

# POLST

*physician orders for life-sustaining treatment paradigm*

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## NEW! NOVEMBER SURVEY

**Click here** to take this month's POLST Survey and help us improve the National POLST newsletter

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## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

With Thanksgiving just around the corner, I am pleased that we have much to be thankful for. Not only has POLST been featured in important research this year, it is also being considered a central component of rethinking advance care planning. Last month, we highlighted the Institute of Medicine report **Dying in**



**America**, which documented the state of end-of-life care in the United States. This month we see POLST included in the American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine annual meeting (see Featured News) and have two great new featured resources on POLST and advance care planning.

The incorporation of POLST into the broader advance care planning landscape demonstrates that we have successfully raised awareness about the importance of the POLST Paradigm. Many thanks to each and every one of you for the work that you have done to expand, disseminate, and improve the POLST Paradigm. I am honored to work with you on behalf of individuals with serious illness and frailty.

Best wishes,

*Amy Vandebroucke*

Amy Vandebroucke, JD

Executive Director

PS - We've added a new feature to this month's eNewsletter. Each month we'll have a short survey I hope you will complete!

# Our News

## Louisiana's LaPOST Gets a New Website

Louisiana's POLST Program, called LaPOST, has launched a **redesigned website**. Part of the **Louisiana Health Care Quality Forum** site, the new LaPOST site features a user-friendly design that is easy for both patients and health care professionals to navigate.

## Consumer Reports Releases Special End-of-Life Guide

**Consumer Reports** has released an end-of-life guide titled *A Beautiful Death*. The guide features the story of a man who documented his wishes, as well as suggestions for how to share your wishes and resources for caregivers.

To view the guide, [click here](#).

## Save the Date: EMS and POLST Webinar

On Monday, March 30th, 2015, the National POLST Office will host a webinar titled "EMS's Vital Role with POLST". The webinar will be led by Angela Fera, the EMS advisor to the National POLST Paradigm Task Force (NPPTF).

Registration for the webinar will open in January, so keep an eye out for more details.

## POLST at the 2015 AAHPM Annual Meeting

Abstracts about two Mature POLST Programs have been accepted for the **American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine (AAHPM)** Annual Assembly in February 2015. Dr. Sandra L. Pedraza's research on the West Virginia POLST Program, entitled "Comparison of Patients' Practices and End-of-Life Outcomes with Use of Advance Directives and the Physician Orders for Scope of Treatment Program: Insights from a Statewide Registry", will be presented at the meeting in Philadelphia. In addition, Dr. Erik Fromme and Dr. Susan Tolle's work on Oregon's POLST Program, "Oregon Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST): Completion in Proximity to Death", will also be presented.

To learn more about the meeting, [click here](#).

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## FEATURED RESOURCE

### The Legal Aspects of POLST

A recent article in the American Bar Association's **Real Property, Trust, and Estate Law Journal** provides a detailed examination of the legal aspects of the National POLST Paradigm. Directed at the estate, trust, and elder law community, the authors explain the history of the POLST Paradigm and how POLST Programs work. Importantly, they distinguish between POLST and advance directives, identifying the unique role of the POLST Paradigm in advance care planning.

In addition, the authors specifically delineate the role of estate planners regarding POLST. Although the POLST form is a medical document, estate planners can play an important role in ensuring that clients have a general awareness of POLST and can encourage patients to revisit the choices recorded on a POLST Form at regular intervals. Furthermore, the article recommends that attorneys become involved in the development of POLST Programs to ensure that POLST articulates well with existing end-of-life legislation.

Finally, the article addresses some concerns with the POLST Paradigm. While acknowledging the importance of debating specific facets of POLST Programs, the authors reinforce the importance of the POLST Paradigm for ensuring that patient wishes are met.

To read the full article, click here:

**Wolf, RB, MJ Maag, and KB Gallant (2014). "The Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST) Coming Soon to a Health Care Community Near You." *Real Property, Trust, and Estate Law Journal* 49(1).**

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## FEATURED RESOURCE

### Advance Care Planning Tools

National POLST Paradigm Task Force (NPPTF) Legal Advisor Charlie Sabatino has recently published an article on advance care planning tools. The article, titled "Advance Care Planning Tools that Educate, Engage, and Empower", was published in the **Public Policy & Aging Report**.

The article surveys advance care planning tools, including tools that foster advance care planning conversations, those that serve as comprehensive planning strategies, and guides that are

disease-specific. Finally, it includes a section discussing advance care planning registries.

The publication serves an important foundation for anyone looking to quickly understand the variety of advance care planning tools that are available and the differences in their approaches.

To read the full article, click here:

**Sabatino, C (2014). "Advance Care Planning Tools that Educate, Engage, and Empower". Public Policy & Aging Report, accessed 11/1/2014 at <http://ppar.oxfordjournals.org/content/24/3/107.full?keytype=ref&ijkey=p96ENgIK6x0xhUc>**

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illness and frailty

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