

OPTN Histocompatibility Committee

Meeting Summary

July 15, 2025

Webex Meeting

Gerald Morris, MD, Chair

Kelley Hitchman, PhD, MS, Vice Chair

Introduction

The Histocompatibility Committee (“Committee”) met via WebEx teleconference on 07/15/2025 to discuss the following agenda items:

1. Updates
2. ABO Project Planning

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

1. Updates

No decisions were made.

Summary of Discussion:

Staff spoke to the committee about potential cross-committee presentations for the 2025 HLA Table Update project. They also mentioned that the project is projected to be on the OPTN regional meeting consent agenda, and therefore, regional representatives will not need to speak on the proposal at their regional meetings.

Staff presented information about Human Resources and Service Administration directives to the OPTN. They spoke on ongoing directives – normothermic regional perfusion, donation after cardiac death, rabies transmission, and allocation out of sequence. They also gave an update on the new OPTN Board of Directors term, as well as provided information on a pause on continuous distribution work.

A member asked if the continuous distribution pause would have an impact on the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services IOTA Model implementation, and staff responded that they did not foresee an impact.

2. ABO Project Planning

The Committee decided to move forward with the proposal decisions listed below.

Summary of Discussion:

Staff mentioned that the ABO project is still in its problem analysis stage and that the Data Advisory Committee, Policy Oversight Committee, and OPTN Board and/or Executive Committee endorsements/approvals are still needed. Staff said that scope, areas of interest, and general rationale are needed at this stage while specific policy language is not yet needed.

The Chair covered project decision points needed by the committee in order to prepare for upcoming approval meetings.

- Policy
 - Are policy changes required for this project? If yes, what should they include?
- Guidance
 - Should current project entail updating existing guidance documents or development of new guidance documents?
- IT/Data
 - Does the OPTN Donor Data and Matching System need a flag notification when placing a transfused donor?
 - Are additional transfused donor data points, along with ABO molecular typing data collection points, needed? And what would they include?

Policy

The Chair presented ideas on policy options that have been discussed previously by members.

- Outlining definition of transfused donors
- Combining living and deceased donor blood typing requirements
- Acceptable testing types
- Requiring molecular testing for Non-A1 typed donors

Members were asked if these items should or should not be included in policy. The Chair mentioned that lectin testing for non-A1s is not “a technically great assay,” while genotyping for A-types can prevent misallocation and expand non-A1 transplants. The Vice Chair voiced support for all policy inclusions. The Chair agreed, stating that requiring non-A1 molecular subtyping is important for patient safety because of its increased preciseness and its expansion of transplant access. The members decided to move forward with these policy recommendations.

Guidance

Members were asked if they would be interested in updating the existing 2020 and 2018 Operations and Safety Committee guidance documents that are relevant to ABO molecular typing and subtyping. The Ex Officio stated that the current guidance documents are 5+ years old and may be outdated. They also stated that robust guidance for histocompatibility labs that are not involved in blood banking could benefit from updated documents.

Data Collection

Staff mentioned the types of information that DAC would be looking for, such as current gaps in data collection, as well as rationale for proposed data collection. Members were asked to review the following data collection questions:

- Should we collect the ABO phenotype data as we currently do and data collection to indicate the method used?
 - Check box for indicating serology vs molecular?
- Should we collect the genotype results of molecular ABO testing?
 - Would these results be useful for future analysis?

IT staff showed a mock-up of data collection that had previously been discussed. This included the following data points:

- Was molecular genotyping performed? Yes/no
- Donor received PBRC and/or whole blood in the last 90 days? Yes/no
- Was there pre-transfusion blood type performed? Yes/no

A member voiced concern about another data point, which asked for “number of transfusions during this (terminal) hospitalization.” The member stated that this doesn’t account for transfusions at other places of care where the donor may have also received a transfusion. The Chair mentioned that the proposed data collection may be able to give more insight into future data changes, such as changes to this data point.

The member also asked if there would be further insight into number of units of transfusion which may allow for data collection to guide future policy. The Chair responded that they hoped to gain insight into transfused donors and molecular genotyping use through the least number of data points needed, as to not cause burden of data entry. The Chair also mentioned that data collection ultimately does not give full insight into medical decisions.

IT

The Chair asked if anyone had opposition to creating a flag in the OPTN Computer System that prompts a message for molecular testing if the donor had one or more transfusions. This flag would be attached to validation between data fields – molecular and serology typings.

Research Metrics

Research staff asked if members supported the following proposal metric:

- Number of A1 and A2B kidneys transplanted to B candidates

Leadership mentioned that it would be important to look at overall transplantations compared to blood typing proportions to compare if any blood types are being disproportionately placed. Research said they will create another metric that aligns with this sentiment.

Upcoming Meeting

- August 12, 2025

Attendance

- **Committee Members**
 - Michael Gautreaux
 - John Lunz
 - Ryan Pena
 - Darryl Nethercot
 - Bobbie Rhodes-Clark
 - Crystal Usenko
 - Helene McMurray
 - Jerry Morris
 - Kelley Hitchman
 - Laurine Bow
 - Tiffany Bratton
- **UNOS Staff**
 - Jamie Panko
 - Betsy Gans
 - Amelia Deveraux
 - Matt Cafarella
 - Thomas Dolan