



Dear colleagues,

In this autumn edition of the newsletter you will find important information on the introduction of the virtual PRA as a first step towards virtual crossmatching in Eurotransplant. You will be kept informed of the progress through this newsletter, as well as through direct communication. Furthermore in this issue, a report on the Tissue Typing Meeting held during the last Eurotransplant meeting can be found, and the dates for the EPT shipments of next year.

### Tissue Typing Meeting

On Friday the 11<sup>th</sup> of October the Tissue Typing Meeting was held during the annual Eurotransplant meeting. The theme of the meeting was towards virtual crossmatching, with four presentations covering the various aspects of this topic.

Sebastian Heidt (ETRL, Leiden) gave an overview on the necessity of virtual crossmatching and presented the roadmap towards the virtual crossmatch in Eurotransplant. Next, Yvonne Zoet (ETRL, Leiden) presented the data from the positive crossmatch inventory which is being carried out by the ETRL. Since the start



of the inventory, the number of positive donor-center crossmatches decreased from 50 to 16 a month, which is an excellent result. Continuing effort will be put into reducing this number even further. The third speaker was Gottfried Fischer (Vienna), who discussed why the HLA typing requirements need to be extended to facilitate virtual crossmatching. There are several possibilities how to handle the extended HLA typing in the allocation process. These will be discussed by the Tissue Typing Advisory Committee (TTAC) on the 21<sup>st</sup> of November this year.

Lastly, David Turner (Edinburgh) elegantly presented the Scottish experience of totally omitting the crossmatch for non-sensitized, and a proportion of well-characterised sensitized patients. It became clear from his presentation that careful definition of unacceptable antigens is key to successful implementation of virtual crossmatching. Presentations from this meeting will be available on the [Eurotransplant website](http://eurotransplant.org).

### Towards virtual crossmatching

Finally, Eurotransplant is heading towards the introduction of virtual crossmatching to replace the physical donor-center crossmatch. Several conditions have to be met before the virtual crossmatch can be safely introduced. Therefore, a stepwise approach has been defined by the ETRL, which was approved by the TTAC.

The first step is that the only way to define the sensitisation status of a patient will be based on reporting unacceptable antigens. On basis of these unacceptable antigens, the virtual PRA will be calculated using the ETRL reference database v3.0, which contains HLA typing data of 10.000 actual organ donors from Eurotransplant (2012-2018). All patients with a vPRA >0% will be regarded as being immunized.

For the time being, the physical donor-center crossmatch will remain, which means that the quarterly serum exchange is still required. Sera that require shipment are those that have a vPRA >0% from patients with known CDC reactivity.

The initial time-frame for the introduction of the vPRA within Eurotransplant has been slightly delayed due to logistical reasons.

The new planning is as follows:

- November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2019: possibility for bulk unacceptable antigen transfer to the Eurotransplant office. This will be done through comma separated values (CSV) file, as specified by Eurotransplant. This transfer needs to be tested on a per center basis. Tissue typing centers will be contacted by Eurotransplant from November onwards for implementation.

### Patient based EPT dates 2020

Information/form sent	Deadline
04-02-2020	18-02-2020
26-05-2020	09-06-2020
15-09-2020	29-09-2020

## EPT shipment dates 2020

In case one of these dates interferes with some special events, please inform us as soon as possible.

Shipping date	Typing dispatch (n)	Deadline typing/xm report	screening dispatch (n)	Crossmatch	Deadline screening report
04-02-2020	3	18-02-2020	12	EPT 2020-A, B, C	07-07-2020
24-03-2020	3	07-04-2020		EPT 2020-D, E, F	
26-05-2020	3	09-06-2020		EPT 2020-G, H, I	
15-09-2020	3	29-09-2020		EPT 2020-J, K, L	

Certificates will be issued in December 2020

- January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020: transition to the vPRA and cessation of the %PRA as a parameter of sensitisation. On this date, for all patients on the waiting list the vPRA will be recalculated using the ETRL reference database 3.0.
- For the transition period we strongly advise to include sera from all patients on the active kidney waiting list with either a vPRA>0% and known cytotoxic HLA antibodies and/or a %PRA>5% in the serum shipment. This is of importance since from January 28<sup>th</sup> 2020 onward all crossmatch requests will be based on the vPRA status (in combination with known CDC reactivity), and in the absence of a serum sample in the donor center for an immunized patient (vPRA>0%) the organ offer will not be made. This is not the case for offers through the AM program where no crossmatch at the donor center is performed.

Sera should preferably be sent on Mondays or Tuesdays, to prevent delivery during weekends. Please announce the shipment of sera to the ETRL office by sending an e-mail to [etrl.am@eurotransplant.org](mailto:etrl.am@eurotransplant.org).

## Extramural meeting 2020 in Mechelen, Belgium

The upcoming extramural meeting will be organised by Marie-Paule Emonds and her team in Mechelen, Belgium on the 13<sup>th</sup> of March 2020. We will discuss EPT matters, the items discussed in the TTAC (organised March 12<sup>th</sup>), as well as update you on the progress of the transition towards the virtual crossmatch. Please let us know if there are any specific subjects you would like to have covered during this meeting.

## AM program logistics update

We would like to remind you that the postal address for sending sera to determine eligibility for the AM program is the following:

ETRL, M.J.H. van der Linden  
LUMC, reception HLA laboratory  
Internal postcode E3Q, room E3-66  
Albinusdreef 2  
2333 ZA Leiden  
The Netherlands

Please be informed that old AM application forms will no longer be accepted. The most recent form is available from the ETRL website (<http://etrl.eurotransplant.org/cms/index.php?page=amprogram>). The 'Serum information sheet' has to accompany the samples that are being shipped. The completed application form may either be sent by e-mail or be included with the samples.

