

**OPTN Board of Directors  
Meeting Summary  
November 21, 2024  
Webex**

**Richard Formica, MD, President  
Lloyd Ratner, MD, MPH, Vice President**

## **Introduction**

The Board of Directors met via Webex on 11/21/2024 to discuss the following agenda items and public comment items:

1. Welcome & Announcements
2. Update Criteria for Post-Transplant Graft Survival Metrics\*
3. Data Advisory Committee (DAC) Report to the Board
4. Executive Committee Report to the Board

### **1. Welcome & Announcements**

Rich Formica, OPTN Board President, welcomed the Board to the meeting and presented the agenda. Contractor staff presented an overview on the voting and governance process of the OPTN. Contractor staff shared the core principles of OPTN voting and governance, and its importance during the meeting.

### **2. Update Criteria for Post-Transplant Graft Survival Metrics\***

Cliff Miles, Chair of the Membership & Professional Standards Committee (MPSC) presented a proposal to Update Criteria for Post-Transplant Graft Survival Metrics. Dr. Miles shared an overview of the proposal, the proposed changes, public comment analysis, and the implementation efforts associated with the proposal.

#### Summary of Discussion:

The Board discussed the proposal and the updated criteria the policy would collect on graft survival metrics. Board members commented that these updated metrics would be more comprehensive for patients and provide a more holistic view of the transplant process. A Board member shared that although members may incur a cost at their institutions making these programming changes, members will likely save in the future due to less patients being flagged.

A Board member asked about post-implementation monitoring associated with the policy and asked about the timeline of implementing the proposed metrics. Dr. Miles shared that since 2021, the MPSC has been analyzing four different metrics, not just post-transplant survival. Dr. Miles noted that analyzing these four metrics had led to a more holistic view of the monitoring process. Dr. Miles shared that if there are no significant changes over the next year with these metrics in place, the MPSC does not foresee any risks to implementing the new metrics. A representative from SRTR shared that the new thresholds would be applied to transplants from the implementation of the policy moving forward and would not be retroactively applied.

A Board member commented that this change will not have a large impact on members as the modification is a very small percentage change. Board members discussed that there has not been a

metric for patient survival since 2021 monitored by the MPSC, except for pancreas programs. Dr. Miles shared that the MPSC has patient survival as a component of the graft survival metric.

A Board member noted that it would be important for the OPTN to notify insurance companies of the new metrics in place, so centers are being measured by a consistent standard. The Board member noted that engaging commercial payers proactively could help alleviate any potential unintended consequences in the future.

Vote:

The Board approved the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the changes to OPTN Bylaw/Management and Membership Policy D.12.A: Transplant Program Performance\*, as set forth in the materials distributed November 11, 2024, are hereby approved, effective March 6, 2025.

*\*Full adoption of the new structure of OPTN governance documents, separating the OPTN Bylaws into Bylaws and Management and Membership Policies will be considered by the OPTN Board at its December 2-3, 2024 meeting. This verbiage allows for approval of the change, regardless of the outcome of that vote.*

### **3. Data Advisory Committee (DAC) Report to the Board**

Jesse Schold, Chair of the Data Advisory Committee (DAC), presented a report to the Board on the committee's efforts over the last few months. Dr. Schold shared how data is managed across the transplant lifecycle and shared highlights from the DAC's annual review of OPTN data. Dr. Schold shared that recently the DAC endorsed ten OPTN policy proposals to modify data collection, reviewed a two-year monitoring report for DAC sponsored projects, endorsed six updates to data definitions and form instructions, and provided feedback on the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) directive to expand OPTN data collection.

Dr. Schold shared that the committee's goals are to increase alignment with the Board and HRSA, identify a data champion on the Board, leverage the DAC's advisory skillset, and create a roadmap to improve and incrementally invest in the OPTN data registry. Dr. Schold shared new initiatives proposed by the committee, including defining the OPTN's data strategy, strengthening data governance, investing in interoperability, and enhancing stakeholder engagement. Dr. Schold shared how these goals and proposed new initiatives would benefit the OPTN community.

