

National POLST

Forum Topic of the Quarter



Introducing Abby Dotson, PhD.

Dr. Abby Dotson is the Executive Director for the National POLST Collaborative, Director of the Oregon POLST Registry (OPR), Director of Operations for Oregon's HERO Kids Registry and a Research Assistant Professor of Emergency Medicine at Oregon Health and Science University. Her National POLST efforts are focused on providing best practice guidance about the POLST process, technology, and form, as well as education throughout the U.S. In her role at OPR, Abby oversees the operations and ongoing technology development of the secure, statewide digital health platform that allows healthcare professionals treating patients access to their portable medical orders. Abby recently spearheaded a program-wide rebuild of OPR's technology and operations, resulting in Oregon's first-ever POLST Registry healthcare provider portal and EMS mobile application allowing providers and first responders electronic access to the OPR database. As a Research Assistant Professor, Abby conducts and supports serious illness care research centered around POLST use and outcomes and is passionate about using data to drive healthcare policy and education.

From the President



It's been an eventful year for the National POLST Collaborative! We have transformed our governance structure from the previous Plenary Assembly and Leadership Council to that of a traditional Board of Directors, with subject matter experts as advisors, [Meet our Board Members HERE](#). For sustainability reasons, we have initiated a membership model for State POLST programs, and currently have almost half of the State programs as active, dues-paying members, for which we are very grateful. For State programs that are having difficulties procuring funding for the membership fees, NPC will try to work with you to help figure out ways to find them. NPC wants to be as inclusive as possible and our goal is 100% membership.

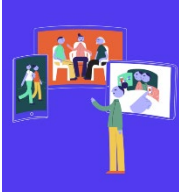
We've also modified our charter (previously bylaws) and are in the process of finalizing our [mission, vision, and values](#). Our committees are being restructured and we are actively looking for new, enthusiastic committee members. Here's a list of our current committees: Technology Committee, Education Committee, Advisors' Council, POLST Form Review Committee, and the POLST Research, Quality and Assurance Committee. We're also very excited about our ongoing collaboration with the Message Lab (see below) and the great work being done in that venue, thanks to the John A. Hartford Foundation and Cambia.

I want to thank each and every one of our supporters, and encourage you all to stay engaged within your State and with the National POLST Collaborative. All of us who strive to ensure that seriously ill people get to make informed decisions about the treatments they want and don't want, and that these conversations get translated into actionable, portable orders, must continue to work together to promote that goal. Please consider making a charitable donation to support our work (see below). Wishing all of you a festive, joy-filled holiday season and a healthy, successful and generally fabulous 2024! And looking forward to growing and amplifying our work in 2024 and the years to come.

Please Support the NPC!

The work of the National **POLST** Collaborative depends on donations to keep going. Please consider donating to the NPC during this holiday season! [The donation link can be found HERE](#). Thanks to our philanthropy partner, **Ochsner Health**, for providing our non-profit accounting services.

Featured Resource



Message Lab and the National **POLST Collaborative.** NPC is proud to be a collaborating participant in the Message Lab. This is an ongoing project supported by **The John A. Hartford Foundation** and Cambia Foundation and led by Anthony Back, MD, of the University of Washington, and Marian Grant DNP, ACNP-BC, ACHPN, FPCN, FAAN. The project, which includes many influential organizations including CAPC, AAHPM, AMDA, NHPCO, NCHPC, C-TAC, Ariadne Labs, VitalTalk, Respecting Choices, is tasked with working with others to develop and test messaging principles and guidance that effectively spur conversations about the kind of care a person with serious illness would want to receive. The goal of this work is to align empirical research findings about what the public is interested in hearing with the way our field talks about serious illness and end-of-life care—and do it with maximum flexibility for individual sectors to use their own vocabulary. Please check out this remarkable resource and feel free to “steal” the ideas contained on the refreshingly creative, forward-thinking website. [Read more HERE](#)

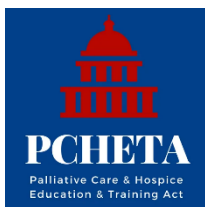
Featured News



National **POLST Collaborative Evolves.** AMDA Caring for the Ages: Partner Perspective by NPC Board Member and Immediate Past Executive Director, Kim Callanan. [Download the full article HERE](#)



NPC leaders featured on the GeriPal Podcast: **POLST Evidence and Update:** Kelly Vranas, Abby Dotson, Karl Steinberg, and Scott Halpern. [Listen HERE](#)



The National **POLST** Collaborative is a proud supporter of the Palliative Care and Hospice Education Training Act (PCHETA), S.2243, a bipartisan bill to improve the lives of patients with serious illness and their care partners.

If enacted, this bill would: create a national public education campaign for patients and health care teams about palliative care-its availability and benefits including the use of **POLST**, expand federal support of research around palliative care including better treatments for pain and other symptoms, and the use of **POLST**, and establish and expand training programs in palliative care for doctors and the other

members of the healthcare team.

Featured Research



Changes Over Time in POLST Use and Content by Race and Ethnicity Among California Nursing Home Residents. Neil Wenger, et al. Journal of the American Geriatrics Society, Volume 71, Issue 9, pages 2779-2787 (September 2023). doi: 10.1111/jgs.18374. [Read the article HERE](#)



Relationship of POLST to Hospitalization and ICU Care Among Nursing Home Residents in California. Neil Wenger, et al. Journal of General Internal Medicine. DOI: 10.1007/s11606-023-08357-3. [Read the article HERE](#).



A Quality Improvement Initiative to Increase Documentation of Preferences for Life-Sustaining Treatment in Hospitalized Adults. Kathleen Drago, et al. Jt Comm J Qual Patient Saf. 2023 Sep 28:S1553-7250(23)00229-5. doi: 10.1016/j.jcjq.2023.09.007. [Read the article HERE](#).

Featured Advisor



The National POLST Collaborative welcomes our new Legal Advisor. Sarah Hooper, JD, is the Professor of Practice and Executive Director of the UCSF/UC Law SF Consortium on Law, Science & Health Policy. She has joined the National POLST Collaborative's Advisory Committee as the Legal Advisor. Welcome, Sarah!

News in Brief



NPC at NAEMSP Drs. Amelia Breyre and Abby Dotson will present a talk entitled, "The POLST: Respecting patient preferences near the end of life" at the 2024 National Association for EMS Physicians Conference on January 11th in Austin, Texas. Amelia Breyre, MD is an Emergency Physician at Yale and a member of the NPC Research and Quality Assurance Committee. [Register HERE](#)



The **NPC Research and Quality Assurance Committee** Report and Recommendations on the new Uniform Health Care Decisions Act (**UHCD**A) bill can be found [HERE](#).

STAY CONNECTED & IN THE KNOW!! [SUBSCRIBE HERE](#)

Sign up for the National POLST Collaborative Newsletter! [Please note, our transition to new platforms and software may have resulted in some people being dropped off our mailing list. Please encourage all of your contacts who have an interest in the NPC's work to subscribe or resubscribe.