

OPTN Vascularized Composite Allograft (VCA) Committee

Meeting Summary

March 29, 2023

Conference Call

Sandra Amaral, MD, MHS, Chair

Vijay Gorantla, MD, Ph.D., Vice-Chair

Introduction

The Vascularized Composite Allograft Committee (“Committee”) met via Citrix GoToMeeting teleconference on 03/29/2023 to discuss the following agenda items:

1. Optimizing VCA Recovery Guidance Document

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

1. Optimizing VCA Recovery Guidance Document

The Committee broke out into groups to discuss and draft segments of the guidance document. The following is a summary of each group’s report out to the committee following small group discussion.

Data summary:

The sections identified by the Committee for updates are:

- VCA Background
- Donor ID
- Recovery & Post-Recovery
- Media/PR
- Family Considerations

Leadership and Staff will review proposed drafts following the in-person meeting in April. Final drafts are expected by the May meeting.

Summary of discussion:

VCA Background

A member noted that much of the background information could be preserved from the original document. They added that there was existing language on the OPTN website that could be incorporated into the document as well.

The pre-existing language sections that are being maintained are “Benefits of VCA Transplantation” and “The Strategic Decision to Participate in VCA Transplantation”.

Donor ID

The Chair noted that their group began by amending the beginning of the document to state that all donor candidates should be considered for VCA donation. Additionally, the process by which a donor is listed has changed now that it will move into the OPTN Computer System. They suggested including more information on how donor listing should be sequenced with family considerations.

They also suggested including a section on living donation, given that the original document only addressed deceased donation.

A member proposed contraindications to VCA donation included in this section.

Recovery and Post-Recovery

A member stated that the largest update to this section will be a list of all covered VCAs and the estimation of how long each takes to procure. Additionally, some references will be added, and others will be updated to reflect current practice. They proposed that, once all information has been added, the Committee should review the relevancy of each reference to ensure that the most pertinent information is being shared.

The Chair asked if the group planned to include a section on tools available to assess suitability. The member replied that they had not discussed it but agreed it would be valuable information. They highlighted that this information would not benefit the general public who may be attempting to learn more about VCA donation but would be especially useful to programs attempting to start a VCA program.

A member wondered if transfer of the donor was discussed anywhere in the document. The representative from the group responded that it would be included, especially when considering transfer timing alongside lifesaving organs. A second member emphasized the importance of this section; they also advocated for a section on novel preservation methods.

Media/PR

The representative from this group noted that the prescriptive timelines in the former document did not seem to suit the diversity of VCA types. Their group proposed removing timeline recommendations for Media/PR outreach altogether. Furthermore, some language seemed too utilitarian, and phrases like “to maximize potential” should be removed.

Overall, members of the group felt that many of the definitive timelines should be removed from the Media/PR section and any communication should be founded on donor and recipient characteristics. They caveated that some recommendations may change between living donation and deceased. Another member supported the idea that clear communication on the donor and recipient’s desires for media exposure should drive the entire process.

Family Considerations

The representative from this group noted that family considerations were exceedingly diverse. They proposed finding a focus group of families within the OPTN to help review the section.

They added that some programs may have done research and outreach that could help create this document. A member noted they had some experience working with donor families in the past and offered to collaborate on this section.

Next steps:

Staff will incorporate early draft feedback for the committee to review at their in-person meeting.

Upcoming Meeting

- April 24, 2023

Attendance

- **Committee Members**
 - Sandra Amaral
 - Vijay Gorantla
 - Bo Pomahac
 - Liza Johannesson
 - Anji Wall
 - Debbi McRann
 - Lawrence Gottlieb
 - Christina Kaufmann
 - Elizabeth Shipman
 - Donald Rickleman
 - Stefan Tullius
 - Max Hendrix
 - Debra Priebe
 - Lori Ewoldt
 - Amir Dorafschar
 - Brian Berthiaume
 - Rick Redett
 - Amanda Gruendell
 - Charlie Thomas
- **HRSA Representatives**
 - Jim Bowman
- **UNOS Staff**
 - Kelley Poff
 - Isaac Hager
 - Lauren Mauk