



COALITION FOR COMPASSIONATE CARE OF CALIFORNIA



Earn up to  
**11**  
CE/CME  
Credits!

*A New Era in POLST Education,  
Process, and Implementation*

# POLST CHAMPION CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

**POLST**  
CALIFORNIA

PHYSICIAN ORDERS FOR LIFE-SUSTAINING TREATMENT

# Is Your Organization Ready for the California Statewide POLST Electronic Registry Launch?



Since 2009, **POLST (Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment)** has been the gold standard tool for discussing, documenting, and communicating treatment wishes of persons with serious illness.

In 2021, the state of California authorized funding to establish a statewide POLST electronic registry (eRegistry) so that creating and retrieving POLST from any location is faster and easier.

The Coalition for Compassionate Care of California (CCCC) and the California Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA) have been close partners in the POLST program and eRegistry development.

## POLST KNOWLEDGE DEFICIENCIES

A recent survey conducted by CCCC and EMSA, with more than 3,600 statewide respondents representing a wide variety of clinical disciplines and healthcare settings, demonstrated that California healthcare professionals continue to struggle with POLST knowledge and process.

**Across all disciplines and settings, the average percentage of correct responses fell below 50% for 11 of 19 questions and below 5% for 4. Only one question received an average percentage of correct answers above 70%.**

*The success of the POLST eRegistry depends on healthcare professionals and organizations being competent and compliant with POLST standards and processes.*

## POLST CHAMPION CERTIFICATE

To address these deficiencies and provide opportunities for comprehensive or refresher education, CCCC offers a comprehensive certificate program to train and support POLST CHAMPIONS to serve as their organization's or community's POLST expert.

### WHY?

The state of California will soon launch a statewide POLST eRegistry; in preparation for this launch, each healthcare organization across the state should have a qualified POLST Champion expert to guide implementation.

### WHO?

The POLST Champion can be any clinician working primarily with patients with serious illness who would benefit from discussing, documenting, and communicating preferences for treatment in the POLST medical order set. Signing providers – MD/DO, NP, or PA – are especially appropriate for this role.

The **POLST Champion Certificate program** includes:

- 10 online training modules
- In-person skills training
- Examination
- Ongoing support/coaching and community
- Certificate continuation requirements

*Once completed, the Certificate is valid for 3 years. For individuals just wanting to increase their POLST competency, the online training modules are also available "à la carte."*



## ONLINE TOPICS MODULES

POLST Topics Modules cover key components of the POLST process, purpose, form, validity, content, signatures, and legal requirements. Offered live to start, they will also be recorded and available for on-demand access.

**Each module is 30 minutes, including didactic content and a real-world case study by a POLST expert. A summary of relevant questions and answers is provided for review.**

**POLST 101:** Overview of POLST history, process, and form requirements and utilization for all sectors and disciplines.

**POLST Eligibility/Appropriateness:** Why use POLST and with whom (including minors); when NOT to use POLST and what to use instead to document code status. *Case study by Karl Steinberg, MD, CMD, Stone Mountain Medical Associates.*

**POLST Form:** What makes a POLST valid; section-by-section content; who can complete/how to complete; signatures/signers; managing the form; reviewing and revising. *Case study by Vincent Nguyen, DO, Hoag Hospital.*

**POLST and Other Advance Medical Directives:** Relationship between POLST, prehospital DNR, AHCD; what does each do/not do; when to use which form; which form takes precedence when; rules around honoring the directives.

*Case study by John Tastad, MA, Coordinator, Advance Care Planning program, Sharp HealthCare.*

**POLST and Legally Recognized Decision Makers/Surrogates:** Who qualifies as a legally recognized decision maker for POLST; limits of their authority; when they can sign POLST; when they can revise or override POLST. *Case study by Sarah Hooper, JD, Executive Director of the UCSF/UC Law SF Consortium on Law, Science & Health Policy.*

**POLST for Incapacitated/Unrepresented Patients:** Determining incapacity; seeking a surrogate; requesting a PPR for a SNF resident; convening an IDT for a SNF resident; signatures for a SNF resident; process for incapacitated/unrepresented patients in the hospital. *Case study by Yarin Ascencio, MSW, Office of the Long-Term Care Patient Representative*

