



Advance Care Plan vs. Maryland MOLST

Advance care planning is valuable for everyone, and ensures that individuals, regardless of age or current health status, receive medical care that is consistent with their wishes and values. Advance care planning gives individuals the opportunity to reflect on and express their values and health care preferences in advance of a health care emergency. It can be confusing to know which document to use to record health care wishes. Voice Your Choice has provided the following information to help determine which type of document is the most appropriate:

Advance Care Plan (living will, advance directive, etc.): is a legal document that provides information about what types of treatments an individual would want if they could not speak for themselves during a medical emergency or due to a serious illness. This is also where a health care agent is designated. All adults should have an advance care plan.

MOLST: MOLST is a medical order for specific health care treatments an individual would want during a medical emergency. MOLST forms are appropriate for individuals with a serious illness or advanced frailty near the end-of-life.

	Advance Care Plan	Maryland MOLST
Who needs one	All adults 18+	Individuals at risk for a life-threatening event due to a serious life-limiting medical condition; this can include dementia or advanced frailty
What is communicated	General wishes	Specific medical orders regarding cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and other life support treatments, like artificial nutrition and dialysis
Type of document	Legal document	Medical order that must be followed in all settings
Appoints a health care agent(s)	Yes	No
Who fills it out	Individuals	Health care providers (doctors, nurse practitioners, physician assistants)
Health agent can change or void	Yes	No
Emergency personnel/EMS must follow	No	Yes
Accessibility	Individual keeps a paper plan; online plans created through VYC can be accessed through CRISP	Individual keeps original and a copy is put into their medical chart. A physical copy travels with them at discharge or in a transfer between clinical facilities (such as a nursing home)

Advance care plans and MOLST are compatible. A MOLST does not replace an advance care plan. All adults should have an advance care plan, but individuals with a serious illness or frailty should be considered for a MOLST. Voice Your Choice can help individuals complete their advance care plan in order to prepare for a MOLST discussion with their health care provider.

This information is based on materials gathered from the [POLST Paradigm Project](#)