



NATCO empowers donation and transplant professionals to achieve their highest potential. NATCO leads the donation and transplant communities by uniting our members, advancing education, and promoting research and advocacy.

4th Quarter, 2020

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MEMBERSHIP

Procurement and transplant professionals, and dietitians who are committed to the advancement of organ, eye, and tissue donation and transplantation join together to improve outcomes and share best practices.

NATCO promotes and enhances relationships between donation and transplantation. Members improve their skills and

IN THE PRESIDENT'S WORDS

Dear NATCO Members,

I hope this letter finds you and your families healthy and safe during these challenging times of COVID-19. I have been impressed working alongside all the professionals from procurement and transplant, as we care for our population during this ongoing pandemic. It has truly been a learning curve for which we have adapted well, navigating the virtual world to provide the best and safest care for our patients. I feel extremely grateful in the midst of this holiday season for my family, friends, and the donation and transplant community.



One of my goals is to ensure NATCO continues to meet your educational needs. The NATCO 46th Annual Meeting call for presentations and abstracts was sent out in October. The Annual Meeting will take place at the Hyatt Regency Grand Cypress in Orlando Florida, August 3-6, 2021. The theme is "Believe in Yourself: Make a Difference". We would like members to share best practices to inspire and influence your colleagues, as the ripple effect starts with you. Tracks at the annual meeting include: transplant, abdominal, thoracic, plenary, hospital engagement, procurement, family authorization and special interest. If you have a best practice, quality improvement, innovative approach, or research project in any of these areas, we would like you to submit. Please keep in mind, the majority of attendees at the Annual Meeting have over 10 years of experience in the field. This is a great way for you to share your success and create a world of opportunities. For more information, please see the NATCO website at www.natco1.org.

We continue to work hard to meet the goals you have set for your personal career development. NATCO has developed a model that is relevant to procurement and transplant coordinators in our

competencies through sharing knowledge and best practices.

Click [HERE](#) to join or for more information.

MEMBER BENEFITS

EDUCATION: geared specifically to donation and transplant professionals to provide the best patient, donor and family care.

CERTIFICATION: achieve and maintain current certification requirements

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: opportunities to increase skills and expertise; and develop leadership within your organization and the community.

CURRENT EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

Emerging Leaders Program
[For More Information](#)

CCTC Review Courses
VIRTUAL COURSES
Coming Soon in 2021!
[For More Information](#)

WEBINARS:
[For More Information](#)

Online version of the
Introductory Course for
Transplant Professionals
[For More Information](#)

community. Members experience personal and professional growth when they engage with NATCO's programs and professionals within the transplant community. Our aim is to provide opportunities that will advance your progression along the model of professional development. We welcome the opportunity to work with you one-on-one to help you succeed. Please email us at info@natco1.org to schedule time to create an individual plan for your career.

In the upcoming year, we will focus our efforts on meeting your needs through online learning. We continue to make upgrades to our on-demand and virtual courses until we can return to some form of live, in-person events. You will see revisions to the CCTC Review Course, the Introductory course, and the Emerging Leader's Program. New exciting courses for 2021 will include online CPTC and CCTN Review courses.

Even though 2020 was not a typical year, we have so much to look forward to in the upcoming year. I am optimistic for our future. NATCO supports and empowers procurement and transplant professionals to reach their highest potential. I am honored to serve as your president. Please continue to share your ideas with myself and the NATCO team. My email is gstendahl@chw.org.

Sincerely,

Gail Stendahl

COVID 19 UPDATE



In light of the current global pandemic, The Scientific Registry of Transplant Recipients (SRTR) will be modifying the evaluation metrics for transplant programs and organ procurement organizations (OPOs) in the upcoming fall 2020 program- and OPO-specific reports release. Following the declaration of the national public health emergency on March 13, 2020, COVID-19 has continued to have a large impact on the transplant system. The reports scheduled for release in January 2021, with data presented through June 30, 2020, will be the first to cover the performance period after March 13, 2020. The SRTR Review Committee evaluated preliminary data on the impact of the pandemic at its meeting on July 7, 2020, with the goal of considering changes to upcoming reports. Preliminary data suggest that the pandemic has had a differential effect on different areas of the country at different times, making it a challenge to deal with statistically until more data becomes available. SRTR's recommendation to the Review Committee was to remove any patient and donor data from the performance metrics following the declaration of a national emergency on March 13, 2020.

