

OPTN Liver and Intestinal Organ Transplantation Committee

Meeting Summary

December 16, 2022

Conference Call

James Pomposelli, MD, PhD, Chair

Scott Biggins, MD, Vice Chair

Introduction

The OPTN Liver and Intestinal Organ Transplantation Committee (the Committee) met via Citrix GoToMeeting teleconference on 12/16/2022 to discuss the following agenda items:

1. Multivisceral Transplant National Liver Review Board (NLRB) Guidance Project: Review and Vote
2. New Project Discussion: Alcohol-Associated Hepatitis

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

1. Multivisceral Transplant National Liver Review Board (NLRB) Guidance Project: Review and Vote

The Committee reviewed the multivisceral transplant NLRB guidance project and voted to submit the project to winter 2023 public comment.

Summary of discussion:

A member expressed concern regarding the score recommendation. The member recognized the increased waitlist mortality for multivisceral candidates, and asked for more information on the justification for the current score recommendation of median MELD at transplant (MMaT) plus six with a three point increase every three months. Another member responded that the justification for the recommended exception score is the high waitlist mortality rate and the need for high quality organ offers. The member explained that to access high quality organ offers, a high MELD score is needed. The member stated the escalator increase is a compromise in order to have multivisceral candidates receive high MELD scores but at a delay. The member noted that the number of multivisceral transplants performed each year is relatively small.

The Committee voted on the following:

- Does the Committee support sending this proposal for public comment in January 2023?
 - Support - 14 ; Abstain – 0; Oppose - 0

Next steps:

The multivisceral transplant NLRB guidance will be submitted for public comment in January 2023. The Committee will review community feedback on the proposal.

2. New Project Discussion: Alcohol-Associated Hepatitis

The Committee reviewed information related to alcohol-associated hepatitis and discussed a potential new project idea.

Summary of discussion:

A member stated that waitlist mortality should be compared between candidates at similar MELD scores instead of comparing against different diagnoses for liver disease. The Vice Chair clarified that alcohol-associated hepatitis candidates have lower waitlist mortality when compared to candidates with other diagnoses at equivalent MELD scores.

A member noted concern that placing restrictions related to alcohol-use disorder may further increase disparity.

Another member asked how to ensure that individuals with alcohol-associated hepatitis are listed with that diagnoses as opposed to a different indication for liver transplant, such as chronic alcoholic cirrhosis.

The Vice Chair suggested the Committee could begin by developing a guidance document. The Vice Chair stated that the guidance document can include a focus on equity for all populations. The Vice Chair added that determining appropriate priority for candidates with alcohol-associated hepatitis may be a separate project to address in the future.

A member supported the Committee pursuing a project on this topic. The member stated this topic is an important issue facing the liver transplant field.

A member of the community noted that there is not appropriate data collection for alcohol-associated hepatitis. The member of the community suggested the Committee may also consider potential data collection proposals in addition to a guidance document project.

Another member stated that the Committee should consider genetics and other diseases that impact individuals' liver disease. The member explained that alcohol has an impact but there are other factors that may contribute. The member stated more data may be needed in order to determine appropriate prioritization of candidates with alcohol-associated hepatitis. The Vice Chair expressed concern regarding how to ensure individuals with alcohol-associated hepatitis are listed with an accurate diagnosis.

Another member of the community noted that a guidance document may help transplant programs ask for more resources in order to better care for individuals with alcohol-associated hepatitis.

Next steps:

The Committee will continue to discuss and refine this topic as a potential new project idea.

Upcoming Meeting

- January 6, 2022 @ 3:00 PM ET (teleconference)
- January 20, 2022 @ 3:00 PM ET (teleconference)

Attendance

- **Committee Members**
 - Alan Gunderson
 - Allison Kwong
 - Colleen Reed
 - Diane Alonso
 - Erin Maynard
 - Greg McKenna
 - James Eason
 - James Trotter
 - Neil Shah
 - Peter Abt
 - Scott Biggins
 - Shunji Nagai
 - Sophoclis Alexopoulos
 - Vanessa Pucciarelli
- **HRSA Representatives**
 - Jim Bowman
- **SRTR Staff**
 - John Lake
 - Katie Audette
 - Tim Weaver
- **UNOS Staff**
 - Betsy Gans
 - Erin Schnellinger
 - Jennifer Musick
 - Joel Newman
 - Katrina Gauntt
 - Matt Cafarella
 - Meghan McDermott
 - Niyati Upadhyay
 - Sarah Scott
 - Susan Tlusty
- **Other Attendees**
 - Catherine Kling
 - Dave Weimer
 - Deepika Devuni
 - Emily Perito
 - Gene Im
 - Marina Serper
 - Simon Horslen