

OPTN Liver and Intestinal Organ Transplantation Committee

Meeting Summary

April 18, 2025

Conference Call

Scott Biggins, MD, Chair

Shimul Shah, MD, MHCM, Vice Chair

Introduction

The OPTN Liver and Intestinal Organ Transplantation Committee (the Committee) met via WebEx teleconference on 04/18/2025 to discuss the following agenda items:

1. Monitoring Plan: Updates to National Liver Review Board Guidance & Further Alignment with LI-RADS
2. Continuous Distribution: Utilization Efficiency

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

1. Monitoring Plan: Updates to National Liver Review Board Guidance & Further Alignment with LI-RADS

The Committee reviewed a monitoring plan for the *Updated to National Liver Review Board Guidance & Further Alignment with LI-RADS* project.

Summary of discussion:

The proposed monitoring plan:

- At 6- and 12-months post-implementation, OPTN Research will assess:
 - Contrast-enhanced ultrasound (CEUS)
 - Count and percent of standard HCC exceptions by imaging modality (CT, MRI, and Other pre-policy; CT, MRI, CEUS, and Other post-policy)
 - Overall and stratified by OPTN Region
 - Score recommendations
 - Count of exception forms submitted and distribution of medical urgency scores requested related to median MELD or PELD at transplant (MMat or MPaT) by exception diagnosis
 - Overall and stratified by form type (initial, extension), outcome (approved, denied) and OPTN region

The Committee agreed with this monitoring plan.

Next steps:

This monitoring plan will be incorporated into the project.

2. Continuous Distribution: Utilization Efficiency

The Committee discussed utilization efficiency within liver continuous distribution.

Summary of discussion:

The Committee reviewed data which showed that pediatric candidates are not receiving transplants from DCD donors. The Vice Chair wondered if pediatric candidates do not have enough access to the perfect DCD donor and that is why the data shows a lack of DCD transplants for the pediatric population.

The Committee discussed the definition of a medically complex liver. The Committee previously decided that DCD donors or age over 70 donors should be defined as medically complex.

A member stated that steatosis thresholds would be beneficial to add into the category of medically complex livers but acknowledged that would be difficult to include for allocation since it is not known at the time of the match. The member stated this could be helpful for expedited liver pathway processes.

Another member stated that they consider a medically complex liver offer as a DCD liver that is in static cold storage. The member stated that it may not be appropriate to consider all DCD livers as medically complex due to the increase in utilization of machine perfusion. A member stated that cost should be a factor for incentivizing local allocation. Another member reminded the Committee that the criteria to determine a medically complex liver for purposes of allocation must be known at the time of the match run. A member suggested that DCD livers could incorporate age thresholds to determine medical complexity.

The Vice Chair stated that data comparing DCD and DBD outcomes are needed to help inform decisions and that information has not yet been published.

The Committee discussed incorporating utilization efficiency as a donor modifier. The Committee previously identified utilization efficiency as an attribute within liver continuous distribution. The new proposed solution is for medically complex liver offers, increase the weights of existing attributes rather than incorporate a standalone utilization efficiency attribute. The Committee focused on adjusting the travel efficiency rating scale for medically complex liver offers.

A member stated that if the travel efficiency rating scale was modified for medically complex livers to give the highest priority to the candidates who are closest to the donor hospital with a steep slope, there may be unintended consequences. The member explained that, for example, if the slope of the rating scale approached zero points at 150 nautical miles, efficiency would effectively be lost. This means that, in this example, any candidate outside of 150 nautical miles will receive no points in travel efficiency which may result in efficiency related consequences.

The Vice Chair suggested that the Committee ensure that they are not disadvantaging underprivileged populations. The Vice Chair explained that there are populations that are not as close to transplant programs that utilize machine perfusion, and the Committee should consider any unintended consequences.

The Committee expressed interest in knowing how many livers from donors aged over 70 livers are placed and how many livers from DCDs above a certain threshold are being placed.

The Committee discussed information that may be helpful to initiate expediate liver pathways. The Chair suggested information about whether or not the liver is pumped as well as biopsy information may be important for expedited placement considerations. A member stated that any primary liver offer that is turned down should go into an expedited pathway. The member added that the liver being on ice could be a trigger for expedited pathway. The member stated that functional warm time could also be important. Another member stated that offer filters could help with determining a transplant program's preference for functional warm time. The member stated that steatosis is very important piece of

information for expedited pathway. The Chair stated the Committee will further discuss potential options for updating the expedited placement of livers policy.

Next steps:

The Committee will continue to discuss this topic.

Upcoming Meetings

- May 2, 2025 at 2 pm ET (teleconference)

Attendance

- **Committee Members**
 - Aaron Ahearn
 - Allison Kwong
 - Cal Matsumoto
 - Colleen Reed
 - Jim Pomposelli
 - Joe DiNorcia
 - Michael Kriss
 - Omer Junaidi
 - Scott Biggins
 - Shimul Shah
 - Vanessa Pucciarelli
- **SRTR Staff**
 - David Schladt
 - Jack Lake
 - Katie Siegert
 - Ray Kim
 - Simon Horslen
- **UNOS Staff**
 - Alina Martinez
 - Benjamin Schumacher
 - Betsy Gans
 - Kaitlin Swanner
 - Laura Schmitt
 - Matt Cafarella
 - Meghan McDermott
 - Niyati Updahyay
 - Sam Noreen