

Being Mortal Discussion January 28, 2023

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Questions to contemplate:

Gawande's: (Ariadnelabs.org)

Questions Gawande asked his father, and asks patients:

1. What are your biggest fears and concerns?
2. What goals are most important to you?
3. What trade-offs are you willing to make, and what ones are you not?

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The Five Wishes (fivewishes.org)

Five questions to consider as you think about preparing for your last days:

1. Who is the person/s I want to make care decision for me when I can't?
2. What is the kind of medical treatment I want or don't want?
3. How comfortable do I want to be?
4. How do I want people to treat me?
5. What do I want my loved ones to know?

Practical checklist that can be helpful for survivors. The important thing is the conversations around these, AND that whoever needs this information (e.g., executor) knows *where the documents are, and that all are up to date with signatures, notarized as necessary, etc.*). NOTE THIS IS NOT MEANT TO BE INCLUSIVE OF ALL ITEMS, BUT RATHER, SUGGESTIONS IN THE SPIRIT OF "HERE ARE SOME THINGS TO THINK ABOUT"

- Are you clear among your family and friends how care decisions will be made, and who ultimately makes them? Does everyone know of your intentions and have they agreed to live them out?
- Do you have a power of attorney signed and in force?
- Do you have a will signed and in force?
- Do you have a Do Not Resuscitate ("DNR") , MOLST, or a health care proxy, or are you otherwise clear on your wishes? Is it in clear view for ambulance drivers/helpers/care providers?

- Do you know what you want: burial, cremation, etc, etc? If you have specific ideas (spreading ashes) – have you shared them with your loved ones?
- Do you have a cemetery plot, and a marker, with suggested text? (if applicable)
- Do you have an obituary or a general outline of one to help those who will write it?
- Do you have some sort of plan for a memorial, including readings, music, and an invitation list?
- Can you make other decisions on practical matters: what clothes to be dressed in, for instance ...
- Have you received advice on financial planning in the event of your death?
- Does someone have access to your key accounts – however you define those, including passwords, so they can access them quickly and easily: computer, phone, banking sites, social media accounts ...
- Even if monies will get to your loved ones eventually, is there enough readily available that they can handle situations while the courts or whomever work things through the system?

Medical Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (“MOLST”)¹

Also POLST (Physician’s Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment

What is MOLST?

The Connecticut MOLST was developed from the national Physician Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment (POLST) Paradigm. The Connecticut MOLST is a **voluntary** adjunctive planning tool to an advance health care directive. (Some patients may have already completed a living will and may have both documents). MOLST orders are for patients who are at the end stage of a serious life limiting illness or in a condition of advanced chronic progressive frailty as determined by a physician or advance practice registered nurse. The MOLST form documents patients’ decisions in a clear manner that can be quickly understood by all providers, including first responders and emergency medical services (EMS) personnel.

Based upon the ethical principle of respect for patient autonomy and the legal principle of self-determination, A "CT medical order for life-sustaining treatment" is a written medical order by a physician, advanced practice registered nurse, or physician assistant that records a patient’s treatment preferences in writing on a bright green form approved by the CT DPH.

The MOLST form is completed after a conversation or series of conversations have taken place between the patient (and if the patient chooses their loved ones) and the patient’s health care provider or providers. The MOLST is an actionable medical order that reflects

¹ From <https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/Medical-Orders-for-Life-Sustaining-Treatment-MOLST/MOLST>

the patient's goals of care for full medical treatment, limited medical treatment or comfort measures only. It is designed to enable patients to document their preferences for medical treatments as they near life's end, and assists their loved ones and health care providers to better understand the patient's wishes. The form identifies the patient's medical condition as well as their treatment preferences and goals and accompanies the patient across all settings. The documentation makes it easier for health providers at one care setting to know the wishes of a patient previously documented in another care setting.

For questions about the MOLST Initiative please contact Barbara Cass at 860-509-7406 or barbara.cass@ct.gov.

Resource for Living Will:

Advance Directive Planning for Important Health Care Decisions

CaringInfo 1731 King St., Suite 100, Alexandria, VA 22314
www.caringinfo.org 800-658-8898

CaringInfo, a program of the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO), is a national consumer engagement initiative to improve care at the end of life.

It's About How You LIVE It's About How You LIVE is a national community engagement campaign encouraging individuals to make informed decisions about end-of-life care and services. The campaign encourages people to:

- Learn about options for end-of-life services and care
- Implement plans to ensure wishes are honored
- Voice decisions to family, friends and health care providers
- Engage in personal or community efforts to improve end-of-life care

For Connecticut information, go to caringinfo.org and pick CT, and download PDF:



How to Prepare, Plan, and Be Present ▾ Types of Care ▾ Resources [

Download and Complete Your State or Territories' Advance Directive Form

[How to Prepare, Plan, and Be Present](#) \ [Advance Directives](#) \ [Download and Complete Your State or Territories' Advance Directive Form](#) \ Connecticut Advance Directive Forms

Connecticut Advance Directive Forms

Find your State's Advance Directive:

Pick a state ▾

An advance directive is a legally binding document that gives instructions for your healthcare in the event that you are no longer able to make or communicate those decisions yourself. Laws and instructions differ by state. [Learn more about the basics of advance directives and advance care planning.](#)

Below you will find the advance directive template for Connecticut.

[Connecticut's Advance Directive Template](#) **Download PDF**

