

**OPTN Ethics Committee
Meeting Summary
June 20, 2024
Webex Meeting**

**Andy Flescher, PhD, Chair
Sanjay Kulkarni, MD, Vice Chair**

Introduction

The Ethics Committee (“Committee”) met via WebEx teleconference on 05/16/2024 to discuss the following agenda items:

1. Project Logistics and Timing
2. Presentation – Trends in Deceased Donor Kidney Allocation Out of Sequence (AOOS)
3. Open Forum

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

1. Project Logistics

No decisions were made.

Summary of presentation:

The Chair reviewed project topic groups, timeline, and expectations.

Summary of discussion:

None

Next steps:

None

2. Presentation – Trends in Deceased Donor Kidney Allocation Out of Sequence (AOOS)

No decisions were made.

Presentation Summary:

An OPTN research staff member presented allocation trends. The presenter reviewed definitions of bypass codes, which allow organ procurement organizations to move through the match run. The presenter showed data indicating that the number of allocations out of sequence are growing. The presenter stated that there are several different definitions of allocation out of sequence which can cause a variety of reporting numbers. The slides showed that most of the allocation out of sequence kidneys were transplanted and do not fall to non-use, however AOOS may affect equity. Data revealed that most kidneys placed out of sequence were not at the highest KDPI but at the medium-high range. Research also found that there were not large differences in characteristics between kidneys procured over the past 5 years, showing that there is not a growing number of higher-risk organs being procured. The presenter stated that OPOs are experiencing a wide variation in reported change for utilization of

AOOS and the rate of AOOS does not appear to have affected non-use rates. The presenter discussed that OPOs typically retroactively input bypass codes after open offers.

The presented stated that AOOS starts earlier for lower KDPI kidneys and there may be other anatomic issues not accounted for that may cause early AOOS. The Vice Chair mentioned that highly sensitized organs may lead to more instances of AOOS. The presenter reviewed median sequence numbers where AOOS starts on the match run, and they showed that recipients of AOOS kidneys were more likely to be older, less sensitized, less dialysis time, white, male, and further from donor hospital. Data showed that pediatric candidates are passed via AOOS mainly at KDPI levels of 35% and higher.

Summary of Discussion:

A committee member asked if transplant center-level decisions are visible in this data. The speaker stated that OPOs do not all handle AOOS in the same way, making it hard to discern whether a transplant center or OPO made a sequencing decision. The speaker mentioned that “open offers,” or phone calls to make organ placements, are often used, with bypass codes not being entered in real time. The Chair reiterated some AOOS offers are far down the match run. The Chair pointed out that there are open offers occurring across KDPI levels, which may be related to equity of organ placement.

Next Steps:

None

3. Open Forum

No decisions were made.

Presentation Summary:

A visitor presented to the Ethics Committee regarding a personal situation. The speaker stated that they have been unable to transfer post-transplantation care to a new transplant program after moving, stating this to be an equity issue.

Upcoming Meeting(s)

- July 18, 2024

Attendance

- **Committee Members**
 - Sena Wilson-Sheehan
 - Sanjay Kulkarni
 - Andy Flescher
 - Andrew Courtwright
 - Erica Stohs
 - Sheila Bullock
 - Jennifer Dillon
 - Laura McCown
 - Lisa Paolillo
 - Felicia Wells-Williams
 - Carrie Thiessen
- **HRSA Representatives**
 - Marilyn Levi
 - Jim Bowman
- **SRTR Staff**
 - Bryn Thompson
- **UNOS Staff**
 - Laura Schmitt
 - Kristina Hogan
 - Kieran McMahan
 - Katrina Gauntt
 - Jamie Panko
 - Cole Fox
- **Other Attendees**
 - Gloria Chen
 - Aite Aigbe
 - Brenden Morrissey