

## **OPTN Liver and Intestinal Organ Transplantation Committee**

### **Meeting Summary**

**July 7, 2023**

**Conference Call**

**Scott Biggins, MD, Chair**

**Shimul Shah, MD, MHCM, Vice Chair**

### **Introduction**

The OPTN Liver and Intestinal Organ Transplantation Committee (the Committee) met via Citrix GoToMeeting teleconference on 07/07/2023 to discuss the following agenda items:

1. Welcome New Committee Members, OPTN Board of Directors Meeting Update, and MELD 3.0 and PELD Cr Implementation
2. Discussion: Continuous Distribution Attribute Outcome Metrics
3. New Committee Member Orientation

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

### **1. Welcome New Committee Members, OPTN Board of Directors Meeting Update, and MELD 3.0 and PELD Cr Implementation**

The Chair welcomed new Committee members. The Committee was provided an update on the actions taken by the OPTN Board of Directors during its June 26, 2023, meeting, including approval of the *National Liver Review Board (NLRB) Guidance for Multivisceral Transplant Candidates*. The Committee was reminded that their previous project *Improving Liver Allocation: MELD, PELD, Status 1A and Status 1B* is slated to be implemented July 13, 2023.

### **2. Discussion: Continuous Distribution Attribute Outcome Metrics**

The Committee continued to discuss the outcome metrics for each attribute within the continuous distribution allocation system.

#### Summary of discussion:

##### *Liver-Intestine Registration*

The Committee began discussing the attribute focused on liver-intestine priority, which they have previously identified as ensuring liver-intestine candidates have appropriate access to high quality offers. A member noted that multivisceral candidates require specific types of organ offers such as pancreas-liver-intestine combinations. A member recommended that the OPTN Multi-Organ Transplantation Committee could help address issues related to multivisceral allocation. The Chair reminded the Committee that they are not deciding the policy, but rather they are narrowing down policies that are then evaluated in modeling.

A member asked about exception points for unique populations in the continuous distribution framework. The Chair, but the main idea for the liver-intestine priority attribute is to ensure that multivisceral candidates appear high on the match run for appropriate offers. A member asked if the

Committee should define the optimal multivisceral donor. The Chair responded that the Committee will further define this in the future.

A member suggested that additional work is needed to help organ procurement organizations (OPOs) determine multi-organ priorities. The Chair agreed and stated that the Committee will need to collaborate with the OPTN Multi-Organ Transplantation Committee.

### *Proximity Efficiency*

The Chair stated their interpretation of the intent of the proximity efficiency attribute is to ensure that difficult to place grafts are less difficult to place. They said machine perfusion with donation after circulatory death (DCD) will require different considerations. The Chair added that the Committee has previously determined that for donors who are over 70 years old or are a DCD should receive extra priority within 150 nautical miles (NM). The Chair suggested reviewing marginal grafts that were accepted for candidates at the top of the match run divided by the active waitlist time. They said the Committee should focus on the purpose being maximizing the use of organs that would otherwise not be utilized.

A member emphasized the importance of efficiency to donor families. They added that trying to find the right recipient can be challenging, especially when working with medically complex donors. They said a challenge they have is how to determine which organs meet marginal criteria, and they are unsure that over the age of 70, as well as being a DCD are the right metrics, due to the advancement in medical technology. The member said their geography on the west coast is very different than that on the east coast, therefore NM may not be the ideal metric. They noted that cost increases the more OPOs travel. The Chair agreed that it would be best to focus on the goal of placing marginal grafts efficiently, rather than distance travelled.

The Chair noted that marginal graft will need to be further defined. They emphasized that the Committee wants to minimize the number of instances where organs are allocated at the very bottom of a sequence, as that is very inefficient.

A member suggested reviewing organ offer declines as they relate to donor-specific factors. The member explained this could help identify marginal grafts to have marginal offers made to candidates faster. Another member suggested reviewing the impact of expedited liver. Another member agreed, emphasizing that although the process was intended to have livers offered to the recipients much quicker, it still requires moving through the match run. They mentioned a challenge is that expedited liver was not as efficient as it was intended to be.

A member suggested that an efficiency expedited liver process involve OPOs "posting" donor information and transplant programs indicating their interest. The member explained that then a match run could be developed by those who are interested as a way to expedite the process and match the graft to the best-fit candidate. Another member said the key is to define marginal organ, and then potentially categorize offers based on the definition.

A member agreed that it is important to define marginal grafts, however it is also important to look at transplant program behavior. They recommended looking at the median sequence number at offer acceptance for each transplant center. The member noted this analysis could help determine ways to improve efficiency in placement. Another member said that a transplant program's behavior may be dependent on competition, therefore it can be hard to predict. They also recommended reviewing metrics stratified by marginal and non-marginal grafts. The member explained that many transplant programs have expressed challenges with increases in organ offers, however the quality of the organ has remained constant.

Next steps:

The Committee will continue to discuss outcome metrics for each attribute within the continuous distribution framework.

**3. New Committee Member Orientation**

New members were oriented to the ongoing work of the Committee and the structure of the OPTN.

**Upcoming Meetings**

- July 21, 2023 @ 2:00 PM ET (teleconference)
- August 4, 2023 @ 2:00 PM ET (teleconference)

## Attendance

- **Committee Members**
  - Aaron Ahearn
  - Allison Kwong
  - Cal Matsumoto
  - Christine Radolovic
  - Colleen Reed
  - Danielle Haakinson
  - Dev Desai
  - Jennifer Muriett
  - Joseph DiNorcia
  - Kathy Campbell
  - Lloyd Brown
  - Scott Biggins
  - Shunji Nagai
  - Tovah Dorsey-Pollard
- **HRSA Representatives**
  - Jim Bowman
- **SRTR Staff**
  - Jack Lake
  - Katie Audette
  - Nicholas Wood
- **UNOS Staff**
  - Erin Schnellinger
  - James Alcorn
  - Katrina Gauntt
  - Kayla Balfour
  - Laura Schmitt
  - Matt Cafarella
  - Meghan McDermott
  - Niyati Upadhyay
  - Shelby Jones
  - Susan Tlusty
- **Other**
  - David Weimer
  - Emily Perito
  - Lori Markham
  - S. DeLair
  - S. Taylor
  - Ted Papalexopoulos