

POLST

physician orders for life-sustaining treatment paradigm

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Dear Friends,



Thank you to all of you who sent in letters supporting the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) proposal to create new billing codes to reimburse health care professionals for advance care planning conversations. The more voices we have letting CMS know this is important the better!

I wanted to share an **open letter to CMS** written by **Amy Berman** in the Washington Post last week. Those of you who have been able to attend our in-person meetings have likely met Amy - we look forward to seeing her again at our conference this year (see sidebar). Her story provides a great example of the value of an advance care planning conversation. It is the willingness of Amy, **Lee, Max, Pat, Sister Martin, Margot** - and other people you can help us find - to share their stories that helps us all educate about the importance of advance care planning and POLST.

In the sidebar we mention a second letter (due next week) that helps promote POLST specifically. I urge you to consider sending a letter for this proposal as well - and to use these stories that we have put online **here** to help us promote the value of POLST. If you have a story to share - **please let us know!**

Best wishes,

Amy Vandenbroucke

Amy Vandenbroucke, JD
Executive Director

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Our News

NPPTF Letter About Long-Term Care Regulation

The National POLST Paradigm Task Force (NPPTF) submitted a letter to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services regarding the proposed regulation **CMS-3260-P, Reform of Requirements for Long-Term Care Facilities**. The letter requests that POLST be included in the requirements that Long-Term Care facilities must meet to participate in the Medicare and Medicaid programs.

The deadline for comments has been extended to October 14th. We strongly encourage individuals and state POLST programs to submit comments encouraging the inclusion of POLST in these revised regulations.

To read the letter, [click here](#).

For more information on submitting a letter, [click here](#).

New End-of-Life Care Reports

A number of organizations have recently released reports detailing the state of advance care planning in the United States. Among them, the Kaiser Family Foundation **conducted a poll** that found a vast majority of the public believes that physicians should have end-of-life conversations with patients and that they should be reimbursed for it. The results of the survey were further shared in the national media, including this [Huffington Post article](#).

In addition, the **Center to Advance Palliative Care** has released a **state-by-state report card** on access to palliative care. The report card provides each state with a numerical

FEATURED NEWS

Distinguishing POLST from Death With Dignity Statutes

In September the National POLST Paradigm Task Force (NPPTF) released a statement articulating the differences between the National POLST Paradigm and Death with Dignity (DWD) statutes. There are 10 states currently considering DWD legislation during this legislative session and 12 states that considered, but did not pass, such legislation. Most notably, on October 5th California Governor Jerry Brown signed a DWD statute into law.

The NPPTF drafted this statement to prevent confusion between the National POLST Paradigm and DWD statutes; this statement underscores the differing origins, motivations, and outcomes associated with POLST and DWD. With DWD legislation regularly being considered and debated, the NPPTF hopes this statement will prove helpful for any POLST Program seeking to communicate these differences to the media and the public.

To read the full statement, [click here](#).

FEATURED RESOURCE

POLST: Doing It Better

POLST: Doing It Better is a new video directed towards health care professionals that corrects general misinformation about POLST, including clarifying which individuals POLST should be offered to and emphasizing best practices for POLST. It also shows that Catholic Hospitals do use POLST, although they do not participate in any DWD activities (another distinction between POLST and DWD - see our Featured News item above).

While made in association with the **Oregon POLST Program** under the direction of Oregon POLST Task Force Chair Susan Tolle, MD, Susan received input from a number of other state leaders in order to help make this video something all states could use without modification. The NPPTF approved the video's message last month and we encourage you to share this video with others. If you have any questions or comments, [please let us know](#).

To watch the video, [click here](#).

Featured Research

and letter grade, and summarizes the findings with a series of recommendations to strengthen access to palliative care nationwide.

Webinar: OHSU's ePOLST Experience

On October 20th, from 12 - 1 pm Pacific Time, the National POLST Office will host a webinar on OHSU's ePOLST Experience. The webinar will be presented by representatives of the Oregon POLST Registry, Oregon Health & Science University Information Technology Group, Epic, and technology firm Vynca.

To register for the webinar, [click here](#).

Webinar: POLST and Dementia

On November 17th, from 12 - 1 pm Pacific Time, the National POLST Office will host a webinar titled "The Role of POLST in the Care of People with Dementia." The webinar will be presented by Kenneth Brummel-Smith, MD, Charlotte Edwards Maguire Professor of Geriatrics at the Florida State University College of Medicine, and will discuss POLST and advance care planning in the context of dementia.

To register for the webinar, [click here](#).

2016 National POLST Paradigm Conference

The 2016 National POLST Paradigm Conference will be titled "The Future of POLST: Challenges and Opportunities". The Conference is scheduled for February 3-5 in Chicago, IL at the Hyatt Regency Chicago. The conference will start at 2 pm on February 3rd and end by 3 pm on February 5th.

Advance Care Planning Among Patients with Cancer

A recent article in [JAMA Oncology](#) explores trends in advance care planning among patients with cancer between 2000 and 2012. The authors obtained survey responses from next-of-kin for 1985 patients who died of cancer to determine rates of durable power-of-attorney and living will creation, as well as advance care planning discussions.

The study demonstrated that rates of durable power-of-attorney creation have significantly increased from 2000 to 2012 (52% to 74%). However, there was no significant change in creation of living wills or advance care planning discussions. Despite the increase in durable power-of-attorney creation, there was an increase in patients receiving all care possible and no change in rates of hospitalizations.

The results indicate that there is more work that must be done to promote advance care planning discussions and the preparation of advance directives. Furthermore, the results suggest that increasing creation of durable power-of-attorney does not relate to limiting or withholding treatment. As a result, this document may not be adequate for patients who wish to forgo life-sustaining treatments when facing serious illness.

** Because of copyright restrictions we cannot provide a copy of the article upon request but options to obtain it are listed on the site below. **

Narang, AK, AA Wright, and LH Nicholas (2015). "Trends in Advance Care Planning in Patients with Cancer: Results from a National Longitudinal Survey". [JAMA Oncology](http://oncology.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?articleid=2383145), accessed 9/28/2015 at <http://oncology.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?articleid=2383145>

To reserve hotel rooms for the conference, [click here](#).

Registration will open in mid-October. Details will be available on POLST.org

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