

# National POLST

## Forum Topic of the Month

We're participating in a 3-year communications project funded by The John A. Hartford Foundation: "Building Public Engagement and Access to Palliative and End-of-Life Care." We have a draft posted we'd appreciate comments on. [Join the conversation.](#)

*About the Forum:* This is not a patient or caregiver forum. The National POLST Forum is a closed online discussion board for POLST advocates and health care professionals participating in their state POLST Program (active programs only). To request access, email [info@polst.org](mailto:info@polst.org), giving us your full name, title/organization and state in which you practice.



## Featured News



### National POLST introduces new logo and branding.

Out with the old and in with the new! With a new logo, we've simplified our name and modernized our look, formally establishing branding changes. We are now "National POLST" rather than the "National POLST Paradigm." Remember: National POLST stopped using POLST as an acronym, instead referring to POLST as portable medical orders. [See why and learn more here.](#)



### Nursing home advance care planning program expands.

Indiana University scientists Kathleen Unroe, MD, MHA, and Susan Hickman, PhD, led a team in developing an intervention called the Advance Care Specialist Program. [Regenstrief Institute](#) researcher Wanzhu Tu, PhD, is also a co-investigator on the project. The program specially trains members of the nursing facility staff to educate other employees and implement procedures to support advance care planning for people living in the facility. The research team worked collaboratively with leaders from three partner companies who own and run nursing facilities to create and refine this program which is now expanding to multiple states. [Learn more.](#)

## Featured Resource



### Register for upcoming webinar about POLST Registries.

On Wednesday, January 8, [Chelsey Patten](#), DBE, will present a webinar making a case for the creation of POLST registries by exploring the limitations of the electronic health record in capturing details related to POLST and advance directives. Dr. Patten serves on the Illinois POLST Committee, is the Director of the Illinois POLST Registry Subcommittee, and serves as a National POLST representative on the Technology Committee. [Register now.](#)

## Featured Publications: A closer look at DNRs



### Health care professionals' understanding of DNR.

"What's in a Do-Not-Resuscitate Order? Understanding the Impact on Pre-arrest Life Support and Factors Influencing Misconceptions," published in the *Journal of General Internal Medicine* describes a study that examined whether the specialty and background of a health care professional affected their understanding of DNR. Nurses and those in surgical specialties were found to have the least accurate understanding of DNR, inappropriately conflating DNR with limiting treatment in non-acute situations. The study

authors Charoonratana et al. concluded that "hospital systems should consider designing systems that separate code status from orders for pre-arrest care, following the distinction seen in POLST forms." [View article](#) (limited access).



## Do communication interventions help patients understand DNR?

"Association of Communication Interventions to Discuss Code Status With Patient Decisions for Do-Not-Resuscitate Orders," published in *JAMA Open Network* describes a review of 15 randomized clinical trials to see if communication interventions were effective in educating patients about life-sustaining treatments and if they influenced patient decisions about DNR preferences. Generally, conversations with patients improved their understanding of life-sustaining treatments and CPR. However, video-only interventions sometimes had a negative effect, thought by the authors Becker et al. to be a possible outcome of such videos being less personal and less interactive. POLST was referenced as "medical decision system" that could be integrated with communication interventions to help "improve the uniformity of clinical care and strengthen patient involvement in the decision process." [View article](#) (open access).

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## National POLST Paradigm News in Brief

### National POLST News Briefs

#### National POLST presenting at conferences in 2020.

(1) [American Health Lawyers Association's Long Term Care & the Law](#) (March 2-4, 2020). Karl Steinberg and Amy Vandenbroucke will present "Avoiding the Deadly POLST Sins." on March 4, 9:40-10:40 am. (Thank you, Charlie Sabatino, for such a catchy title—it has been helpful with many conferences! Read Charlie's original *ABA Bifocal* article, "[POLST: Avoid the Seven Deadly Sins.](#)")

(2) [AMDAs Annual Conference](#) (April 2-5, 2020). Kevin Henning and Amy Vandenbroucke will present "Conversations: The Cornerstone of the POLST Paradigm and all Advance Care Planning" on April 4 at 4-5:30 pm.

### Industry Collaborations

**Respecting Choices® is newly collaborating with WiserCare**, a scalable, digital advance care planning platform, resulting in [WiserCare's](#) ability to present an advance care planning experience compatible with the [Respecting Choices® First Steps®](#) advance care planning program. Questions? Reach out to Tom Poole [tompoole@wisercare.com](mailto:tompoole@wisercare.com) or Matthew Isbell [misbell@respectingchoices.org](mailto:misbell@respectingchoices.org).

**Vynca and PatientPing are collaborating.** [Vynca](#) is an advance care planning software platform that has been integrated with POLST in many states across the U.S. [PatientPing](#) is a care collaboration platform. [View the press release.](#)

### Leadership Opportunities

**Apply for Sojourns Scholar Leadership Program** - The [Cambria Health Foundation](#) has opened the Sojourns® Scholar Leadership Program application cycle for 2020. Individuals from around the country including physicians, nurses, social workers, physician assistants, chaplains, psychologists, pharmacists and other health system leaders are encouraged to apply for this program, which is designed to identify, cultivate and advance the next generation of palliative care leaders. Letter of Intent due February 21, 2020. [Read more.](#)

**Health and Aging Policy Fellows Program** information sessions begin soon. Open to professionals in all disciplines and at all career stages, the [Health and Aging Policy Fellows Program](#) provides skills, content, and hands-on experience to be able to offer policy solutions to the health challenges of an increasingly aging population and the barriers to the health care system that serves them. [See how to apply.](#) *Information sessions are:* December 18, 2019 from 4 to 5 pm; January 21, 2020 from 4 to 5 pm; February 27, 2020 from noon to 1 pm; March 11, 2020 from 4 to 5 pm; and April 3, 2020 from noon to 1 pm. RSVP to [hapfell@nyspi.columbia.edu](mailto:hapfell@nyspi.columbia.edu).

### Continuing Education

**The Center to Advance Palliative Care is offering two free online courses to all clinicians:** *An In-Depth Look At Palliative Care And Its Services* and *Supporting the Caregivers of People Living with Dementia.* [Learn more.](#)

Is this newsletter helpful? We want it to be! [Email us to let us know](#) if you have any ideas on what else we could include to make it even more useful and informative to you.



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