

**OPTN Kidney Transplantation Committee  
Kidney Expedited Placement Workgroup  
Meeting Summary  
March 3, 2025  
Conference Call**

**Chandrasekar Santhanakrishnan, MD, Chair**

## **Introduction**

The OPTN Kidney Transplantation Committee’s Expedited Placement Workgroup (the Workgroup) met via WebEx teleconference on 03/03/2025 to discuss the following agenda items:

1. Welcome
2. Project Updates
3. Review and Discuss Project Feedback
4. Next Steps and Closing Comments

The following is a summary of the Workgroup’s discussions.

### **1. Welcome**

The Chair welcomed the Workgroup. Today’s discussion will focus on the next steps and timeline to advance the Expedited Placement project. The Chair noted the significant amount of work the Workgroup has accomplished to date and how that work can support the goals of transparency and equity in organ allocation.

#### Summary of discussion:

No decisions were made.

There were no questions or comments.

### **2. Project updates**

The Workgroup reviewed an overview of the Expedited Placement Project and the project timeline.

#### Expedited Placement Overview

- Candidates opt in to receiving expedited placement offers.
- OPOs offer through priority classifications via standard allocation.
- OPOs switch to expedited placement when initiation criteria are met.
- Upon initiation of expedited placement: candidates who have not opted in for expedited offers are bypassed; transplant programs who have not historically accepted those kidneys are bypassed via offer filters.
- Simultaneous offers are sent to potential transplant recipients (PTRs) remaining on the match. Transplant programs have 90 minutes to submit up to 3 PTRs from the existing match. OPO places the kidney(s) with the highest PTR(s) remaining on the match.

#### Project Timeline

- The Workgroup presented the project to the Data Advisory Committee on 2/10 to get initial feedback on the addition of a data field to collect the candidate opt-in.
- The Workgroup presented to the Policy Oversight Committee for recommendation on project approval on 2/13.
- On 2/11 HRSA provided feedback pending resolution of the AOOS critical comment.
- On 2/21 HRSA provided a response to the allocation out of sequence (AOOS) critical comment directing the OPTN to take several actions.
- The Executive Committee will review the project for approval on 3/6.

Summary of discussion:

No decisions were made.

Workgroup members asked questions regarding the use of offer filters to bypass potential transplant recipients registered at transplant programs who have not historically accepted the types of kidneys that would be offered via the expedited pathway. Members discussed the data incorporated into the Offer Filters Model for organs allocated out of sequence. Contractor staff and workgroup members affirmed that OPOs enter bypass codes when closing out the donor record. Those bypasses are not considered “declines” and therefore would not be used to generate a filter for a transplant program. A member asked if historical acceptance pattern filters are necessary if programs can actively opt in or opt out of expedited placement for a candidate. Contractor staff suggested a data request could be created to explore the impact of offer filters on transplant programs for this population of donors.

**3. Review and Discuss Project Feedback**

The Workgroup reviewed recent project feedback from the Data Advisory Committee (DAC), the Policy Oversight Committee (POC), and HRSA.

Summary of feedback:

- The Data Advisory Committee declined to endorse the proposed opt-in data field at the 2/10 meeting and requested further participation and additional meetings between the Workgroup and DAC leadership.
- On 2/13 the POC recommended project approval. POC had questions regarding potential disparities for candidates at transplant centers with less experience in high Kidney Donor Profile Index (KDPI) transplants and how the project may impact the CMS Increasing Organ Transplant Access (IOTA) model.
- On 2/11 HRSA provided the following feedback: “HRSA believes it is inadvisable to proceed with this proposal at this time pending resolution of the AOOS critical comment. Although policy development by the OPTN in this area remains a priority, it is premature to advance this project without further parameters in the post-critical comment period.”
- On 2/21 HRSA provided a response to the critical comment on AOOS<sup>1</sup> directing the OPTN to take several actions, including providing a remediation plan to improve OPTN allocation policy requirements and policy definitions.

Summary of discussion:

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<sup>1</sup>Dr. Suma Nair, letter to Dr. Rich Formica and Ms. Rexanah Wyse Morrisette, February 21, 2025, <https://optn.transplant.hrsa.gov/media/km3fskz1/hrsa-directive-to-optn-on-aos-022125.pdf>.

No decisions were made.

Workgroup members discussed the HRSA directive and increased media coverage of the organ transplant system. The Chair noted the increased attention on issues of AOOS and equity in the system, and that the Workgroup's progress on Expedited Placement may promote more transparency, efficiency, and fairness in the system.

Workgroup members discussed the proposed candidate submission process and its alignment with the OPTN Final Rule and HRSA's feedback. A member noted the proposal would require programs to identify potential transplant recipients from the existing match and that is different from an open offer to a program. Members agreed this is an area the Workgroup may need to further review.

Workgroup members discussed the advantages and disadvantages of the candidate opt-in data field for the expedited pathway. Some members noted the high burden the opt-in would place on transplant programs and the difficulty of meaningfully educating patients on the consequences of an opt-in choice. Members also questioned the utility of the opt-in feature and discussed whether it would be meaningfully different than existing conversations transplant programs have with candidates regarding medically complex organ offers. Members discussed whether individualized opt-in was necessary if program level filters were in place. The Chair suggested candidate interaction and education decisions may be more appropriate at the transplant program level than in policy.

#### **4. Next steps**

OPTN is developing a plan to respond fully to HRSA's directive and welcomes participation from Workgroup members in that effort.

The Executive Committee will meet on March 6<sup>th</sup> to review the Expedited Placement project for approval. The Workgroup will receive an update with the Executive Committee's feedback and the Workgroup will reconvene on March 10<sup>th</sup> to discuss.

#### Summary of discussion:

No decisions were made.

#### **Upcoming Meetings**

- March 10, 2025, 3:00 – 4:00 ET
- April 21, 2025, 3:00 – 4:00 ET

## Attendance

- **Workgroup Members**
  - Chandrasekar Santhanakrishnan, Chair
  - Megan Urbanski
  - Jim Kim
  - Jason Rolls
  - George Surratt
  - Carrie Thiessen
  - Tania Houle
  - Anja DiCesaro
  - Jillian Wojtowicz
- **SRTR Staff**
  - Bryn Thompson
  - Grace Lyden
  - Jon Miller
- **UNOS Staff**
  - Kaitlin Swanner
  - Carly Rhyne
  - Ben Wolford
  - Cass McCharen
  - Carlos Martinez
  - Keighly Bradbrook
  - Sarah Booker
  - Houlder Hudgins
  - Asma Ali
  - Ross Walton
  - Rebecca Fitz Marino
  - Thomas Dolan
  - Lindsay Larkin