received mixed feedback on whether or not the committee thought a project aligned with the draft strategic plan. The committee conversed about whether the project needed to align with the three goals, or the plan in general which would include the introduction to the plan. The committee discussed how to include projects that do not align with the strategic plan but are projects that are seen as a priority of the OPTN. The committee was then asked to consider the prioritization of sample projects and whether the projects aligned with the draft strategic plan or not. After this exercise, the committee discussed other projects the OPTN had completed in the past and rated them as a high, medium, or low priority for the OPTN. During the exercise, the committee discussed how important it is to consider priorities when approving new projects, no matter if they align with the strategic plan or not. They discussed potential ways to ensure that projects that do not align with the strategic plan but are a priority of the OPTN, are completed.

3. Expedited Placement Variance Proposal*

Jame Alcorn, Senior Policy Strategist, presented updated language on the Expedited Placement Variance Proposal based on feedback from the Executive Committee during their March 19 meeting. Mr. Alcorn shared a summary of the post-public comment changes, including the variance being extended from its original end date of July 1, 2025 to December 31, 2025. He also shared that all individual protocols would follow a 6-month duration, but the Executive Committee reserves the right to amend a protocol. The committee also agreed to add three safeguards to the variance proposal to protect pediatrics, racial minorities, and gender. Mr. Alcorn shared the updated policy language with the committee.

Summary of Discussion:

A representative from HRSA asked that the Executive Committee consider sending the proposal out for another round of public comment. Dr. LaPointe Rudow shared that the committee has made significant efforts to ensure the community is aware of the changes since public comment and to hear their feedback. She responded that she did not think the policy needed to go out for another round of public comment.

Vote:

The committee unanimously approved recommending the Expedited Placement Variance Proposal to the OPTN Board of Directors for consideration.

Next Steps:

The Expedited Placement Variance Proposal will be shared with the Board of Directors during their March 26 meeting.

4. New Project from the Policy Oversight Committee (POC)*

Jennifer Prinz, Chair of the Policy Oversight Committee (POC), presented a new project on behalf of the POC. Ms. Prinz presented a new project from the Disease Transmission Advisory Committee (DTAC) on Requirements for Communicating Post-Transplant Disease. She explained that this project would happen in two phases. The purpose of the first phase of the project is to update and clarify transplant program requirements for reporting and communicating recipient disease and the purpose of the second phase of the project is to improve the structure and efficiency of the 45-day follow-up process

for reporting potential disease transmission events (PDTE). Ms. Prinz also shared the strategic goal alignment, the rationale, the benefit score, and the vote and feedback from the POC on the project.

Summary of Discussion:

There were questions or comments from the committee.

Vote:

The Executive Committee approved the initiation of the project from the Policy Oversight Committee (POC) on Requirements for Communicating Post-Transplant Disease.

5. Updates for the Committee

Dr. LaPointe Rudow and contractor staff shared updates on ongoing activities across the OPTN. The Executive Committee received an update on eGFR monitoring by the Membership & Professional Standards Committee (MPSC), an update from the Code of Conduct Work Group and the Prioritization Work Group, and an update from the Expedient Task Force.

eGFR Monitoring Updates:

Dr. LaPointe Rudow provided the committee with an update on eGFR monitoring done by the MPSC. She shared that at HRSA and the Executive Committee's request, the MPSC developed a plan to review kidney programs who submitted an attestation without submitting any or few wait time modifications. Dr. LaPointe Rudow shared a timeline of the events that have occurred. She explained that the MPSC conducted a data review and determined a threshold of programs with Black/African American candidates registered but submitted modifications for fewer than 20% of those candidates, which accounted for 56 programs. The MPSC then sent letters of inquiry, with responses due to the MPSC a month later, and additional reminders were sent after the due date to programs whose responses were late.

Dr. LaPointe Rudow shared that next, the MPSC will review responses and determine next steps for these programs. She asked that more information will be shared with the Executive Committee once the MPSC has completed their review.

Summary of Discussion:

Committee members shared their own experiences with eGFR wait list modifications and shared feedback they have heard from other members within the community.

Work Group Updates:

Contractor staff provided an update on the Code of Conduct Work Group. Contractor staff shared the background and timeline associated with the Code of Conduct and Whistleblower Policy. They presented an overview of the Code of Conduct Work Group's work and shared that to date they have:

- Reviewed practices of other nonprofits and board management groups.
- Identified components to include in OPTN Code of Conduct.
- Evaluated sample language for each provision of the Code.
- Determined scope/who is subject to the Code.
- Defined processes for enforcement of the Code.
- Determined how to codify various requirements.

Contractor staff explained that the project and public comment proposal will include bylaw changes and implementation of a code of conduct for the OPTN. The draft code of conduct is included in the policy proposal.

Contractor staff shared that next steps include reviewing draft language for the code of conduct and bylaws, and once the work group has solidified the language, the proposal will be sent to the Executive Committee to consider for a special public comment period to align with Board consideration in June 2024. If approved, the work group will target implementing these changes starting with volunteer terms beginning on July 1, 2024.

