



Friday, February 24, 2023

Jerry McCauley, MD
President
Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network
Thomas Jefferson University Hospital
111 South Jefferson Street
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Paulo Martins, MD, PhD
Chair, Minority Affairs Committee
Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network
UMass Memorial Medical Center
55 Lake Avenue North, S6-412
Worcester, MA 01655

Dear Dr. McCauley and Dr. Martin:

On behalf of the more than 37,000,000 Americans living with kidney diseases, the 90,000 individuals on the national transplant waitlist awaiting a kidney transplant, and the 21,000 nephrologists, scientists, and other kidney health care professionals who are members of the American Society of Nephrology (ASN) and the National Kidney Foundation (NKF), we thank you for your leadership of the Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network (OPTN).

Advancing equity in all aspects of transplant care is an issue of mutual importance to our three organizations. We are gratified regarding OPTN's recent policy to modify wait time for Black transplant candidates affected by the race-based estimated glomerular filtration rate (eGFR) calculation. Having jointly endorsed OPTN's proposal to make this change in a letter to OPTN in June 2022, which is attached, we applaud this advancement and look forward to continued progress to remove the inappropriate use of race throughout kidney medicine.

Following up on the second subject we addressed in our previous correspondence, we encourage OPTN to consider the removal of race in the Kidney Donor Risk Index (KDRI). We are pleased to learn that the Minority Affairs Committee is meeting on Monday, February 27, to discuss this topic and has a goal to convene an expert task force. ASN and NKF commend OPTN for prioritizing this effort and would like to join the task force to support this endeavor.

We remain committed to identifying, addressing, and eliminating fundamental causes for the unacceptable disparities, inequities, and injustices that negatively impact kidney health and care, and we stand ready to support OPTN's efforts related to removing race from KDRI. ASN and NKF firmly believe that race is a social construct and has no place in clinical algorithms used to evaluate organ suitability. On behalf of the patients our organizations represent and serve, we feel a sense of urgency to ensure this change occurs as expeditiously as possible and would like to request that OPTN share a plan for developing and a deadline for implementing a race-neutral KDRI equation.



To understand this critical work, and how our organizations and our respective memberships may contribute, we request a meeting with you and the leaders of the KDRI revision effort within OPTN. We would be pleased to meet at your convenience, in-person or virtually. Again, we thank you for your leadership in ensuring organ procurement and transplantation practices are equitable, creating access for all people to donate life-saving organs and to receive the gift of life.

To discuss this letter, or to schedule a meeting to discuss this shared priority, kindly contact Rachel Meyer with ASN at rmeyer@asn-online.org or Morgan Reid with NKF at morgan.reid@kidney.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michelle Josephson".

Michelle Josephson, MD, FASN
President
American Society of Nephrology

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sylvia E. Rosas".

Sylvia E. Rosas, MD, MSCE, FNKF, FASN
President
National Kidney Foundation