**POLST for Minors:** How/when to use POLST for pediatric (infants, children, and teens) patients. *Case study by Christy Torkildson, PhD, RN, PHN, FPCN, HEC-C.*

**POLST and Cultural/Religious Sensitivity:** Communicating with non-English speaking patients; interpreter vs. family member; using POLST translations; treatment choices in cultural/religious contexts. *Case study by Sandy Chen Stokes, Executive Director, Chinese American Coalition for Compassionate Care.*



## ONLINE SETTING-SPECIFIC MODULES

These modules focus on implementation of POLST in different healthcare settings. Each is one hour (30 minutes didactic content; 15-minute case study with examples of real-life situations presented by an expert; 15 minutes Q&A). **Certificate participants must complete two of these: one for the setting in which they are working and one “adjacent” setting:** e.g., SNF and EMS; Hospital ED and Hospital Inpatient; Specialty Care/Palliative Care, etc. Settings include:

- EMS/first responders
- Home Health
- Hospice
- Hospital Emergency Department
- Hospital inpatient
- Palliative Care
- Skilled Nursing Facility
- Primary Care/Specialty Care

## IN-PERSON POLST SKILLS TRAINING

After completing the online modules, Certificate participants must attend this full day, hands-on training, which concentrates on the POLST conversation: techniques for introducing POLST, determining capacity, describing the treatment choices, eliciting values, answering questions, identifying qualified surrogates, completing and managing the form, and more. Participants receive abundant materials to support their role as POLST Champion. Dates for in-person trainings are posted on the CCCC website.

### Examination

Conducted at the In-Person Skills Training, this 50-question test will cover all aspects of the POLST online training modules and skills day. Participants must achieve at least an 80%-correct score to pass.

## CERTIFICATE CONTINUATION REQUIREMENTS

To maintain POLST Champion status, participants must:

- Participate in at least 3 bi-monthly “Office Hours”/year
- Report 1x/year on POLST Champion activities: education provided, questions or issues that have come up, QA/QI projects, etc.
- Complete 6 hours of POLST or POLST-related education over the 3 years, which can include hours of POLST presentations GIVEN as well as education RECEIVED.



## PROGRAM DETAILS AND PRICING

### POLST Champion Certificate Program

Participants must complete all elements of the program:

- 8 Online Topics Modules (4 CE/CME; for live/virtual or recorded; recorded versions, available late Spring, 2025)
- 2 Online Setting-Specific Trainings (2 CE/CME; live/virtual or recorded)
- In-Person Skills Training and Materials (5 CE/CME)
- Examination

Also included:

- Bimonthly Office Hours & Online Community Forum (optional)
- Certificate Continuation Recordkeeping

**\$669 CCCC Member; \$799 Non-member**

3 or more registrations from the same organization at the same time:

**\$500/pp CCCC Member; \$630/pp Non-member**

### Certificate Renewal

After 3 years, participants must meet the requirements of Certificate Continuation and pass a renewal examination.

**\$99 CCCC Member; \$149 Non-member**

## À LA CARTE PRICING

### Online Topics Modules

Individual Module Registrations (no CE):  
**\$29 Member; \$39 Non-member**

Series Registration (8 trainings; 4 CE/CME):  
**\$209 CCCC Member; \$279 Non-member**

### Online Setting-Specific Modules

Individual Module Registrations (1 CE/CME per module):  
**\$49 CCCC Member; \$59 Non-member**

## OFFICE HOURS

All successful POLST Champions will be eligible to attend regular bimonthly Zoom calls in which to discuss questions that have come up and discuss answers; consider "tough" POLST cases; and share resources. Includes access to an online closed community discussion forum.

**Note:** In-Person Skills Training, Exam, and Office Hours are only open to POLST Champion Certificate participants.

## NOT A MEMBER OF CCCC?

[Join or renew now at www.coalitionccc.org](http://www.coalitionccc.org)

Individual Membership is just \$125!

Interested in membership for your organization?

Call 916-489-2222

or email [Info@CoalitionCCC.org](mailto:Info@CoalitionCCC.org)

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