Andrea Tietjen, Chair of the Prioritization Work Group provided an update on behalf of the Prioritization Work Group and their ongoing efforts. She shared that the work group is currently working to revamp the OPTN prioritization process, including the roles and responsibilities associated with prioritization, strategic plan alignment, early prioritization, and idea generation and submission. The work group plans to bring their proposed changes to the prioritization process to the June Board meeting for the entire Board's consideration.

Summary of Discussion:

The committee discussed the Code of Conduct Work Group and the parameters proposed in the code of conduct proposal for public statements made by OPTN volunteers. The committee discussed the difference in educational publications made by volunteers, versus a volunteer publishing an opinion piece. Contractor staff shared that there is language within the proposal that distinguishes the difference between the two. Contractor staff noted that the language used in the proposal aligns with language that is used within the federal government when someone publishes a piece based on their own intellectual capacity.

While discussing the Prioritization Work Group, a committee member asked if the work group has considered whether they would entertain project ideas from the public and if so, what this idea generation process would look like. The committee discussed the role that committees and the community will play throughout the policy development process.

Expeditious Task Force Update

Dr. LaPointe Rudow provided an update on the Expeditious Task Force. Dr. LaPointe Rudow shared that the OPTN held a town hall on March 13 on the Expedited Variance Proposal to discuss and address any questions from the community. Dr. LaPointe Rudow provided an update on MPSC metrics discussions that were held amongst different stakeholders, including Task Force leadership, Board leadership, the SRTR, and MPSC leadership. She shared that the group discussed the potential to change MPSC metrics thresholds.

The Executive Committee took a voice vote and approved a motion to direct the MPSC to collaborate with the SRTR to work on a proposal to increase thresholds for acceptance and lower the threshold for post-transplant outcomes. Dr. LaPointe Rudow asked that the MPSC consider bringing this proposal to the Board for August 2024 public comment.

Dr. LaPointe Rudow also shared the Task Force's collaboration on quality improvement and educational initiatives. She highlighted that the Task Force's efforts have been communicated to the broader community during regional meetings and through the Transplant Growth Collaboration.

Summary of Discussion

The committee discussed directing the MPSC to evaluate their metrics thresholds and whether they are imposing a hinderance in the efforts of the Task Force's ongoing efforts. The committee specifically discussed having the MPSC evaluate the threshold for post-transplant outcomes. The committee had a broad discussion about the metrics the MPSC utilizes. The committee discussed what a realistic timeline would be to have the MPSC consider these metrics and produce their findings to the Executive

Committee. The committee discussed what collaboration may include for the directive between the MPSC and the SRTR.

The committee discussed the Transplant Growth Collaborative and the efforts that have gone into the events. Dr. LaPointe Rudow asked the committee if they had any concerns with allowing the collaborative to grow organically and to allow the community to utilize these resources. The committee discussed the costs associated with the collaborative and it was noted that host OPOs are funding most resources, however, Dr. LaPointe Rudow asked the committee to allow the process to continue and for the OPTN to front any cost associated with the Task Force's collaboration. A representative from HRSA asked that information on the cost the OPTN is incurring for the collaborative be shared in writing to HRSA. The committee discussed the importance of analyzing the entire portfolio of work the OPTN is performing to analyze the cost and resources that are going towards the Task Force.

6. Proposal to Address the Relationship of the OPTN and OPTN Contractor Boards Public Comment*

James Alcorn, Senior Policy Strategist, presented public comment feedback on the Proposal to Address the Relationship of the OPTN and OPTN Contractor Boards. Mr. Alcorn shared the sentiment by member type for the proposal and the themes seen throughout public comment. He shared that the themes seen throughout public comment were support for the separation between the OPTN and OPTN Contractor Boards, concern for the timing and plan to separate the two Boards, and questions on the role of the OPTN Executive Director.

Summary of Discussion:

The committee discussed why patients were the most opposed to the proposal according to the sentiment graph. Mr. Alcorn explained that upon further examination, these comments expressed concern on how the Boards will be separated and how directors will be insured.

Vote:

The committee unanimously approved recommending the *Proposal to Address the Relationship of the OPTN and OPTN Contractor Boards* to the OPTN Board of Directors for their consideration.

Next Steps:

The Proposal to Address the Relationship of the OPTN and OPTN Contractor Boards will be shared with the Board of Directors for their consideration.

Attendance

- **Committee Members**
 - Andrea Tietjen
 - Dianne LaPointe Rudow
 - Ginny McBride
 - Jerry McCauley
 - Jim Sharrock
 - Linda Cendales
 - Manish Gandhi
 - Melissa McQueen
 - Richard Formica
 - Silas Norman
 - Valinda Jones
 - Wendy Garrison
- **HRSA Representatives**
 - Christopher McLaughlin
 - Frank Holloman
- **UNOS Staff**
 - Ann-Maire Leary
 - Anna Messmer
 - Jacqui O'Keefe
 - Julie Nolan
 - Kaitlin Swanner
 - Maureen McBride
 - Morgan Jupe
 - Rebecca Goff
 - Rebecca Murdock
 - Roger Brown
 - Susie Sprinson
 - Trish Jasion
- **Other Attendees**
 - Jennifer Prinz