

Organ and Tissue Donation and Transplantation Steering Committee

Conference Call Minutes
Date: Monday, May 11, 2009 at 2:00 EDT

Chair: Dr. Graham Sher

Participants: Dr. Andrew Baker
Dr. John Hamm
Dr. Alan Hudson
Mr. Craig Knight
Dr. Maurice McGregor
Ms. Anne McLellan
Dr. Brian Postl
Dr. Judith Shamian
Dr. Michael Strong
Dr. Simon Sutcliffe
Dr. William Wall

Observers (Canadian Blood Services):

Ms. Sophie de Villers, VP, Strategy Management
Ms. Kimberly Young, Executive Director, Organs and Tissues
Dr. Peter Nickerson, Medical Director, Transplantation, Organs and Tissues
Dr. Sam Shemie, Medical Director, Donation, Organs and Tissues
Ms. Lorna Tessier, Director, Public Relations
Ms. Sylvia Torrance, Director, Business Initiatives

Welcome and Introductions

The Chair welcomed all members and thanked them for attending the first meeting of the Steering Committee. Members introduced themselves and gave a brief description of their involvement with organ and tissue donation and transplantation.

Review Agenda

The agenda was reviewed and no changes were noted.

Background

Dr. Sher provided background on how Canadian Blood Services had received its mandate to develop a national system design for organ and tissue donation and transplantation (OTDT) for Canada:

- On May 28, 2007, Deputy Ministers of Health requested Canadian Blood Services to prepare a proposal examining possible merger with Canadian Council for Donation and Transplantation. Canadian Blood Services responded that rather than take over an advisory board, it would be beneficial for Canadian Blood Services to deliver national OTDT services.
- In response, Deputy Ministers requested Canadian Blood Services submit a detailed options analysis. This analysis, which included reference to the development of a strategic plan for organs and tissues, was presented to the Conference of Deputy Ministers in Sept 2007. The Deputy Ministers, excluding Quebec, agreed to the proposal in principle.
- A Health Canada Contribution Agreement was signed in April 2008 between Health Canada and Canadian Blood Services, and a Letter of Intent was signed with all provinces, except Quebec, in August 2008.

Dr. Sher indicated the work that needed to be done at the national level would not be in conflict with initiatives that were in progress at the provincial level, e.g. the donor registry work being done in Alberta, or the wait time initiative in Ontario. It was emphasized that Canadian Blood Service would lead the development of a system design in collaboration with other OTDT stakeholders.

A listing of provincial OTDT initiatives in progress was requested.

Action Item: Canadian Blood Services to provide provincial OTDT initiative listing for Steering Committee

Clarification was requested on the status of Quebec's participation in a national system. Dr. Sher replied that though discussions were on-going between Provinces/Territories and Quebec, the issue had not yet been resolved. The Health Canada Contribution Agreement requires that Quebec be included in initiatives funded with federal money. It was noted that at present Quebec participates in national organ sharing for urgent status patients, but they do not participate in the new Living Donor Exchange Registry recently created by Canadian Blood Services.

Action Item: Canadian Blood Services will prepare a briefing note on Quebec's participation in the national system design for the Steering Committee.

Further discussions took place on Federal/Provincial/Territorial relations and challenges in developing a meaningful plan that all ministers could support.

Action Item: Relevant documents relating to Canadian Blood Services' OTDT mandate from the government will be provided to the Steering Committee by Canadian Blood Services.

Some discussion took place on the importance of ethnic and aboriginal health issues. A review of legislation or policy that would impede delivery of national services to the aboriginal community was requested.

Action Item: Canadian Blood Services will prepare a briefing note on any legislation or policies that would impede delivery of national services to the aboriginal population.

Process

Dr. Sher and Ms. de Villers provided a high level overview of the strategic planning process as well as the committee structure. The process builds on previous work done by the former Canadian Council for Donation and Transplantation, provincial and federal governments, and the September 2008 stakeholder consultation held by Canadian Blood Services. The process is designed to be open and transparent, and ensure stakeholders will support the plan when complete. Further details will be provided at the June Steering Committee meeting.

Action Item: Canadian Blood Services will send the report from the September 2008 OTDT stakeholder consultation to the Steering Committee.

A request was made for more information on international OTDT models. Dr. Sher indicated that this would be part of the background material that will be sent to members. Dr. Hudson also indicated that the Ontario expert panel report would be ready within the next month and that this would be another useful document for the Steering Committee.

Action Item: Canadian Blood Services will send out material on international OTDT models in advance of the meeting to allow time for review by Steering Committee members.

Terms of Reference

Dr. Sher requested members review the draft Terms of Reference for the Steering Committee. The approval of the Terms of Reference will be an agenda item on the June meeting.

Discuss Schedule

The next meeting will be held June 29, 2009 at the Sheraton Gateway Hotel at the Toronto Airport.

Action Item: Canadian Blood Services will begin scheduling meetings for September, December or January, and for March.

Other Business

The group was informed that a public announcement will be made May 14th of the launch of the Steering Committee. Steering Committee members will be provided with the press release ahead of time, and asked to refer media enquires back to Canadian Blood Services. It was suggested that the Steering Committee collectively determine the process and ground rules for dealing with media requests going forward.

Action Item: Canadian Blood Services will include this topic as an agenda item for the June meeting.

Meeting Adjournment

Dr. Sher expressed his gratitude to the Steering Committee members for their participation in this process. The meeting was adjourned at 3:55.