For transplant programs, this means that SRTR will stop all patient follow-up on March 12, 2020, the day prior to the declaration, i.e., waitlist survival, transplant rate, and outcomes will not be assessed after that date. For OPOs, SRTR will not evaluate eligible death conversion rates or deceased donor organ yield past March 12, 2020. The SRTR Review Committee and HRSA will continue to evaluate this solution to determine future changes as the pandemic continues to evolve and SRTR can investigate alternative solutions. Learn more details about this plan on the [SRTR website](#).

Additionally, SRTR has developed an application to evaluate COVID-19's impact on the national transplant system. The application

presents the differences in waitlist outcomes, offer acceptance, post-transplant graft survival, and donor utilization before and after the emergence of COVID-19. The evaluation includes a wide range of descriptive statistics and adjusted analyses, including the effect of COVID-19 on patient subgroups (e.g., candidate age). This app will have periodic updates, so check the SRTR website regularly. Stay tuned to the SRTR website and social media platforms (Twitter and LinkedIn) for announcements about SRTR-related updates and initiatives. For questions and comments, please contact SRTR.

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE!



Organ Recovery Systems, a long-time corporate sponsor of NATCO, is announcing a new scholarship opportunity for dependents of transplant professionals* who plan to enroll or are currently enrolled in an accredited post-secondary program in STEM or medical field of study within the United States.

Two (2) \$1,500 awards available

Awards may be renewed* for up to three additional years or until the undergraduate program is completed, whichever occurs first.

**Click link below for full details.*

APPLICATIONS DUE

Wednesday, January 13, 2021

Learn
More

DONATE LIFE AMERICA

By: Lida Pieterman, Senior Writer and Editor, Donate Life America



DLA Welcomes New NATCO Liaison – John Nguyen RN, CCRN-K, CPTC

We are excited to announce that John Nguyen will be serving as the new NATCO Liaison to the DLA Advisory Council. John Nguyen is a Living Donor Nurse Coordinator at UCSF Health in San Francisco. He recently joined the kidney transplant team after 13 years at Donor Network West, where he was a Clinical Operations Manager. Starting his career as an RN in critical care, John got exposure to caring for donors and their families in the ICU. While working in organ procurement, he was involved in numerous clinical research projects and served on national committees to help advance organ donation. Welcome,



National Donate Life Month 2021 – Theme and Webinar

Based on the positive feedback from the donation and transplantation community regarding the 2020 National Donate Life Month theme, and in light of the impact of COVID-19 this year (and ongoing), Donate Life America will be continuing with the “Garden of Life” theme for National Donate Life Month 2021! A garden and the insects in it serve as symbols of hope, courage and transformed life — themes repeatedly found within the donation and transplantation journey. Additional graphics, resources and promo items will be introduced to go along with the existing graphics — and will be posted

to DLACommunity.net in December.

Please join us **Wednesday, January 13 from 2:00-3:00pm ET** for the National Donate Life Month Webinar to get ideas from the Donate Life Community (registration will open in December). Printed materials and resources will be available to order and download from DLACommunity.net in December/January. In the meantime, start planning your beautiful Donate Life Gardens now so that they will be in full bloom this April!

Save the Date – National Donate Life Blue & Green Day 2021

April 16, 2021 is National Donate Life Blue & Green Day. In past years, we have seen some terrific blue and green office décor and lunch spreads. What can you do to take your celebration to the next level? It is never too early to start thinking about how to show your Donate Life spirit in blue and green! You can also participate in DLA’s annual Blue & Green Day Photo Contest. Please mark your calendars now and stay tuned for photo contest details in early 2021.

Save the Date – National Pediatric Transplant Week 2021

National Pediatric Transplant Week takes place the last full week of National Donate Life Month in April. It focuses on the powerful message of ending the pediatric transplant waiting list. This year, it will be celebrated **April 18-24**. The full set of graphics and resources will be available on DLACommunity.net in December.

