Improving Care At The End Of Life: Physician Orders For Life Sustaining Treatment (POLST)

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Will affect the cost, access and delivery of end-of-life care to those estimated 800,000 Arizonans ages 22-80+

Increase the cost of care as patients seek treatment in EMS services, hospital emergency rooms urgent care facilities

The patient’s true end-of-life treatment choices may not be conveyed to those acute care medical providers

Implement, Amend, Create

Sole Intent: improve quality of end-of-life care and reduce costs
“Medicalized Torture”

- Advanced and improving medical interventions
- Marketed, utilized to terminal patients
- Prey on hopes of the ill and families
- Escalate costs.....same end result
Arizona’s Proposed POLST

- Requires both a patient and physician signature, with two witnesses of the patient signature
- Establishes and maintain a state-funded and maintained registry
- Assures the patient's dying wishes are respected
- Eliminates potential for family members and/or friends/ assigned surrogates to make decisions
Stakeholders & Consequences

- Center for Arizona Policy (CAP) and Compassion and Choices Arizona Coalition
- Creation of ‘closed borders’, affecting Arizona’s economy
- Abuse by ill-intended for personal gain
- Infliction of unnecessary financial and emotional injury to survivors
WITHOUT WRITTEN INSTRUCTIONS, IT’S HARD TO KNOW WHAT A PATIENT WANTS

JUST SO YOU KNOW...

I NEVER WANT TO LIVE IN A VEGETATIVE STATE, DEPENDENT ON SOME MACHINE.

IF THAT EVER HAPPENS, JUST UNPLUG ME, OK?

OK.

Hey!
Talking Point One

- CAP: Patient’s preparations take priority over physician

- CCA: POLST assures patient’s wishes are discussed with the treating physician, ensures directives are medical orders
Talking Point Two

- CAP: The law should safeguard patient’s wishes
- CCA: Exactly!
CAP: POLST is opportunity for untold abuse-managed death, “Euthanasia”

CCA: To the contrary, POLST registries recognize patient’s rights to use a Physician’s Order For Life-sustaining Treatment
Recommendation

- Rescind the decision of April 1, 2015
- Implement the POLST program and process as patterned after the Oregon POLST program
- Amend the ARS 36-3209
- Create a fund for education and oversight of the electronic POLST system
- Veto Referendum: 5% of Arizona voters (86,406) obtained!
References


Hickman, S; Sabatino, C; Moss, A; Nester, J, “The POLST (Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment) Paradigm to Improve End-Of-Life Care: Potential State Legal Barriers to Implementation”, Journal of Law, Medicine & Ethics (Spring 2008): 119-140.


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