

RESOURCES | POLST FACTS FOR NONCLINICAL STAFF

Details: the POLST form

- Documents a patient's wishes for medical treatment during serious illness
- Must include physician signature and patient or decisionmaker signature
- Accompanies a patient during transfer between home, hospital, Skilled Nursing Facility, and Assisted Living Facility/Residential Care Facility for the Elderly
- Ideally is printed on Ultra pink, 65 pound bond paper, but POLST printed or FAXed in any color is valid

Managing the POLST form

- POLST should be kept in a plastic sleeve, which can also include a copy of the patient's Advance Healthcare Directive
- File a copy of the POLST in the medical record or scan into Electronic Medical Record (EMR), usually in the "Advance Directive" section of chart
- The POLST can be revised. If the POLST is changed, "VOID" is written across the old copy, with signature and date. The voided POLST is then placed in the medical record or EMR.
- The new, current POLST, on pink paper, is sent with the patient at the time of POLST completion or discharge. A copy of the current POLST document is placed in the medical record or scanned into the EMR.

What if the POLST form is misplaced?

- If the pink POLST form becomes separated from the patient (i.e. the pink POLST is found with medical records for filing), contact either the patient or the facility the patient was transferred to, and arrange for delivery of POLST.
- If the patient arrives at a medical facility without the pink POLST, a fax or copy of POLST on any color paper is legal and valid.

Getting the Physician's Signature

If a Home Health or Hospice Nurse arrives at the medical office requesting the physician signature for a POLST, please expedite contact with the physician for signature. The signed POLST form should be re-united with the patient as soon as possible.

POLST forms are available at www.caPOLST.org