

MISSION

The mission of the Louisiana Physician Orders for Scope of Treatment (LaPOST) is to improve end-of-life care in Louisiana by honoring the health care wishes and goals of care of those who have serious advanced illness.

OVERVIEW

The LaPOST document gives patients with life-limiting diseases and irreversible conditions the ability to state their own preferences for medical care if they become unable to communicate. A model program, the LaPOST document is transferable among health care settings and enhances communication among health care professionals with the patient at the center. It is voluntary and is not biased for or against treatment.

An advance directive, also known as a “living will,” provides instructions that specify what kind of treatment should be given to a person when that individual is unable to make decisions or speak for him/herself and is usually completed in advance of any known illness. It can be specific or vague. A health care power of attorney allows a patient to authorize another person to make medical decisions on his/her behalf when the patient is no longer able to do so.

The LaPOST document is more than an advance directive or a power of attorney for health care. It is a **physician order** that outlines a patient’s wishes for medical treatment and goals of care when the patient has a known serious, advanced illness. It can also be used to translate an advance directive (“living will”) into a physician order. When completed, the LaPOST document must be honored by all health care professionals, serving as a road map for those providing medical care to patients with advanced, life-limiting illnesses.

QUICK FACTS

The LaPOST document can be completed for a qualified patient regardless of age. It is designed for patients who have irreversible conditions and limited life expectancies.

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The LaPOST document must be signed by a physician and the patient or the patient’s personal health care representative in order to be valid.

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The LaPOST document is brightly colored (gold) in order to be easily identifiable for patients, caregivers and health care providers.

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The LaPOST document can be revoked or changed at any time by the patient or the patient’s health care representative if there is new knowledge of a change in the patient’s condition or medical wishes.

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To view an informational video about LaPOST and to download the document, visit la-post.org.