

Minutes STEP meeting Copenhagen, November 3rd, 2023

1. Per L welcomed everyone to the meeting followed by a short presentation round.
2. Ilse DW presented data from the STEP program so far
There have been in total 14 runs and 6 re-runs resulting in 59 transplantations. In total 159 pairs have participated and 7 altruistic donors. In average there have been 26 pairs in each match run. 59% of chains have been broken and that is mainly in the 3 way chains compared to two way chains. 1/3 have been transplanted within STEP and of those 34% are because of ABO incompatibility. How long or how many runs a pair should be participate was questioned and IDW reported that matches were found in some cases even after 6 runs.
3. The experience and suggestions from each centre were then reported. In general, all participants are happy with the performance of the program but some items come up from several centres.
 - a. Problem with the ABOi pairs with patients with blood group 0 not finding a match. Tommy A said that it would be possible to alter the algorithm to prioritize those pairs but that requires some simulation.
 - b. Most prefers 4 runs compared to 3 runs to minimize the waiting time for the pairs
 - c. All participants reported that they think that the time between a successful run and the actual transplant takes too long time. Not a single cause but several items. It was decided to create a small working group to look into this chaired by Kjersti Lønning.
 - d. The virtual meeting after each run was decided that it is not very useful, so that will be cancelled in the future. Then it is very important if centres need to brake chains, that this is immediately reported back to IDW
 - e. A list of persons with contact details at each centre should be created
 - f. A common checklist should be created and be available on SCTP website, IDW showed were to find all the STEP guidelines ([link](#))
4. Per L reported that at present CT scans on donors are done slightly different at different centres. In Sweden all centres use the same protocol, the biggest difference is between Danish centres. It was concluded that now when this is known to all participants there is no need for a common protocol. It was a common wish that the images should be uploaded ASAP and IDW mentioned that at the office they are working with a project on how to enhance the possibility to share images through YASWA.
5. How to increase the number of pairs in the program was discussed and it was clear that today the policy in how to include ABOi pairs varied widely. Gtb reported that they offered all ABOi pairs to join the STEP program for one run but they still have their planned time for the tx, if no match. It was concluded that it would be difficult to create common criteria for this. Tommy A pointed out that a rather small increase in the number of pairs would make a substantial difference. It could be a step wish increase for instance starting by each center including 1/3 or 1/4 of all their ABOi.
6. Per L the reported about the EUROKEP.
SCTP has been invited to participate in an EU application to develop a European wide paired exchange program. SCTP will be in WP3 "Guidelines for the implementation" together with

France. It was concluded although engaged in this EU project we should continue to run our STEP and only when no matches in STEP go to the next level.

Decisions

1. Creation of working group to identify how to decrease time between runs and transplants
2. No virtual common conference after each run
3. Creation of common template for contact names and numbers that can be used just before, during and after a specific STEP exchange

Søren Schwartz Sørensen – Copenhagen
Helle Bruunsgaard - Copenhagen
Cengiz Akgül – Odense
Claus Bistrup – Odense
Stella Johansen - Odense
Kirsten Giolitti – Odense
Karin Skov – Aarhus
Pernille Koefoed-Nielsen - Aarhus
Mats Bengtsson – Uppsala
Line Boulland – Oslo
Jørn Petter Hanto Lindahl – Oslo
Kjersti Lønning – Oslo
Käthe Meyer – Oslo
Torsten Eich – Stockholm
Anne Asperheim-Sandberg - Stockholm
Jenni Kippola – Helsinki
Ingrid Petersson - Gothenburg
Küllli Kõlvald – Tartu
Tommy Andersson
Per Lindner – STEP chair
Ilse Duus Weinreich – Scandiatransplant