National POLST Collaborative

Quarterly Newsletter

October 2026

President's Message



It is an honor and a privilege to serve as the President of the National POLST Collaborative for the next two years. I look forward to continuing the strong legacy of our previous presidents, and am particularly grateful to our outgoing president, Dr. Susan Nelson, for her extraordinary leadership. Under Dr. Nelson's guidance, we welcomed Jeanette May and her team at MaySquare, established ourselves as an independent 501(c)(3), updated the National POLST Form, completed a major overhaul of our website, and held our first in-person conference in many years – just to name a few of her most important accomplishments.

As Dr. Nelson did in her outgoing message, I would also like to thank our outgoing Board members: Judy Thomas, Vicki Buchda, and Cindy Munn. In addition, I'd like to welcome our new Board members:

- Wendy Davis - Quality Improvement Facilitator - Outcomes Clinical Advancement and Patient Safety (CAPS), Carilion Clinic, Virginia
- Chelsey Patten - Assistant Professor & Director of Clinical Ethics at the University of Colorado Center for Bioethics & Humanities
- Kandyce Powell - Executive Director at Maine Hospice Council and Center for End of Life Care
- Hilary Walker - Occupational Therapist in Acute Care, ICU, Skilled Nursing, and Home Health Provider; Washington POLST

I, along with our continuing Board members, look forward to working alongside our newest colleagues.

As we discussed during our recent all member meeting, I'd like to highlight my priorities for the remainder of 2026 and through 2027:

- Maintaining financial security and sustainability through continued development of strategic partnerships and growth of the member model. We are thrilled to count 20 states as well as one organization and six individuals as members at this time.
- Strengthening the value of membership through enhanced web resources and guidance documents, sharing of best practices, a robust webinar schedule (including our upcoming Advance Care Planning and POLST in Long-Term Care webinar on October 7th!), and a virtual conference later in 2027.
- Convening our Industry Advisory Board and working with these experts to ensure we are well positioned to meet our goal of increased availability of the POLST process, and portability and accessibility of the resulting POLST form.

- Continued website improvement and refinements.
- I'm also looking forward to integrating additional priorities into this plan as identified in our upcoming member survey.

Again, thank you for your trust and your partnership. I look forward to a productive and meaningful two-year term.

Most Sincerely,

Matthew Kestenbaum, MD, FAAHPM
President, National POLST Collaborative



Technology Committee Webinar Series Begins October 14th



The Technology Committee is launching a webinar series to help organizations strengthen advance care planning (ACP) technology and improve access to ACP documents across healthcare settings. The series will share practical strategies, encourage knowledge sharing, and support collaboration across states and healthcare organizations.

Join us for the first webinar, ***Navigating POLST and Advance Care Planning Technology: Uploading, Accessing, and Ensuring Privacy***, on October 14th, 2026, at 11:00 AM PT.

The session will explore secure document uploading and management, privacy and HIPAA compliance, and timely access for first responders. Participants will also learn from case studies of effective data management strategies.

Presenters:

- Abby L. Dotson, Ph.D. - Director, Oregon POLST Registry; Associate Professor, OHSU Emergency Medicine
- Robert Cothren - Principal, A Cunning Plan; Technology Advisor, POLST

Register Now!

Please share this webinar with colleagues and others involved in advance care planning, POLST, health information technology, or emergency care. Help us bring more perspectives into the conversation!

Education Committee Hosts Successful First Webinar

The Education Committee hosted its first webinar, *Advance Care Planning and POLST in Long-Term Care*, on October 7th, with a great turnout!



Presented by Karl Steinberg, MD, CMD, FPALTC; Annette Meares, DNP, RN, HEC-C; and KJ Page, RNC, LNHA, the session explored how advance care planning helps ensure care reflects what matters most to each resident. Topics included the differences between Advance Directives and POLST, appropriate candidates for each, and practical ways to incorporate these tools into long-term care. The presenters also highlighted the role of interdisciplinary teams in supporting implementation.

Thank you to our presenters and everyone who joined us! Stay tuned for details about the committee's next webinar.

The committee also continues to advance educational resources nationwide.

