

**OPTN Board of Directors
Meeting Summary
March 26, 2024
Webex**

**Dianne LaPointe Rudow, ANP-BC, DNP, FAAN, President
Richard Formica, MD, Vice President**

Introduction

The Board of Directors met via Webex on 03/26/2024 to discuss the following agenda items and public comment items:

1. Welcome & Announcements
2. Refit Kidney Donor Profile Index without Race and Hepatitis C Virus (Minority Affairs Committee)
3. OPTN Strategic Plan 2024-2027 (Executive Committee)
4. Winter 2024 Public Comment Items
5. Region 1 Councillor Vacancy*
6. Updates from the President
 - a. Expeditious Task Force
 - b. eGFR Monitoring
7. Expedited Placement Variance Special Public Comment*
8. Proposal to Address the Relationship of the OPTN and OPTN Contractor Boards Public Comment Review*

The following is a summary of the Board of Directors discussions.

1. Welcome & Announcements

Dianne LaPointe Rudow, OPTN President, welcomed the Board to the meeting.

2. Refit Kidney Donor Profile Index without Race and Hepatitis C Virus

Alejandro Diez, Chair of the Minority Affairs Committee (MAC), presented the proposal to Refit Kidney Donor Profile Index without Race and Hepatitis C Virus. Dr. Diez shared that the purpose of the proposal is to refit the Kidney Donor Risk Index (KDRI) model without race and HCV and remap it to KDPI, to better reflect the likelihood of graft failure of kidneys from African American/Black and HCV-positive deceased donors. Dr. Diez shared public comment sentiment that the proposal received, denoted by different member types and regions. He shared that the public comment themes noted:

- Support for the removal of race and HCV, feedback on the modeling approach, impact on removing HCV on the pediatric population, and discussion around APOL1 testing.

Summary of discussion:

The Board discussed the positive impact this change will have on equity within the transplant community. The Board also discussed that the negative sentiments during public comment were mostly due to the concern throughout the pediatric community and the impact that this policy change could have on pediatric candidates. A Board member suggested that the committee closely monitor the pediatric community once the policy is implemented, and for the committee to consider modifying educational resources for pediatric practitioners to better understand the policy change.

3. OPTN Strategic Plan 2024-2027

Dianne LaPointe Rudow, Chair of the Executive Committee, presented the proposal for the OPTN Strategic Plan 2024-2027. Dr. LaPointe Rudow shared the purpose of the strategic plan is to align with OPTN resources with specific, significant opportunities within the transplant community. She noted that the strategic plan is not an exhaustive list of the OPTN's work but serves as a high-level framework to guide the OPTN's strategic focus. Dr. LaPointe Rudow stated that the Executive Committee intentionally selected the goals within the proposed plan with greater specificity to allow for a focusing of resources on key opportunities, driving action to ultimately benefit patients.

Dr. LaPointe Rudow presented that the three proposed goals of the strategic plan are:

- Improve Offer Acceptance Rate
- Optimize Organ Use
- Enhance OPTN Efficiency

Dr. LaPointe Rudow shared sentiments received from the community throughout public comment, and shared the key themes seen throughout public comment focused on: equity, living donation, metrics, data, prioritization of OPTN projects, education, and communication. She shared that the committee is reviewing public comment feedback and themes to consider refinement to the plan. She shared that the committee met the day before and shared a summary of the committee's discussion.

Summary of discussion:

There were no questions or comments from the Board.

