



ELDER LIFE MANAGEMENT & HOME CARE SERVICES

We Have Solutions

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Summary:

In February 2013, a new Health Care Planning tool, the POLST form, was announced in NJ, following similar forms being established nationally. Practitioner Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment (POLST) was actually signed into law by Governor Christie in December 2011, however only recently announced for surrogate, and the patient's attending physician or advance practice nurse, and provide instructions for end of life care. The goal of this tool is to improve communication of individual wishes and documentation of medical orders that reflect patient centered wishes.

The POLST form is intended for patients with a life limiting illness and allows for detailed preference on specific goals and medical interventions. The completed POLST form is an actual medical order that becomes a permanent part of the nursing facility resident's medical record. It is valid in all healthcare settings and therefore is a standardized universal tool for end of life medical order, including at home.

POLST key points:

1. This physician order does not substitute for Advance Medical Directive, but it complements it
2. Entirely voluntary
3. Designed for a person seriously ill with life limiting advanced illness
4. Being suggested for individuals who are living in a nursing home and assisted living
5. Based on current health status
6. Collaboration between the individual and medical practitioner
7. Focus is on Goals of Care
8. Goal of Care relate to a comprehensive understanding of the resident's medical condition, expected prognosis and resident specific goals.
9. Culture change- from medical problem based care to goal based care
10. DNR is here described as DNAR- don not attempt resuscitation or/and Allow Natural Death
11. Address resident preferences for CPR attempts, airway management for respiratory failure, preferences for artificial feeding and hydration and hospital transfer if comfort needs cannot be met at facility
12. Institutional policy will need to be followed, including actual DNR and/or DNH to be added to POS upon completion of the POLST form