

**National POLST Paradigm  
Initiative Task Force**

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August 5, 2013

Julie Goldstein, MD  
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Dear Dr. Goldstein:

Thank you and your Illinois POLST colleagues for your time and effort in discussing the National POLST Paradigm Task Force (NPPTF) Endorsed POLST Program form requirements with Woody Moss, MD, Vice Chair of NPPTF and Amy Vandenbroucke, JD, Executive Director, NPPTF. We appreciate all your work to develop a POLST Paradigm Program in Illinois.

As you know, the NPPTF was created in 2004 to establish quality standards for POLST programs. The NPPTF endorses states that have proved their program falls within those standards. While the NPPTF avoids updating these standards frequently, they are periodically reviewed and updated based on NPPTF member experiences in their own states, quality reviews, and research regarding POLST forms and programs. Further, as you are aware, the NPPTF has recently decided to distinguish certain states as states with "Programs that do not conform to POLST requirements" when the state is implementing a POLST program that does not adhere to the POLST standards created by the NPPTF. This distinction is important as the POLST Paradigm Program gains more and more national attention and, therefore, is more subject to negative attacks.

You asked the NPPTF Executive Committee to review the current Illinois POLST form that you submitted (attached) and decide whether Illinois could be grandfathered in as "endorsed" given the Illinois requirement that the POLST form comply with NPPTF standards for endorsement or, failing that, that the NPPTF continue to identify Illinois as "developing" as opposed to a program not adhering to POLST requirements.

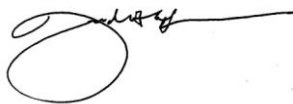
The NPPTF Executive Committee met on June 27, 2013 and considered the Illinois form, as well as the Illinois laws, history of the Illinois form, and other information you had provided to Amy and Woody. The Committee decided the following:

- (1) The “Do Not Resuscitate” and “Advance Directive” language needs to be removed from both the title and border of the form in order for Illinois to continue to be listed as “developing” on the national POLST Paradigm Program map. The NPPTF Executive Committee has serious concerns that the words “Do Not Resuscitate” in the title may be misinterpreted and lead to medical errors in patient care in Illinois. Patients who want CPR may be denied it because the Emergency Department physician or Emergency Medical Services provider did not read the order for CPR in Section A of the form after noting that the title of the form is UNIFORM DO-NOT-RESUSCITATE (DNR) ADVANCE DIRECTIVE.
- (2) The witnessing requirements do not comply with the NPPTF endorsement requirements but the Committee notes that Illinois law requires such a signature. With respect to the work that has been done relying on the previous endorsement requirements and the collaboration the Illinois coalition has with the NPPTF, the Committee agreed that such witnessing requirement will not prevent Illinois from obtaining endorsement status from NPPTF. The Committee expects that Illinois will work towards changing this element of the law. The rationale behind the new endorsement criteria prohibiting forms to have witness or notary requirements is twofold: first, having such requirements creates confusion with advance directive documents and, second, this was another way to ensure POLST forms are viewed as *medical orders*, which don’t require patient or surrogate, much less witness or notary, signatures.

The Committee encourages Illinois to work towards endorsement and to work with the NPPTF to help. When Illinois is ready it can submit its endorsement application form and schedule time with the Consultation Committee to obtain an endorsement recommendation.

Please let us know if you believe you can address the above concerns in a timely manner (roughly six months). If not, Illinois will be listed as a program not conforming to the NPPTF requirements. If you have any questions or would like additional clarification, please contact Amy Vandembroucke at [vandenbr@ohsu.edu](mailto:vandenbr@ohsu.edu) or (503) 494-9550.

Sincerely,



Judy Citko, JD  
Chair, National POLST Paradigm Task Force



Amy Vandembroucke, JD  
Executive Directive, National POLST Paradigm Task Force

Enclosure



