

## **OPTN Transplant Coordinators Committee**

### **Meeting Summary**

**August 15, 2024**

**Conference Call**

**Christine Brenner, RN, BSN, CPTC, CCTC, Chair**

**Heather Bastardi, RN, MSN, CPNP, Vice Chair**

### **Introduction**

The OPTN Transplant Coordinators Committee (the Committee) met via Cisco WebEx teleconference on 08/15/2024 to discuss the following agenda items:

1. Policy Operationalization Checklist Project
2. Closing Remarks

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

#### **1. Policy Operationalization Checklist Project**

The Committee received a recap of the previous month's discussion on the project and finalized the remaining questions for the compliance and process change buckets.

#### Data summary:

The Committee reviewed the following questions for compliance operationalization considerations:

- What is the future auditing potential of this policy?
- What documentation will be necessary to indicate compliance? Will there be mandatory or preferred language needed to implement?
- What language will site surveyors be looking for when auditing/conducting site surveys?
- How many hours are estimated (monthly/annually) to maintain compliance?

The Committee reviewed the following questions for process change operationalization considerations:

- Will there be workflow changes? Will this create an additional burden on staff?
- Will there be an increase in workload volume?

The Committee considered the following questions as they relate to goals of the project overall and how the success of this project would be determined:

- What are the goals of this document?
- What does success of this project look like?
- How will we determine this project is successful?

#### Summary of discussion:

The Committee agreed on the questions for compliance operationalization considerations and worked on questions for process change operationalization considerations.

The Vice Chair recommended including a section to address examples, especially when asking what type of language site surveyors will be looking for during audits. Other members agreed that including

examples of language or situations could help clear up ambiguities when implementations go live. OPTN Contractor staff highlighted that though these questions are going to be incorporated into a checklist, there is still flexibility for adapting them should the need arise.

The Vice Chair recommended addressing up front burden for staff regarding process changes, referencing the recent estimated glomerular filtration rate (eGFR) policy change that prompted programs nationwide to re-evaluate kidney candidates with a race-neutral eGFR calculation. They highlighted that though a large amount of work was anticipated, some programs could have been better prepared to deal with the large up-front burden that came with the wait-time modifications. A member offered that adding staff should be an item for consideration, not just an additional burden on staff, as hiring added staff can put a resource strain on institutions and should be considered. Contractor staff added that the OPTN Transplant Administrators Committee has a Workgroup, the Fiscal Impact Advisory Group, which reviews projects before public comment for any potential fiscal impact they might have on the transplant community, and questions such as the addition of staff are included in that impact assessment.

A member recommended rephrasing the question to be “what are the workflow changes for the stakeholder involved in this implementation?” to capture more broadly the policy implementation implications.

A member suggested that sometimes policy does not align with actual practice on the center level, and so including a question which would pertain to how issues are rectified when identified could be worth considering.

The Vice Chair added that one way to determine the success of the current project would be when the feedback from centers on implementations has fewer questions about operationalization. Additionally, when there are fewer questions to be asked about how a policy is implemented during public comment review, it would mean that the sponsoring Committee carefully considered the checklist and made use of the questions included.

A member queried whether success would be qualitatively or quantitatively measured. It was suggested that given the project's qualitative nature, there were no quantifiable metrics to be incorporated.

One member asked whether the issue lies less with the implementation and more in the push to implement policies and projects on a faster schedule, which can sometimes leave gaps. Another member offered that that could be a component, however, not addressing operational questions and only dwelling on ethical or moral aspects of a project can sometimes result in inefficiencies and bigger issues to correct down the line. Members agreed that a balance needs to be struck between swiftly implementing policies and ensuring the policies address the issues appropriately.

Members agreed that the primary focus of this project is to ensure the right questions are being asked early enough in the development process so that when policy is implemented, there are fewer situations of non-compliance; centers, labs, and organ procurement organizations have the necessary tools to understand and operationalize the policy; and the efficiency of the OPTN system is enhanced.

#### Next steps:

The Committee will finalize the questions and develop examples and guidance on how to use the document at their in-person meeting in September.

## **2. Closing Remarks**

The Committee discussed potential agenda topics for their in-person. OPTN Contractor staff offered suggestions like conducting a holistic review of OPTN Policy 3. Members highlighted that there is

additional work being done in this area by other OPTN Committees and to avoid duplication of work, encouraged additional review of what might require their expertise.

**Upcoming Meetings**

- September 5, 2024 (in-person)
- October 17, 2024
- November 21, 2024

## Attendance

- **Committee Members**
  - Amy Olsen
  - Ashley Cardenas
  - Ashley Hamby
  - Courtney Risley
  - Eve Cabatan
  - Gertrude Okelezo
  - Heather Bastardi
  - Katherine Meneses
  - Kati Robinson
  - Kenny Laferriere
  - Stewart Jusim
  - Karl Neumann
- **UNOS Staff**
  - Laura Schmitt
  - Ross Walton
  - Cole Fox
  - Stryker-Ann Vosteen