



POLST vs Advance Health Care Directive ***for Medical Providers***

POLST (Providers Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment)**

- A POLST is not for everyone
- Used when patient has a serious health condition (terminally ill/severe chronic illness) with limited life expectancy
- Contains medical orders that lets healthcare providers, including paramedics, know what medical care patient wants or does not want. Takes effect as soon as it is signed.
- Must be signed by a physician or nurse practitioner. Review choices with patient

AHCD (Advance Health Care Directive)

- Everyone 18 and older should have an AHCD
- Provides instructions for end-of-life care when the patient cannot communicate
- Used to plan for an unforeseeable health care crisis sometime in the future
- Names a Health Care Power of Attorney (Agent)

**** A patient with a POLST should also have an AHCD.**

	POLST	ADVANCE HEALTH CARE DIRECTIVE
Type of Document	Medical Order	Legal Document
Who Should Have One	Any seriously ill or frail individual (regardless of age) with limited life expectancy	All competent adults, 18 or older
Who Completes the Document	Physician or Nurse Practitioner	Individual
What Document Communicates	Specific medical orders	General end-of-life treatment wishes
Does this Document Appoint a Health Care Power of Attorney/Agent?	No	Yes
Can Emergency Personnel Follow this Document	Yes	No
Ease in Locating/Portability	Provider Responsibility: Patient has original; copy in patient's medical record. Transferrable to all healthcare settings.	Patient/Family Responsibility: No set location. Patient must make sure Health Care Agents have most recent version
Periodic Review	Health care professional responsible for reviewing with patient	Patient is responsible for periodically reviewing