

OPTN and UNOS Update

OPTN Web Site Transition and Improvements

OPTN recently changed its Web site address and improved its accessibility. The new site can now be found at <http://optn.transplant.hrsa.gov>. Although the www.optn.org address will include a redirect to the new site, we encourage you to check your links and bookmarks.

The site's design was updated to coordinate with the Health Resources and Services Administration's family of Web sites. The information contained on the site is also compliant with federal Section 508 requirements for greater accessibility by people with disabilities.

OPTN/UNOS Board of Directors Meeting Highlights

The OPTN/UNOS Board of Directors met November 16 and 17 in Orlando, Florida, after the press date for this issue. An executive summary of all Board actions from the meeting will soon be available on the OPTN Web site. The organization's new Vice President/President-Elect is Charles Alexander, RN, MSN, MBA, CPTC, who served as NATCO President from 2005 to 2006.

Key actions from the June Board meeting are outlined below.

- The Board adopted a policy to broaden access to donated livers for Status 1A and 1B liver candidates. At any given moment there are usually fewer than 10 of these candidates nationwide. Liver offers from adult donors will be considered for any medically compatible Status 1A and 1B candidates throughout the OPTN region of the donor before being offered to any less urgent patients either locally or regionally.
- The Board endorsed a public forum to be convened in the spring of 2010 to discuss additional potential improvements to liver allocation policy. The need for additional discussion was prompted in part by a recent public comment proposal to allocate all livers throughout the OPTN region based on MELD/PELD score instead of the current tiered local/regional sequence. Based on significant concerns raised during public comment, the proposal was not presented for Board consideration at this time.
- The Board endorsed the concept of incorporating into the Lung Allocation Score, which prioritizes candidates for lung transplantation, each lung candidate's laboratory measure of total bilirubin and whether candidates in diagnosis group B have a bilirubin score that has increased by 50% within a 6-month period. Data analysis

suggests this addition would reduce waitlist mortality primarily among group B candidates, most of whom need a transplant because of pulmonary hypertension. The Board will consider implementation options and the priority of programming at a later meeting. In the interim, the Board endorsed measures to educate lung transplant centers about the process they may use to seek additional priority through the national lung review board for candidates with pulmonary hypertension.

- The Board approved establishment of a section of OPTN policy specifically to house living donation requirements. This new policy section distinguishes current living donor policies from others meant only to apply to deceased donor transplantation and will be the destination for additional living donor policies as they are developed.
- Given the announced discontinuance of the most common test kit used to assess potential organ donors for HTLV 1 and 2 before donation, the Board resolved that the OPTN end the requirement of prospective HTLV testing for deceased donors, effective pending notice to members. The Board further specified that retrospective testing with confirmation shall be performed on all deceased donors. Implementation of this requirement will be delayed to permit a minimum 45-day public comment period and review by the OPTN/UNOS Executive Committee. The OPTN/UNOS Ad Hoc Disease Transmission Advisory Committee will submit further policy modifications for public comment in late summer/early fall.

Kidney Paired Donation Pilot Program

UNOS is currently in the initial implementation phase of a national kidney paired donation (KPD) pilot program. The initial implementation, involving a small group of transplant programs, is meant to help UNOS staff gain experience with KPD before rolling out a full system, to test the KPD business processes before they are programmed in the full system, and to implement a limited KPD system on an expedited timeframe.

Additional programs will have the opportunity to participate in the full implementation of the KPD pilot program anticipated to begin in December 2010. For resource information about the program and its status, visit the following link on the UNOS Web site: <http://www.unos.org/resources/KPDPP.asp>.