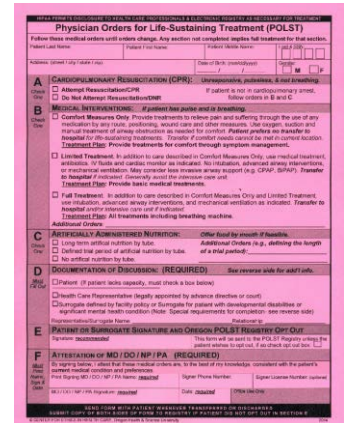




**Do you have a serious illness or frailty?**

**Give yourself peace of mind.**

**Make your treatment wishes known.**



### **POLST: What is it?**

POLST is a medical order that stands for **Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment**. It directs your care in a medical crisis. POLST orders give seriously ill or frail people control over the treatments they do or do not want to receive in a medical crisis.

A POLST order is printed on bright pink paper and signed by your physician, nurse practitioner or physician assistant after a discussion with you.

### **Is it required?**

No. Completing a POLST is always voluntary.

### **POLST Form: How is it used?**

In a medical crisis, a POLST Form directs emergency staff to the type of treatment you do or do not want. Paramedics, EMTs and physicians are required to follow POLST orders. POLST orders show what treatments you want *now*, in your **current state of health**. It is important to have a POLST if you do not want all emergency treatments.



## **Should I have a POLST?**

POLST is for those with serious illness – such as advanced heart disease, advanced lung disease, or cancer that has spread. Or for someone who is older and frail, and may not want to go to the intensive care unit.

POLST is not for everyone. Most 65-year-olds are too healthy to have a POLST form. In a medical emergency, most healthy seniors would want everything done while more was learned about what was wrong and their chances of recovery. These healthy seniors should have an Advance Directive.



## **What is an Advance Directive?**

Oregon's Advance Directive is the legal document that allows you to choose a Health Care Representative – someone to make health care decisions for you if you are unable to speak for yourself. It also allows you to write down your wishes for care and life-sustaining treatments.

To learn more about Advance Directives visit: [oregonhealthdecisions.org](http://oregonhealthdecisions.org) or [caringinfo.org](http://caringinfo.org)

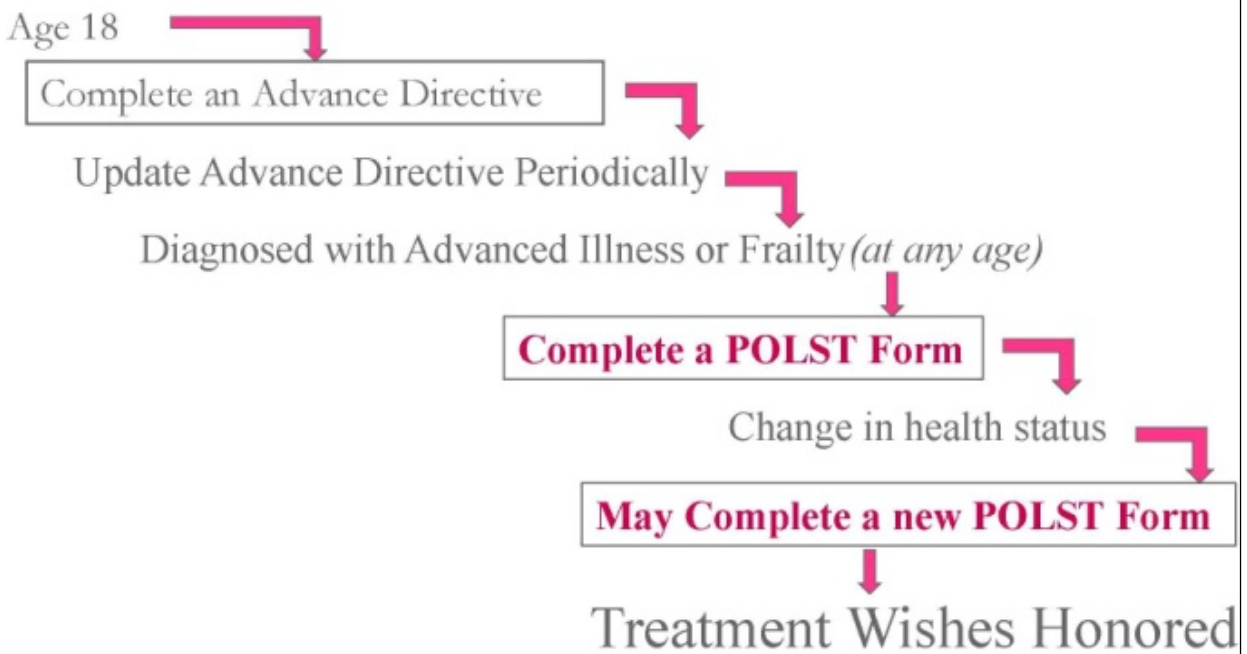
## **How do an Advance Directive and POLST work together?**

Healthy people should have an Advance Directive to document future wishes. When you are sicker or more frail, you – or the person you have appointed in your Advance Directive – should consider the right time to have a POLST form.



# HOW ADVANCE DIRECTIVES AND POLST WORK TOGETHER

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## Why have a POLST Form?

When you are seriously ill or frail, a POLST Form gives you and your loved ones confidence that you will receive the treatments you want, and avoid the treatments you do not want.

You can really lift a burden from those you love by completing an Advance Directive and, if appropriate, a POLST Form.



## **Who completes & signs a POLST Form?**

Together, you and your health care professional have a conversation and complete your POLST Form based on your treatment wishes. If you are unable to speak for yourself, your representative can speak on your behalf.

Because the POLST Form contains medical orders, it must be signed by a physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant. You may discuss your wishes with a social worker or nurse who may help you complete the form and then have it signed.

## **What if I change my mind?**

If your wishes change, talk with your health care professional so a new POLST can be completed.

## **What is Oregon's POLST Registry?**

The POLST Registry is a secure database of Oregon POLST forms that can be quickly accessed by health care professionals in a crisis. You can choose to be a part of the registry or opt out. Visit [www.orpolstregistry.org](http://www.orpolstregistry.org) for more information.





POLST is for the seriously ill and frail, **not** all adults.

POLST is a medical order that emergency staff follow in a medical crisis.

POLST describes your wishes about medical treatments based on your *current* state of health.

POLST goes where you go – home, hospital or long-term care facility.

### **To Learn More . . .**

Ask your doctor, nurse practitioner or physician assistant.

Visit [www.or.polst.org](http://www.or.polst.org) to view the “Understanding POLST” video and to learn more about POLST.

### **Developed by the Oregon POLST Task Force**

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