

### What is POLST?

POLST is a process that helps identify a patient's wishes regarding medical treatment through conversation, after which the patient's treatment wishes are documented as a portable medical order, called a POLST Form. There are 16 names for POLST (MOLST, MOST, POST, etc.) so your state may use call it something else (see [www.polst.org/map](http://www.polst.org/map), bottom of the page). Read more: [Overview of POLST](#).

### Is POLST available everywhere?

No. It is up to each state to develop a POLST Program and some are just getting started. Check with your state contact to see if it is available where you are (go to [www.polst.org/map](http://www.polst.org/map) and click on your state).

### What patients are appropriate for POLST?

POLST is appropriate for patients who are considered to be at risk for a life-threatening clinical event because they have a serious life-limiting medical condition, which may include advanced frailty. See [here](#) more information and examples.

**NOTE:** Even if the patient falls within this definition their medical condition or treatment preferences may be too complex for POLST. POLST forms are intended to help the majority of patients in this population.

*Healthy patients* should be encouraged to complete an advance directive ([How POLST Differs from Advance Directives](#))

### How is a POLST completed?

The patient and his/her health care professional discuss the patient's goals of care considering their current diagnosis, prognosis, and treatment options (including risks and benefits of each) and then make decisions about the patient's goal of treatment and what treatments he/she would want to receive right now if something happened.

### Who signs a POLST form?

In almost all states physicians, nurse practitioners and physician assistants. [See what applies in your state.](#)

### Can a POLST form be required?

NO. Forcing completion violates patient self-determination, informed consent and principles of person and family-centered care. Patients have a right to participate in medical decision-making regarding their treatment plan.

### Can an out-of-state POLST form be honored?

Generally yes, so long as it is valid (with required signatures and dates). Check with your state contact to confirm (look up at [www.polst.org/map](http://www.polst.org/map); click on your state contacts).

### Can a POLST form be signed electronically?

It varies by state. Refer to the [CMS emergency waiver on telemedicine for support.](#)

### Where can POLST forms be obtained?

Forms are state specific. Go to [www.polst.org/map](http://www.polst.org/map) and click on your state to find either who to contact or the website with information about how to order forms.

### Are verbal orders valid?

It varies by facility but generally yes. They should be signed by an appropriate provider as soon as possible.

### Are there patient resources to provide?

Yes. There are two national patient guides for POLST: [Getting Ready for Conversation](#) and [How to Interpret Your POLST](#)