4. Winter 2024 Public Comment Items

Contractor staff presented the remaining public comment items out for Winter 2024 Public Comment. They presented on the following items:

- Clarify Requirements for Pronouncement of Death (Organ Procurement Organization Committee)
- Standardize Six Minute Walk for Lung Allocation (Lung Transplantation Committee)
- Modify Effect of Acceptance Policy (Multi-Organ Transplantation Committee)
- Standardize the Patient Safety Contact and Reduce Duplicate Reporting (Disease Transmission and Advisory Committee)
- National Liver Review Board (NLRB) Updates Related to Transplant Oncology (Liver and Intestinal Organ Transplantation Committee)
- Promote Efficiency of Lung Allocation (Lung Transplantation Committee)
- Update Post-Transplant Histocompatibility Data Collection (Histocompatibility Committee)
- Concepts for Modifying Multi-Organ Policies (Multi-Organ Transplantation Committee)
- Update on Continuous Distribution of Hearts (Heart Transplantation Committee)

Contractor staff gave a summary of each project. Contractor staff shared the overall sentiments received on each proposal and shared the participation metrics for items that were not rated on a sentiment scale. They shared that sentiment scores are taken on all public comment items that are an action item. Contractor staff also noted that the heart value prioritization exercise received 702 complete responses.

Summary of discussion:

A Board member asked how the participation in the Heart Continuous Distribution VPE compared to other VPE exercises. Contractor staff shared that the Heart Transplantation Committee is pleased with the number of responses received during the exercise.

5. Region 1 Councillor Vacancy

Richard Formica, Chair of the Nominating Committee, presented on the Region 1 Councillor Vacancy. Dr. Formica presented that the current Region 1 Councillor is moving out of the region, creating a vacancy on the Board. The Region 1 Nominating Committee recommends Stefan Tullius to serve a portion of the remainder of the Region 1 Councillor's term from April 1 to June 30, 2024. The Region 1 Nominating Committee further recommended that Martha Pavlakis, the current Region 1 Associate Councillor be appointed as Region 1 Councillor for the remaining portion of the Region 1 Councillor term from 7/1/2024-6/30/2025.

Summary of discussion:

There were no questions or comments from the Board.

Vote:

The Board unanimously approved the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that Stefan Tullius is hereby appointed as the Region 1 Councillor on the OPTN Board of Directors, to fill the vacancy created by the relocation of Reginald Gohh, effective April 1, 2024, through June 30, 2024.

FURTHER RESOLVED, that Martha Pavlakis, the current Region1 Associate Councillor, is hereby appointed as the Region 1 Councillor on the OPTN Board of Directors, effective July 1, 2024.

6. Updates from the President

Dianne LaPointe Rudow, OPTN President, provided an update to the Board on eGFR monitoring from the MPSC and an update on work by the Expeditious Task Force.

eGFR Monitoring Update

Dr. LaPointe Rudow shared an update on eGFR monitoring being performed by the MPSC due to a request from HRSA and the Executive Committee. The MPSC was asked to develop a plan to review kidney programs who submitted an attestation without submitting any or few wait time modifications. Dr. LaPointe Rudow presented a timeline of the MPSC's work, and shared that next the MPSC will review the cases and determine next steps.

Expeditious Task Force Update

Dr. LaPointe Rudow shared an update on the Expeditious Task Force with the Board. She shared that they hosted a town hall on March 30 on the Expedited Placement Variance Proposal. Dr. LaPointe Rudow also shared that there have been conversations about reevaluating MPSC outcome metrics and offer acceptance metrics. She also shared that the task force has focused on quality improvement and educational initiatives, specifically noting the transplant growth collaborative.

Summary of discussion:

There were no questions or comments from the Board.

7. Expedited Placement Variance Public Comment Proposal*

James Alcorn, Senior Policy Strategist, presented the Expedited Placement Variance proposal and the post-public comment changes that have been made. Mr. Alcorn shared the purpose of expedited placement variances, public sentiment received during public comment, and themes seen during public comment. He also shared key terms associated with the proposal, the structure of the pilot, and the structure of the protocols.

