

IPOST Essentials

IPOST : what is it, and how can I use it? IPOST stands for: Iowa Physician Orders for Scope of Treatment. The IPOST is a standardized, clearly identifiable one page, salmon colored form. The IPOST allows an individual to communicate their treatment preferences for life-sustaining treatments. These treatments may include: resuscitation, general scope of treatment, artificial nutrition and more. Essentially the IPOST translates a conversation about goals of care into an actionable medical order format with the authority of a physician, physician's assistant (PA), or a registered nurse practitioner (ARNP) signature. This is a communication tool that is complementary to an advance directive. An IPOST is appropriate for individuals who are frail and elderly, have a chronic, serious critical medical condition, or terminal illness.

Benefits of the IPOST include:

- A clear declaration of the individual's healthcare treatment choices and wishes.
- Relieving the decision maker of making complicated health care decisions during the last stages of an illness, as the IPOST communicates the individual's wishes in the form of an actionable medical order.
- IPOST became a state law on March 7, 2012. Iowa Code 144D allows IPOSTs to be recognized throughout the state in any setting (home, long-term care facility, hospital, hospice, etc.).
- Seamless communication and execution of an individual's care choices across healthcare treatment settings.

Facilitators, physicians, ARNP's and PA's have the ability to assist with completing the IPOST forms by discussing goals and care decisions with individuals. There are educational events for providers who are interested in learning how to complete IPOST forms. The Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) and The Iowa Healthcare Collaborative (IHC) have come together to provide education, administrative structure and to develop a strategy for statewide implementation. To date, the following counties have launched the IPOST program: Linn, Jones, Johnson, Muscatine, Scott, Dubuque, Polk, Blackhawk, Woodbury and Webster.

How can I go about creating an IPOST paradigm in my area?

- First, an IPOST champion will need to be identified (essentially someone willing to lead the cause). The IPOST champion could create a community coalition involving key stakeholders. Long-term care facilities are the perfect place to facilitate these discussions. Stakeholders may include physicians/ARNP/PA's, hospital personnel (administration, Palliative care, social work), EMS, home care, faith communities, hospice, long-term care settings, an ethicist, legal, public health and interested community members. If you would like to be connected to a community coalition, contact Christine Harlander at: charlander@mercyare.org

What resources are available?

- You will find many resources in the IPOST toolkit:
<http://www.ihconline.org/asp/general/page.aspx?pid=82>
- IDPH has an IPOST specific website as well: <http://www.idph.state.ia.us/ipost/default.aspx>

Who can help me to organize a coalition or answer my questions?

- Kady Hodges, a staff lead with IHC is available to answer questions relating to the IPOST:
hodgesk@ihconline.org
- Christine Harlander is a great resource who has a lot of experience organizing coalitions:
charlander@mercyare.org

Are there educational opportunities regarding the IPOST?

- On June 4, there is an Iowa Healthcare Collaborative Care Coordination Conference at the Meadows Events and Conference Center in Altoona. This conference is geared toward long term care providers, in addition to many other providers in the healthcare continuum. A Polk county nursing facility will present on how they have implemented the IPOST program. There will be break-out sessions focusing on IPOST that afternoon. For more information contact Kady Hodges at: hodgesk@ihconline.org
- IPOST Informational webcast by Dr. Tom Evans and Shannon Strickler:
<http://iha.mediasite.com/mediasite/Play/16a5aec5994c406ca2ea94a1a80752a91d?catalog=ac704d67-8663-499c-a863-932b0754df8b>

How do I obtain the IPOST forms?

- IDPH has the IPOST forms, and they can be ordered in bundles of 100 for \$30. Order forms are available on the IHC website as part of the tool kit:
<http://www.ihconline.org/asp/general/page.aspx?pid=82>

Additional information:

- The IPOST State Task Force will be sending IPOST surveys to stakeholders and long-term care providers in the coming months. The purpose of these surveys will be to determine the awareness level, who is utilizing the IPOST program, and to identify any barriers. Your participation in this survey would be appreciated.

The mission of the Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman is to protect the health, safety, welfare, and rights of individuals residing in long-term care by investigating complaints, seeking resolutions to problems, and providing advocacy with the goal of enhancing quality of life and care.