

Delaware Medical Orders for Scope of Treatment

Program Goals:

- Honor patient preferences.
- Improve the quality of care people receive at the end of their life.
- Translate patient goals and wishes into medical orders.
- Increase communication between the patients, their surrogates, and health care professionals.

A partnership of many including:

- Christiana Care Health System
- Delaware Academy of Medicine
- Delaware Division of Aging
- Delaware Division of Long Term Residents Protection
- Delaware Division of Public Health
- Delaware Division of Services for Aging & Adults with Physical Disabilities
- Delaware Elder Law
- Delaware Emergency Medical Services
- Delaware Healthcare Association
- Delaware Healthcare Facilities Association
- Delaware Quality of Life Coalition

Learn More at:

www.delawaremost.org



WHEN AND WHY SHOULD YOU HAVE A CONVERSATION ABOUT GOALS OF CARE WITH YOUR DOCTOR?

Advance Care Planning (ACP) conversations are critical to have, with your doctor, and with family & friends. Having this conversation lets your doctor and your Power of Attorney (POA) for healthcare know about your wishes, in case you cannot make your wishes known.

There are different ways to put your end-of-life wishes in writing. In Delaware, you can use three different documents: Advance Directive/Living Will, POA for Healthcare, and a DMOST form.

While the living will and POA are legal documents, the DMOST form is a medical order, and is only appropriate for patients whose medical providers would not be surprised if they died in the next year.

The DMOST conversation allows your doctor to educate you about certain procedures that are used at the end of life, like CPR, intubation, and artificial nutrition. You and your doctor can then discuss if these procedures are right for you at this stage of your life, or if the risks outweigh the benefits.

If you are eligible, you and your doctor can complete a DMOST form, describing your treatment choices. The DMOST form is a valid medical order that travels with you, and must be followed by anyone providing health care (this includes EMTs, nurses, and other doctors). Keeping your DMOST orders with you, in their bright pink envelope, ensures that others will be aware of your goals and wishes for end-of-life treatment, and that these instructions will be honored.

The key to success when making the best decisions is knowledge and discussion.

- Talk to your doctor
- Discuss the different treatment options available at the end of life, and the risks and benefits of each
- Determine your goals of care, and the best ways to support that care.
- Talk about your choices with your family and friends.

DMOST Frequently Asked Questions

The DMOST form is a process for documenting treatment choices. It is completely voluntary, and is a portable, standardized Medical Order that will be recognized and followed by Delaware healthcare providers.

Q. What is DMOST?

A. The Delaware Medical Orders for Scope of Treatment (DMOST) form is a portable medical order form. It allows you to make choices about life-sustaining treatments, including among other treatments, CPR (resuscitation) and artificial nutrition. You may request full treatment, limited treatment, or comfort care only.

Q. Who is it for?

A. A DMOST form can be used by a person with a serious illness or frailty, whose health-care practitioner would not be surprised if they died within the next year.

Q. When should it be discussed and signed? Who signs it?

A. A DMOST form is completed after a conversation you have with a health care practitioner. It is signed by you and a physician (MD or DO), an advanced practice registered nurse (APRN), or a physician assistant (PA). The physician/APRN/PA signature makes the choices into portable medical orders.

Q. Who is required to follow the wishes documented on the DMOST form?

A. These orders will be followed by health care providers in any setting (ambulance, long-term care facility, emergency room, hospital, hospice, home, assisted living facility, etc.). It travels with you and is honored when you move to a new setting.

Q. Can someone else make DMOST decisions for me?

A. You make health-care decisions for yourself as long as you have decision-making capacity. You have the right to change your authorized representative at any time while you have decision-making capacity. If a physician determines that a person lacks decision-making capacity, an authorized representative can sign a DMOST form on behalf of that person. A DMOST form does not change the decision-maker designated by an Advance Health Care Directive, a Health Care Power of Attorney document, a guardian of person appointed by a Court, or Delaware law on health care surrogates.

If you have capacity and complete a DMOST form, you can sign on the form saying that if you lose capacity, your authorized representative cannot void the form you signed.

Q. What if I change my mind?

A. If your condition or your choices change, you or your authorized representative should void (cancel) your DMOST form and request a new DMOST be completed with your new choices. If your DMOST form does not agree with your advance directive, the most recent document will be followed.

Q. Must I do this?

A. The DMOST form is always voluntary and can be voided at any time. A Health care organization is prohibited from requiring you to complete a DMOST form for any reason. This form contains medical orders, and will be followed by all health care providers.

Q. What will happen to my choices if I travel out of state?

A. Many states, including all the states in our region, currently use a form similar to the DMOST form. Forms from those states which are valid under the Delaware Law will be honored in Delaware. DMOST forms will be honored in other states which have reciprocity.