

OPTN Ad Hoc Disease Transmission Advisory Committee

Meeting Summary

November 22, 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/in City, State on 11/22/2021 to discuss the following agenda items:

1. Five Month Post-Implementation Monitoring: Require Lower Respiratory Testing for SARS-CoV-2 in Lung Donors
2. Closed Session: Confidential Medical Peer Review

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

1. Five Month Post-Implementation Monitoring: Require Lower Respiratory Testing for SARS-CoV-2 in Lung Donors

UNOS Research Analyst presented the five month post-implementation monitoring report for the policy to require lower respiratory testing for SARS-CoV-2 in lung donors.

Summary of discussion:

Multiple members expressed the desire for DTAC to obtain additional information about recipients from donors who tested positive for COVID-19, beyond what is available on the transplant recipient follow-up forms. They expressed a goal of ensuring recipient safety and providing community education to increase utilization rates if additional data support patient safety. Members agreed that a good first step would be to report on patient and graft status of the organs.

A member expressed that he was happy to see an increase in DCD and overall lung transplantation, after low transplant numbers in recent months. The member asked for an analysis of the number of lung candidates on the waiting list currently as compared to previous years, and stated that there seems to be a decrease in the number of listed patients in their area, which makes it more difficult to locate a potential transplant recipient. They also mentioned that one of the lung ex vivo perfusion companies mentioned that their referrals have decreased overall as well. He mentioned that the transplant issue may be in part driven by the number of listed patients for lung transplant. Another member mentioned that they had been having issues with scheduling candidate appointments due to the pandemic, which has made it challenging to list new candidates.

A member asked when it would be appropriate to start using COVID+ lungs for transplantation, especially as vaccination rates have increased. Another member stated that they think it might be challenging to consider these organs currently, even with medications. They also mentioned that Chronic Lung Allograft Dysfunction (CLAD) is increased in patients with community acquired viral and other respiratory infections, so it may be challenging to utilize these lungs in the near term. They did state that utilizing these organs safely may be a good long-term goal.

Another member stated that the lack of transmissions since policy implementations is showing that the policy is working to protect patient safety. They also stated that once there is a decrease in positive tests reported, it would be necessary for DTAC to evaluate whether the policy is still warranted, but for now the number of positive lower respiratory test results reported has increased since the previous month.

Multiple members also reported increasing use of non-lung donor organs where the COVID+ tests were incidental findings, not related to the donor's hospitalization reason.

Next steps:

Research will incorporate committee suggestions and present the 6-month post-monitoring report to the DTAC once available.

2. Closed Session: Confidential Medical Peer Review

The Committee had a closed session review of potential donor-derived transmission events.

Upcoming Meetings

- December 20, 2021, 12 PM EST, Teleconference

Attendance

- **Committee Members**
 - Ann Woolley
 - Avi Agarwal
 - Charles Marboe
 - Debbie Levine
 - Dong Lee
 - Gary Marklin
 - Helen Te
 - Kelly Dunn
 - Michelle Kittleson
 - Ricardo La Hoz
 - Sam Ho
- **HRSA Representatives**
 - Jim Bowman
 - Marilyn Levi
- **CDC Staff**
 - Ian Kracalik
 - Pallavi Annambhotla
 - Rebecca Free
 - Sridhar Basavaraju
- **FDA Staff**
 - Brychan Clark
 - Scott Brubaker
- **UNOS Staff**
 - Anne McPherson
 - Cassandra Meekins
 - Cole Fox
 - Leah Slife
 - Mike Ferguson
 - Sandy Bartal
 - Sarah Booker