Mr. Alcorn shared post-public comment changes that were made by the Executive Committee. He shared that based on public comment feedback, the committee decided a subgroup of the Expeditious Task Force would monitor the results of the protocols. He also shared that the Executive Committee decided that each protocol should be limited to 6-months. The Executive Committee decided that they could amend the dates of the protocol but could not extend the timeframe. He shared that the length of the variance itself has been changed to expire in December 2025 to allow for more time to perform more protocols. Mr. Alcorn also shared that the Executive Committee decided that protocols can be performed at the same time.

Summary of discussion:

A representative from HRSA shared that HRSA suggests the proposal should be sent out for another round of public comment to provide the community the opportunity to review post-public comment changes. A representative from HRSA also suggested that each protocol be submitted for public comment before it is tested.

Dr. LaPointe Rudow shared that HRSA shared this feedback with the Executive Committee during an earlier meeting, and that the Executive Committee decided the proposal did not need to go out for a second round of public comment. She explained that the Executive Committee reviewed feedback and made changes based on comments received. She also noted that the Executive Committee alongside the Expeditious Task Force hosted a town hall to address any remaining questions from the community. Dr. LaPointe Rudow explained that the community will have the opportunity to provide comments during the entire life of the variance and will have the opportunity to provide feedback on each of the respective protocols.

Multiple Board members commented that they did not agree with submitting the proposal for another round of public comment. They commented that the town hall was an appropriate forum to answer the community's questions after public comment. A Board member stated that it is important for the Board to act expeditiously in implementing the proposal.

Board members asked clarifying questions on topics like concurrent protocols, the plan to collect metrics during the life of the variance, and the timeline of PDSAs.

VOTE:

The Board approved for the following:

RESOLVED, that the changes to *Policy 1.3: Variances* and *Policy 5.4.G: Open Variances for Expedited Placement*, as set forth in the meeting materials, is hereby approved effective April 2, 2024.

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

James Alcorn, Senior Policy Strategist, presented the Proposal to Address the Relationship of the OPTN and OPTN Contractor Boards and shared feedback received during public comment. Mr. Alcorn shared the sentiment the proposal received by member type, and shared that the themes seen throughout public comment focused on:

- Support for the separation between the OPTN and OPTN Contractor Boards.
- Concern for the timing and plan about how to separate the two boards.
- Role of the Executive Director.

Mr. Alcorn shared that the Executive Committee reviewed the proposal and public comment feedback during an earlier meeting and unanimously approved sending the proposal to the Board for their consideration.

Summary of discussion:

There were no questions or comments from the Board.

Vote:

The Board approved for the following:

RESOLVED, that the changes to Bylaw 2.8 Relationship of the OPTN Board and the OPTN Contractor's Board, as set forth in the materials distributed, are hereby approved, effective March 30, 2024.

Attendance

- **Board Members**
 - Alan Langnas
 - Andrea Tietjen
 - Andrew Kao
 - Barry Massa
 - Christopher Jones
 - Colleen McCarthy
 - Daniel Yip
 - Dianne LaPointe Rudow
 - Emily Blumberg
 - Erika Demars
 - Evelyn Hsu
 - George Surratt
 - Ginny McBride
 - Jen Lau
 - Jerry McCauley
 - Jim Sharrock
 - Julie Spear
 - Kelley Hitchman
 - Laura Butler
 - Laurel Avery
 - Linda Cendales
 - Lloyd Ratner
 - Luis Hidalgo
 - Maryjane Farr
 - Meg Rogers
 - Melissa McQueen
 - Michael Kwan
 - Nicole Hayde
 - Regniald Gohh
 - Richard Formica
 - Stuart Sweet
 - Valinda Jones
 - Wendy Garrison
- **HRSA Representatives**
 - Frank Holloman
- **UNOS Staff**
 - Ann-Marie Leary
 - Anna Messmer
 - Betsy Warnick
 - James Alcorn
 - Kelley Poff
 - Maureen McBride
 - Morgan Jupe
 - Rebecca Murdock
 - Roger Brown

- Susan Tlusty
 - Susie Sprinson
- **Other Attendees**
 - Alejandro Diez