

COLORADO CENTER
for
HOSPICE & PALLIATIVE CARE

Medical Orders for Scope of Treatment Form

A new tool for documenting treatment preferences that is
Standardized • Efficient • Portable • Flexible • Updatable • Effective

The Medical Orders for Scope of Treatment is a 1-page, 2-sided document that **consolidates and summarizes patient preferences** for key life-sustaining treatments including: CPR, general scope of treatment, antibiotics, artificial nutrition & hydration.

Persons may **refuse treatment, request full treatment, or specify limitations.**

The standardized form can be **easily and quickly understood** by patients, health care providers, and emergency personnel.

It is **primarily intended to be used by the chronically or seriously ill** person in frequent contact with health care providers, or already residing in a nursing facility.

The Medical Orders for Scope of Treatment is completed by the patient or authorized agent in conversation with a health care provider, then signed by the patient/agent and a physician, advanced practice nurse, or physician's assistant.

The physician/APN/PA signature **translates patient preferences into physician's orders.**

The Medical Orders for Scope of Treatment "travels" with the patient and is **honored in any setting:** hospital, clinic, day surgery, long-term care facility, ALR, hospice, or at home. The original is brightly colored for easy identification, but photocopies, faxes, and electronic scans are also valid.

The portability of the form **allows seamless documentation of treatment preferences and closes gaps** as patients transfer from setting to setting or experience delays in access to providers.

The latitude of authorized signers (physician/APN/PA) allows prompt documentation of preferences in **rural regions or areas where physicians and health care services are scant.**

Treatment preferences may be previously or more extensively documented in the patient's advance directives. Completion of Medical Orders for Scope of Treatment does not replace or invalidate prior directives. **The Medical Orders for Scope of Treatment overrules prior instructions only when they directly conflict.**

A section on the back **prompts patients and providers to regularly review, confirm, or update** choices based on changing conditions.

The Medical Orders for Scope of Treatment is a variant of the Physician's Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment, pioneered in Oregon in the late 1990s. Similar programs are now officially sanctioned in Oregon, Washington, West Virginia, New York, and parts of Wisconsin. Programs are being developed in 13 states including Colorado and parts of 5 others.

Extensive research indicates that the Medical Orders for Scope of Treatment program **greatly improves incidence of advance care planning and adherence to expressed wishes.** (See the *POLST* Web site, www.polst.org for references and research findings.)

The Medical Orders for Scope of Treatment program in Colorado has been spearheaded by the **Colorado Advance Directives Consortium**, a multidisciplinary volunteer group including representatives from health care (hospital, hospice, long-term care), professional associations and statewide organizations (Colorado Medical Society, Colorado Bar Association, Colorado Center for Hospice & Palliative Care, Colorado Health Care Association, Colorado Hospital Association) government and social services (CDPHE, EMS, ombudsman, DRCOG, HCPF, legislators), health care ethics, elder law attorneys, and others.

The Consortium has been examining the feasibility of the Medical Orders for Scope of Treatment for Colorado, customizing the form for adherence to Colorado law and medical practice, and seeking input from stakeholders since summer of 2006. A **voluntary pilot program** is poised to implement the process, including facilities in the Centura Health, Kaiser Permanente, and Evercare systems; and El Paso County hospitals/hospice/long-term care. A CDPHE taskforce is looking at the Medical Orders for Scope of Treatment in conjunction with their review of the CPR regulations.

The **Colorado Center for Hospice & Palliative Care** is well positioned to take the lead in administering the Medical Orders for Scope of Treatment program: providing administrative and technical support to the Colorado Advance Directives Consortium, coordinating pilot programs, producing and distributing Medical Orders for Scope of Treatment forms and explanatory booklet, and conducting education training programs for health care professionals and the lay community.

For additional information, please contact:

Colorado Center for Hospice & Palliative Care

PO Box 50888

Colorado Springs, CO 80949

Phone: 719-594-9233 or 303-756-1360

v. 01/05/09