DONATE LIFE FLOAT



2021 Donate Life Floral Sculpture to Honor Donation and Transplantation Professionals as Donation Healthcare Heroes on New Year’s Day

2021 Donate Life Tribute to the Rose Parade, Community of Life, Honors Donation and Transplantation Professionals Who Have Been Instrumental During the COVID-19 Pandemic

As part of the Tournament of Roses 2021 TV special, "The Rose Parade New Year Celebration presented by Honda" airing on New Year’s Day, the Donate Life community will honor six donation and transplantation professionals who have gone above and beyond their call of duty to make donation and transplantation possible during the current COVID-19

pandemic. These Donation Healthcare Heroes will be recognized with special plaques on the 2021 Donate Life floral sculpture.

The 2021 Donate Life floral sculpture, "Community of Life," will highlight the arduous work of donation health care professionals who quietly, yet diligently, work every single day to make the gift of life possible.

[Read More...](#)

ADVANCING PUBLIC POLICY



By: Wade Delk

We are down to the wire on getting the Comprehensive Drug Coverage for Kidney Transplant Patients Act (S.3353/H.R.5534) passed in Congress. With just a couple of weeks left until the 116th Congress adjourns, it is critical that we keep the pressure on like never before.

As of this writing there are 107 Representatives and 23 Senators who have signed on as co-sponsors. This is a really good number. This summer the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) gave the bill a savings score of \$70 million over a ten-year period. In early November, the CBO increased that number to \$400 million. This can be good or bad. A low savings score usually means legislators will not have to fight over how to use those savings, but as we all know this year nothing is as usual, so it may work to our advantage.

Congress is looking for ways to fund Medicare and Medicaid programs and they have a deadline of December 11, 2020 to do it. If they allocate the savings from our bill to offset the cost of some those programs it will certainly help them to accomplish that.

If you have not contacted your Representative and two Senators, please do it right now. If you have, contact them again to remind them this is still important to you.

Many of us have been working for over a decade to make this happen and I know we would all very much like to see this become law. Keep your fingers crossed and your thoughts positive!

If you have any questions, please contact me at wadebdelk@gmail.com or call 202-253-7862.

-Wade

TAKE
ACTION

UNOS/OPTN

By: Anne Paschke, UNOS

If there is a silver lining during the pandemic, it is that all of your collaboration and hard work have paid off. In fact, we've performed 800 more deceased donor transplants in the United States in 2020 than we had by this time last year!

Working together, we can continue to improve the system for the more than 100,000 waiting list candidates. Getting there will take a comprehensive, systemic approach, such as the one proposed in UNOS' [five-point reform plan](#).

Changes to kidney, pancreas allocation

On December 15, DSA and OPTN region will be replaced with a 250 nautical mile radius for [kidney and pancreas allocation](#). And, starting on December 1, centers will be able to pre-fill data for candidates who meet the new definition of medically urgent.

Training materials will be posted in UNOS Connect on November 3 and 17. Check the following toolkits for everything you need to prepare for the policy implementation:

- [Removal of DSA and Region from Kidney Allocation Toolkit](#)
- [Removal of DSA and Region from Pancreas Allocation Toolkit](#)
- [Modifications to Released Kidney and Pancreas Allocation Toolkit](#)
- [Addressing Medically Urgent Candidates in the New Kidney Allocation System Toolkit](#)

COVID-19 diagnosis codes for heart and lung

There are now [COVID diagnosis organ failure codes](#) in the transplant candidate and transplant recipient registration forms - two new codes for lung and two new codes for heart. In addition, a heart code has been modified to note that diagnosis is not due to COVID-19. Using these will make it possible to measure the impact of the pandemic.

ABSTRACTS



By: Linda Ohler, MSN, RN, CCTC, FAAN

[How is immunosuppressive status affecting children and adults in SARS-CoV-2 infection? A systematic review](#)

Chiara Minotti 1, Francesca Tirelli 2, Elisa Barbieri 3, Carlo Giaquinto 3, Daniele Donà 3

Objectives: SARS-CoV-2 infection has now a global resonance. Data on how COVID-19 is affecting immunocompromised patients are however few. With our study we aimed to systematically review the current knowledge on SARS-CoV-2 cases in children and adults with immunosuppression, to evaluate outcomes in this special population.