Dr. Schold shared that the DAC would like to develop a plan in conjunction with the Board to better support the data efficiency objective in the OPTN Strategic Plan, and to develop improvements to the OPTN data registry.

Summary of Discussion:

The Board discussed the committee's recommendation to have a data champion part of the Board of Directors. Dr. Formica shared that the data champion should be a current member of the Board of Directors. He shared that designating an already existing Board member as the data champion will be important as the OPTN continues to undergo modernization changes. Other Board members commented that it is important that a data champion does not replace any of the current represented stakeholders on the Board. They shared that this person should have to adhere to the compositional Bylaw requirements for the Board. Dr. Formica asked the Board to consider the position and consider which current Board member could be designated at the data champion.

A Board member shared that it is important for the OPTN Board to partner with HRSA when it comes to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) process. They shared that partnering with OMB could help move data collection processes more expeditiously. The Board discussed whether modifying the timing of OMB package submissions would aid the process.

A Board member asked whether the DAC would have a role in the future leveraging tools used by transplant centers to input data to better standardize data collection, elements, and submission. Dr. Schold shared that the DAC contains a great amount of expertise in these areas and has discussed the importance of consistent data codification standards and collaborating with electronic medical record vendors. A Board member suggested the DAC include more examples in their reports in the future so all members can comprehend the content.

#### **4. Executive Committee Report to the Board**

Rich Formica, Chair of the Executive Committee, provided an update to the Board on the committee's efforts since June 2024. Dr. Formica presented the charge of the committee, new projects the committee has approved since June 2024, and items the committee approved for Summer 2024 Public Comment. Dr. Formica shared that the committee approved two special public comment items, submitted public comments on behalf of the OPTN, and shared other efforts the committee has undertaken since June 2024. Dr. Formica further reported other Executive Committee actions, including reviewing a project update from the Living Donor Committee to Update and Improve Efficiency in Living Donor Data Collection, overseeing a merger that occurred between two OPOs in two different OPTN regions, approving a Pathogens of Special Interest update from the Disease Transmission Advisory Committee (DTAC), and directing the Operations & Safety Committee (OSC) to examine normothermic regional perfusion (NRP) practices.

##### Summary of Discussion:

The Board did not have any questions about the Executive Committee Report to the Board.

A Board member asked about a final timeline for OPTN budget approval and when the OPTN Finance Committee was expected to meet on this subject. OPTN Treasurer, Andrea Tietjen, explained that the Finance Committee is waiting to receive more information about the budget from HRSA and then the committee is planning to meet on the matter. The Board discussed other topics including the end of the current OPTN contract period on December 30, 2024, and the future of OPTN modernization.

#### **Upcoming Meetings**

- December 2 & 3, 2024

## Attendance

- **Board Members**
  - Andrea Tietjen
  - Andrew Kao
  - Brittany Clayborne
  - Caroline Alquist
  - Catherine Kling
  - Christopher Jones
  - Colleen McCarthy
  - David Vega
  - Denise Abbey
  - Dev Desai
  - Dianne LaPointe Rudow
  - Dorrie Dils
  - Emily Blumberg
  - Erika Demars
  - Gaurav Gupta
  - George Surratt
  - Glen Kelley
  - Jen Lau
  - Jennifer Muriett
  - Jennifer Reese
  - Julie Spear
  - Kelley Hitchman
  - Laura Butler
  - Lloyd Ratner
  - Luis Hidalgo
  - Macey Levan
  - Martha Pavlakis
  - Michael Kwan
  - Nancy Metzler
  - Osama Gaber
  - Richard Formica
  - Robert Harland
  - Sandra Amaral
  - Sara Rasmussen
  - Silas Norman
- **HRSA Representatives**
  - Christopher McLaughlin
  - Mesmin Germain
  - Raymond Lynch
  - Stephanie Grosser
- **UNOS Staff**
  - Anna Messmer
  - Eric Messick
  - Krissy Laurie
  - Nadine Rogers

- Rebecca Murdock
- Sharon Shepherd
- Susie Sprinson
- **Other Attendees**
  - Clifford Miles
  - Jesse Schold
  - Jon Snyder
  - Lisa McElroy
  - Sumit Mohan