

OPTN Policy Oversight Committee

Meeting Summary

April 10, 2023

Conference Call

Nicole Turgeon, MD, FACS, Chair

Jennifer Prinz, RN, BSN, MPH, CPTC, Vice-Chair

Introduction

The Policy Oversight Committee (“Committee” or “POC”) met via Citrix GoToMeeting teleconference on 04/10/2023 to discuss the following agenda items:

1. Efficient Matching
2. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) Follow-Up

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

1. Efficient Matching

The Committee discussed how to define efficient matching and current operational applications.

Summary of discussion:

The Committee discussed the challenges of defining efficiency and considered ideas for further planning and defining this important topic. A member noted accuracy and time to be essential aspects of efficient matching process. Another member identified the importance of considering how different organs may reflect different efficiency considerations – for example, the distance of 50 miles for kidney transport is much less significant than it is for heart. Members also considered defining efficient matching by what it is not – for example, 100 programs responding to texts about potential donors is very inefficient, especially if most respond ‘no’. Potentially, some projects could be applied to efficient matching across organs, while other projects may have to be more organ specific.

The Committee also discussed whether continuous distribution could contribute to less efficiency in the system if more organs travel farther. In a similar comment, a member noted the potential conflict between longevity matching versus proximity efficiency (for example, pediatrics were prioritized in kidney allocation but then those organs traveled more). What this balance looks like is important.

Members noted that efficient matching could be extended from initial potential donor identified to offer acceptance, transplant and even outcomes. It is a question of whether the efficient matching priority should be narrowly or broadly defined. Important aspects include reducing time to the recipient and ensuring the organ ultimately gets transplanted.

The Committee also considered an opportunity to include operational improvements that align with the efficient matching priority for Board consideration at their June 2023 meeting. These efforts stemmed from the provisional yes policy project, which was initially supposed to go to the Board in June 2023 but was withdrawn ahead of January 2023 public comment because of community feedback on a concept paper issued for summer 2022 public comment.

The Committee had some questions about the process by which the resources were allocated for technical implementation. The current budget is 15,000 IT implementation hours. IT creates estimates

based on committee identification of proposed solutions and the level of effort associated with each project being implemented; these estimates are refined throughout the policy development process and become more accurate as work progresses. When projects are moved or canceled (such as the provisional yes project not moving forward to public comment due to community feedback), this affects the total IT technical implementation estimates for that particular Board cycle.

The Committee reviewed system improvements that could be applied towards the June 2023 Board cycle since the provisional yes project would no longer be part of the technical implementation budget:

- Improve the Transplant Center organ offer console display
- Create tools to allow programs to more easily find the potential recipients on the match that can accept an organ
- Allow easier navigation between matches for different organs for a donor
- Ability to see donor information and potential recipient information in one view

The POC was asked if these operational changes would be supported for Board consideration in June 2023 as a non-policy operational effort to improve efficient matching and utilize available resources for this cycle. Since there were questions about the process of IT estimates and POC leadership was unable to join the call, staff confirmed this topic would be brought back to the POC for consideration on a future call.

Next steps:

The efficient matching effort will be summarized in the POC report to the Board in June. The POC will reach out to relevant committees about their feedback on important efforts related to efficient matching. The POC will reconsider the potential for endorsement of operational efficiencies at their next call.

2. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) Report Follow-Up

The Committee reviewed potential new policy priorities based on discussion of NASEM report recommendations and ranked these areas of interest regarding their potential as new policy priorities.

Summary of discussion:

The Committee considered organs that don't get used for transplantation as the number one priority among those discussed. This was followed by data on pre-waitlist evaluated patients, and then shared decision-making with patients.

Next steps:

This informal poll will be considered in next steps that the POC identifies for potential new policy priorities, as well as shared with the Board in the POC's report to the Board in June 2023.

Upcoming Meeting

- June 13, 2023

Attendance

- **Committee Members**
 - Andy Flescher
 - Alejandro Diez
 - Jason Huff
 - Jesse Schold
 - Jim Kim
 - Jondavid Menteer
 - Kimberly Koontz
 - Molly McCarthy
 - Natalie Blackwell
 - PJ Geraghty
 - Stephanie Pouch
 - Rachel Engen
 - Scott Biggins
 - Scott Lindberg
 - Stevan Gonzalez
 - Peter Stock
- **HRSA Representatives**
 - Jim Bowman
- **SRTR Staff**
 - Ajay Israni
 - Jon Snyder
- **UNOS Staff**
 - Anna Messmer
 - Cole Fox
 - Darby Harris
 - Eric Messick
 - Isaac Hager
 - James Alcorn
 - Kaitlin Swanner
 - Kayla Temple
 - Kieran McMahan
 - Kimberly Uccellini
 - Laura Schmitt
 - Lauren Mauk
 - Matt Cafarella
 - Roger Brown
 - Sally Aungier
 - Sharon Shepherd
 - SaraRose Wells
 - Stryker-Ann Vosteen
 - Taylor Livelli
- **Other**
 - Ginny McBride (Board member)