[Association of Karnofsky Performance Status with waitlist mortality among older and younger adults awaiting kidney transplantation](#)

Anoop Sheshadri Giuseppe Cullaro Kirsten L. Johansen Jennifer C. Lai

Patients with end-stage renal disease (ESRD) have impaired functional status compared with the general population. We sought to explore the association between Karnofsky Performance Status (KPS) and

death/delisting from the kidney transplantation waitlist and whether this association differed by age. Patients listed for single-organ kidney transplantation in the United Network for Organ Sharing/Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network from January 1, 2015, to January 1, 2018, were included. We performed competing-risk regression analyses to determine the association between KPS (“Severely impaired”, “Moderately impaired”, “Non-impaired”) and death/delisting, with deceased-donor kidney transplantation as a competing risk. We tested for interactions between age and KPS on death/delisting. Of the 89,819 patients analyzed, 39% were impaired (KPS < 80) and 20% were aged ≥ 65 years. Older age and lower KPS were independently associated with higher risk of death/delisting (age 45-64 years, HR 1.97 [95% CI 1.73-2.24]; age ≥ 65 years, HR 3.62 [95% CI 3.33-3.92] compared with age < 45 years;

Aggressive utilization of liver allografts: Improved outcomes over time

Abbas Rana Matthew Brent Price Spencer C. Barrett Jennifer Lai Syed Shahyan Bakhtiyar Fasiha Kanwal John Vierling Mengfen Wu Nhu Thao Galvan John Goss

Aggressive acceptance of liver allografts has driven utilization of marginal allografts. Our aim was to assess the impact of the aggressive phenotype on transplant center outcomes over time.

We used a cohort of 148 361 candidates from the Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network for liver transplantation between 2002 and 2016 in 134 centers. Using the Discard Risk Index, we designated high probability discard allografts by the top 10th percentile for likelihood of discard. Aggressive phenotype was defined by usage of high probability discard (HPD) allografts (top 10th percentile). Our analysis of survival on waitlist and graft survival after transplantation included a comprehensive list of center level covariates across three equal time periods (2002-2006, 2007-2011, and 2012-2016).

Need for tracheostomy after lung transplant predicts decreased mid- and long-term survival

Stephen J Huddleston 1, Roland Brown 2, Kyle Rudser 2, Umesh Goswami 3, Rade Tomic 3, Nicholas T Lemke 1, Andrew W Shaffer 1, Matthew Soule 1, Marshall Hertz 3, Sara Shumway 1, Rose Kelly 1, Gabriel Loor 4

Background: Tracheostomy is an important adjunct for lung transplant patients requiring prolonged ventilation. We explored the effects of post-transplant tracheostomy on survival and bronchiolitis obliterans syndrome after lung transplant.

A MORTALITY RISK SCORE FOR SEPTUAGENARIANS UNDERGOING HEART TRANSPLANTATION

Laura Seese, Gavin W. Hickey, Michael Mathier, Mary Keebler, Ibrahim Sultan, Thomas G. Gleason and Arman Kilic

In this study we derive and validate a risk score for one-year mortality in adults >70 years undergoing orthotopic heart transplantation (OHT)

The United Network for Organ Sharing registry was used to identify adults >70 years who underwent OHT between 1987 and 2018. Primary outcome was 1-year mortality. Patients were randomly divided into derivation and validation cohorts. Associated covariates (univariate $p < 0.2$) were entered into a multivariable logistic regression model, as was year of OHT to account for temporal changes in outcomes. A risk score was created using the magnitudes of the odds ratios from the derivation cohort, and its ability to predict 1-year mortality was tested in the validation cohort.

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NATERA is a global leader in cell-free DNA testing. The mission of the company is to change the management of disease worldwide with a focus on women's health, oncology and organ health. The company offers proprietary testing services for physicians, researchers and clinicians in cancer, including biopharmaceutical companies, and genetic laboratories through its cloud-based software platform. Developed by our trusted legacy in cfDNA, the Prospera™ transplant assessment test is optimized to be a precise

and reliable tool for early, clinically meaningful rejection assessment. Renasight™, a renal genetics panel, is a comprehensive, accessible genetic test for patients with chronic kidney disease.

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