

To: Liver transplant program directors
Liver transplant program administrators
OPO executive directors

From: Julie Heimbach, M.D.
Chair, OPTN/UNOS Liver and Intestinal Organ Transplantation Committee

Subject: Liver Committee update, October 2018

We want to continue to update you on the status of major projects involving the OPTN/UNOS Liver and Intestinal Organ Transplantation Committee.

Liver distribution policy proposal and public comment

As you know, our committee has been working on an accelerated basis to develop a new liver and intestinal organ distribution policy to replace donor service areas and regions with a more consistent framework. We developed four basic alternative approaches and asked to SRTR to perform simulation modeling on them. The modeling results are available.

On Monday, October 1, we finalized a public comment proposal based on fixed distance (concentric circles) surrounding the donor hospital. The proposed threshold for broader distribution out to a 250 nautical mile distance from the donor hospital is a MELD or PELD score of 32 or higher. If you refer to the SRTR modeling, you will see the simulation results for this option abbreviated as "B2C 32."

Pending final approval by the Policy Oversight Committee and the Executive Committee this week, this proposal will be posted for special public comment beginning Monday, October 8. You may submit comments through Thursday, November 1. Registration is open for a national webinar on October 9 to review the proposal. Each region will also have its own follow-up webinar for further discussion. You should have already received a schedule of the regional webinars.

While most of our committee members believe a concentric circle approach is the most feasible alternative at this point, we had considerable discussion on the most appropriate threshold for broader distribution. The proposal will include several questions for feedback, including two key areas where we are requesting your specific input:

- whether a MELD threshold of 32 is the most appropriate for broader sharing, or if a lower threshold such as MELD 29 or a higher threshold such as MELD 35 should be considered.
- whether the circle sizes represented in the proposal are appropriate, or if not, what sizes they should be.

The proposal also changes the unit for calculating median MELD at transplant (MMaT), which is the basis for calculating exception scores to be used under the national liver review board (NLRB) system. It recommends calculating MMaT based on transplant hospitals within a 250 nautical mile circle around

the transplant hospital. Median PELD exception scores would be based on the nationwide cohort of patients younger than age 12.

Our committee will meet in person Friday, November 2, to review all input and develop a final recommendation to present to the OPTN/UNOS Board at its meeting December 1-2.

For questions or further information

If you'd like to know more about existing policies or public comment items, please visit our committee's [page](#) on the OPTN website and/or contact your Regional Administrator. If you'd like to know more about projects or proposals our committee continues to discuss, contact your regional representative to the committee or send an e-mail to liver@unos.org.