

Organ Utilization Rate Interpretation Guidance

For Organ Procurement Organization (OPO) Performance Measurement
Version October 2026

Organ Utilization Rate Interpretation Guidance as of October 2026

Reporting Frequency

The Organ Utilization Rate is intended to be measured monthly, quarterly, and/or annually.

Directionality

The Organ Utilization Rate indicates the number of organs transplanted divided by the total number of organs recovered for transplant from donors in the Organ Procurement Organization's (OPO) Donation Service Area (DSA) in a calendar year. Organs included must be recovered for transplant, not other purposes. The Organ Utilization Rate is calculated at the OPO level and expressed as a rate per 100 organs. Higher rates indicate better performance and less waste.

Performance Thresholds

While sufficient data exists to set a threshold or benchmark for Organ Utilization Rate, one has not been set at this time.

Application of the Measure Results

The Organ Utilization Rate is intended to be used *internally* by an OPO for performance improvement and relationship building with Transplant Centers.

Exclusions

Exclusions introduce biases. If it is necessary to exclude a case from the calculation, please consult the measure developer.

Cautions and Limitations

- + **Lag Time:** Numerator and denominator data for this measure are drawn from the Scientific Registry of Transplant Recipients (SRTR). The SRTR data system includes data on all donors, waitlisted candidates, and transplant recipients in the United States, submitted by members of the Organ Procurement & Transplantation Network (OPTN). SRTR data is released quarterly (March, June, September, and December of each year), with usually no more than a 3-month lag.
- + **Managing High Variability:** Because donation is a rare event and some OPOs have relatively small DSAs, within short periods of time, there may appear to be differences in performance that are not meaningful. If it is necessary to compare OPOs, a test of statistical significance—rather than a direct comparison of percentages or rates—should be used.
- + **Combining Measure With Other Measures to Create a Scorecard:** No single measure can fully capture OPO performance. This principle was a key driver behind the development of the OPO measurement framework. However, composite scoring across multiple measures, rankings, and comparisons to the mean and median can obscure important details in performance and limit opportunities to identify, share, and adopt best practices. We therefore recommend evaluating process and outcome measures individually as part of a comprehensive oversight approach that also includes site surveys, quality improvement activities, and other tools that support patient safety, accountability, and continuous improvement.