Current projects include reviewing and implementing a Learning Management System, developing POLST Pearls with concise practical insights, and expanding educational guidance related to the new POLST form.

Three subcommittees support this work:

- Long-Term Care Education: Supporting education through the POLST in Long-Term Care Education Survey and webinars.
- Resources Review: Evaluating NPC's existing web-based materials and identifying opportunities to strengthen nationwide learning resources.
- POLST Education Modules: Collaborating with Erik Fromme on guidance and modules for the new POLST form, while reviewing state-based resources for best practices and alignment.

Committee Members

- Paula Sanders, Chair; Susan Nelson; Hillary Walker; Kim Callanan; Erik Fromme; Christine McMichael; Jeanette Koijane; Robyn Axel-Adams; Paul Drager; Annette Meares; Lorie Weber; and Rebecca Gruszkos.

Call for Committee Volunteers: Technology and 2027 Conference Planning

Interested in getting more involved?

Complete the committee interest form below.

Committee Interest Form



California POLST Updates Signed into Law: October 21 Webinar

Governor Gavin Newsom has signed SB 1088, updating California's POLST and prehospital do-not-resuscitate (DNR) statutes. The law takes effect January 1, 2027.

The Coalition for Compassionate Care of California (CCCC) will discuss these changes during its Public Policy Roundup on October 21, 2026. The webinar will also cover other California legislation affecting serious illness care, implementation of new hospice regulations, and federal policy shifts affecting hospice and palliative care.

This event is open to CCCC members only.

View details and register, or **learn about CCCC membership**.

Become a Member of NPC

We invite state programs, organizations, and individuals to become members of the National POLST Collaborative. Renewal year starts July 1st. When you join National POLST, you're not only supporting our work - you're gaining access to a wealth of resources, networking opportunities, discounts on trainings, advocacy updates, recognition on our website, and more. State members have voting privileges. Learn more at **POLST.org**

- State Programs: $1,000 annually
- Organizational Membership: $1,500 annually
- Individual Membership: $200 annually

Become A Member

Delaware Advances POLST Form Update and Statewide ACP Integration

Delaware has updated its form to align with the National POLST form. The new Delaware POLST form is expected to take effect in the first quarter of 2027, following establishment of new regulations.

A funded partnership is also moving forward with a multiyear rollout of an integrated, statewide advance care planning (ACP) and POLST system. Partners include the state, Delaware's health information exchange, health systems, payors, and

MyDirectives. The initiative combines education and training with electronic health record integration across care settings, including emergency care.



From Completed POLST to Accessible Medical Order

Provided by MyDirectives, an NPC sponsor.

Completing a POLST form with a clinician helps turn a person's goals of care and treatment preferences into medical orders. But those orders can guide care only if they are available when needed. A paper form on the refrigerator or a document stored in one organization's EHR may be difficult to find when a person moves between home, EMS, a hospital, and post-acute care, or even when the person is simply away from home at the grocery store.

As states modernize POLST, MOLST, and similar portable medical orders, digital creation is only part of the answer. Orders also need to be kept current and accessible to medical teams and EMS wherever the person may find themselves when the documents are needed. At MyDirectives, we're passionately working with state health information organizations, health systems, POLST and MOLST programs, and healthcare associations to connect digital portable medical order form creation with secure exchange and clinical workflows. We're making progress. Success will mean medical orders travel with the patient, so emergency medical teams and EMS can find and honor them when seconds count and minutes matter.

Learn More

StickyJ Medical ID: Helping First Responders Access POLST and DNR Forms

Provided by StickyJ, an NPC sponsor.

StickyJ Medical ID is a leading provider of POLST and DNR identification products for residents in all 50 states. Its customizable offerings include custom engraved bracelets, pendants, and aluminum wallet cards, as well as advanced QR code options that give first responders immediate smartphone access to a patient's POLST or DNR form. Based in Seminole, Florida, StickyJ Medical has provided a broad range of medical identification jewelry—including designs with safety clasps—for more than 26 years. The company's medical ID bracelets are made from 100% surgical-grade stainless steel for corrosion resistance and hypoallergenic performance. Learn more at **StickyJ.com**.

Learn More

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