

OPTN Organ Procurement Organization Committee

Meeting Summary

March 14, 2024

Teleconference

PJ Geraghty, MBA, CPTC, Chair

Lori Markham, RN, MSN, CPTC, CCRN, Vice Chair

Introduction

The OPTN Organ Procurement Organization (OPO) Committee met via WebEx teleconference on 3/14/2024 to discuss the following agenda items:

1. Pronouncement of Death Proposal
2. Promote Efficiency of Lung Allocation
3. OPTN Strategic Plan 2024-2027
4. Heart Values Prioritization Exercise (VPE)

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

1. Public Comment Update: Pronouncement of Death Proposal

OPTN contractor staff provided the group with updates regarding the OPO Committee's public comment proposal to *Clarify Requirements for Pronouncement of Death*.¹

Presentation Summary:

Themes in Public Comment:

- Comments have mostly been supportive
- 12 comments as of 3/14/2024
- There was appreciation for the clarity and consistency in language
- There was anticipation of a positive impact on the patient population

Summary of discussion:

The Committee did not make any decisions.

2. Promote Efficiency of Lung Allocation

An OPTN Lung Committee representative presented the *Promote Efficiency of Lung Allocation* public comment proposal².

Presentation Summary:

Purpose of Proposal:

¹ "Clarify Requirements for Pronouncement of Death," OPTN, Public Comment Proposal, available https://optn.transplant.hrsa.gov/media/e5up1wpg/opo_pronouncement-of-death_pc-proposal_winter-2024.pdf.

² "Promote Efficiency of Lung Allocation," OPTN, Public Comment Proposal, available https://optn.transplant.hrsa.gov/media/3ftfa23x/lung_allocation-efficiency_pcjan24.pdf.

- Add new data collection to aid evaluation of lung offers
- Provide overview of lung offer filters (released Jan. 2024)
- Request feedback on other potential system enhancements
 - “Bypass bilateral and other lung” button if only single lung is available
 - Opt in to offers from isolated areas beyond specified maximum recovery distance

Summary of discussion:

The Committee did not make any decisions.

During discussions regarding a system enhancement pertaining to the "Bypass bilateral and other lung" button, a member highlighted its potential benefits, emphasizing the current manual effort required for such tasks and the anticipated assistance the button would provide. The member pointed out the challenges faced by OPOs in the allocation process, particularly when a lung is declined, necessitating a backtrack to reallocate or renotify different programs about the availability of both lungs. Stressing the need for streamlining the process, the member urged for a designated point in the allocation process where OPOs can progress without having to restart the list. Another member echoed support for the button, though expressing a concern regarding potential missed opportunities if both right and left lungs are declined, leading to re-allocation of bilateral lungs. This member also acknowledged the inefficiency of OPOs having to revisit the list when a lung is declined and echoed the sentiment for a more effective practice.

One member voiced her support for the inclusion of additional data collection fields concerning allergies and sternotomies, expressing no objections to their implementation. She noted that much of this information might already be captured or should be captured as part of existing procedures. Additionally, she emphasized the importance of enhancing education around data collection to ensure accuracy and completeness.

3. OPTN Strategic Plan 2024-2027

OPTN contractor staff provided an overview of the *OPTN Strategic Plan 2024-2027* proposal³.

Presentation Summary:

- This strategic plan is not an exhaustive list of the OPTN’s work, but rather serves as a high-level framework to guide the OPTN’s strategic focus.
- The Committee intentionally selected goals with greater specificity to allow for a focusing of resources on key opportunities, driving action to ultimately benefit patients.
- Proposed Goals:
 - **Improve Offer Acceptance Rate:** Increase opportunities for transplants for patients in need by enhancing offer acceptance.
 - **Optimize Organ Use:** Maximize the use of organs for transplantation for waitlisted patients, while maintaining or improving upon past equity gains.
 - **Enhance OPTN Efficiency:** Increase the efficiency of the OPTN through improvement and innovation to serve the greatest number of patients.

³ “OPTN Strategic Plan 2024-2027,” OPTN, Public Comment Proposal, available https://optn.transplant.hrsa.gov/media/nwrksrgl/exec_2024-2027-strategic-plan_pcjan24.pdf.

Summary of discussion:

The Committee did not make any decisions.

One participant urged the group to consider organs at the highest risk of non-use and emphasized the importance of examining specific characteristics within each organ that contribute to this risk. He suggested that identifying these characteristics could inform the development of alternative pathways for rescue allocation.

Building on this point, another member highlighted the significance of assessing donor hospitals that may not prioritize donor surgeries, potentially limiting allocation time and impacting the overall ability of OPOs to allocate organs efficiently. She stressed that while organ characteristics play a role, systemic processes within donor hospitals also pose risks to organ allocation.

Adding to the discussion, a different member noted that donor operating rooms (ORs) might not receive the necessary priority, resulting in logistical challenges during donor surgeries and subsequent allocation processes. She proposed that focusing on donor hospitals as part of the process affecting organ allocation could yield valuable insights for improvement.

4. Heart Values Prioritization Exercise (VPE)

OPTN contractor staff provided the group with an *Update on the Continuous Distribution of Hearts* and the VPE⁴.

Presentation Summary:

Purpose of Request for Feedback and VPE:

- Share proposed attributes and rating scales
- Seek community feedback regarding:
 - Proposed attributes and rating scales
 - Priority to assign each attribute in the continuous distribution of hearts framework
 - Values-based decision-making for weighing attributes against each other
 - Project plan and approach

VPE:

- Values Prioritization Exercise uses analytical hierarchy process methodology to aid in values-based decision-making
- Community prioritizes on attribute against another
- Participants are asked:
 - Which attribute is most important when prioritizing candidates for donor hearts?
 - How much more important is the attribute than another?
- Participants are encouraged to leave comments explaining their decisions because such info is very helpful in Committee deliberations

Summary of discussion:

The Committee did not make any decisions.

⁴ "Update on the Continuous Distribution of Hearts," OPTN, Request for Feedback, available https://optn.transplant.hrsa.gov/media/om4dqvbz/heart_cd_request-for-feedback_jan24pc.pdf.

Upcoming Meeting

- March 27, 2024

Attendance

- **Committee Members**
 - PJ Geraghty
 - Lori Markham
 - Valerie Chipman
 - Micah Davis
 - Dan DiSante
 - Stephen Gray
 - Clint Hostetler
 - Lee Nolen
 - Sharyn Sawczak
 - Donna Smith
 - Judy Storfjell
 - Greg Veenendaal
- **HRSA Representatives**
 - Jim Bowman
 - Marilyn Levi
 - Kala Rochelle
 - Adriana Alvarez
- **SRTR Staff**
 - Katie Audette
 - Jon Miller
- **UNOS Staff**
 - Kayla Balfour
 - Kevin Daub
 - Houlder Hudgins
 - Eric Messick
 - Kelley Poff
 - Kaitlin Swanner
 - Kayla Temple
- **Other Attendees**
 - Rich Formica
 - Erika Lease