Final Assessment

As your final assessment for this module, your teacher will ask you to answer several, or all, of the following questions on a separate sheet of paper. You should write one well-organized paragraph per question.

1. Identify and explain one similarity and one difference between the current and past UNOS policies.

2. Suppose that two patients, Roma and Xavier, need liver transplants, and a liver is available from a deceased donor. The liver is an equally good match for both patients, so both are likely to accept it as long as they take a reasonably low dose of immunosuppressant medication. Both patients are willing to take this medication each day after a transplant, and both live the same distance from the hospital. Roma is 26 years old and has a MELD score of 13. Once she receives a liver, she is expected to live for 20 years, at least. Xavier is 54 years old and has a MELD score of 19. Once he receives a liver, he is expected to live for no more than 10 years. Under the current UNOS policy, who (Roma or Xavier) would get the liver? Explain why.

3. How do you think that the current and past UNOS policies compare in terms of fairness? In other words, do you think that one policy is fairer than the other? Fully explain your answer, being as specific as possible.

4. Suppose that UNOS writes a new policy that incorporates a new criterion: “reason for liver failure.” Prioritization will be given to patients who are sickest and live closest; “sickest” will be determined by Status 1 and MELD scores described in Master 3.10. However, if there are any ties in sickness and geography between patients, the hospital will then consider why the liver failure occurred. For example, a patient with an inherited liver disease would be given priority over a patient who has damaged his or her liver by drinking too much alcohol. Do you agree with this decision? Why or why not?

5. Would you change the current policy in any way to make it fairer? If not, why not? If so, identify and justify one specific change that you would make.