



## ***Fast Facts: TPOPP for EMS***

### **What is TPOPP?**

Transportable Physician Orders for Patient Preferences (TPOPP) is a program designed to improve the quality of care people receive at the end of life by translating patient/resident goals and preferences into medical orders for treatment.

### **What is the TPOPP form?**

The TPOPP form is a bright pink piece of paper that can communicate patient preferences regarding life-sustaining medical treatment. When signed by a patient (or a recognized decision maker) and a physician licensed in Kansas or Missouri, it becomes a medical order. Providers at all sites of care should follow the medical orders.

### **What types of medical orders are on the form?**

The form includes medical orders and patient preferences regarding:

- CPR
- Implementing comfort care
- Defibrillation and cardioversion
- Intubation and mechanical ventilation
- Transport decisions

### **Who might have a TPOPP form?**

TPOPP is designed for persons who have advanced progressive chronic illness or are terminally ill. EMS may see TPOPP forms for persons who:

- Live independently;
- Reside in a long-term care or assisted living facility;
- Receive hospice care.

### **Does every person with advanced chronic or terminal illness have a form?**

No. TPOPP is voluntary and based on the belief that an individual has the right to make his or her own health care decisions. TPOPP forms can be used by persons of any age with an advanced progressive illness or who is terminally ill.

### **How is a TPOPP form completed?**

The TPOPP form is completed after having a conversation with the patient (or recognized decision maker) and a member of the healthcare team such as a physician, nurse, social worker or chaplain. When the patient (or recognized decision maker) and a physician sign the form it is complete. Both signatures are necessary. The signatures verify that the preferences on the form are consistent with the patient's values and treatment goals.

### **What do you do with a completed form?**

The TPOPP form travels with the patient between care settings. The original form should accompany the patient and be presented to each provider (first responder, hospital or other care setting).

### **Where is the form kept?**

EMS personnel should look for or ask for the form. It should be conspicuously located:

- In the front of the patient's medical chart at care facilities;
- On the refrigerator, by a phone, or bedside when the patient resides at home;

The TPOPP form should go with the patient when the person is transferred from the hospital or health care setting.

### **How is the form used by EMS?**

EMS should administer the level of treatment ordered in Section A and in Section B when they arrive on scene. EMS will transfer the individual to the emergency room if ordered or contact medical control for further instructions.

### **What sections apply to EMS providers?**

Section A orders apply only when the person is in cardiopulmonary arrest. If the "Attempt Resuscitation/CPR" box is checked then CPR should be performed. If the "Do Not Attempt Resuscitation (DNAR/no CPR/Allow Natural Death)" box is checked, CPR should not be performed. Comfort measures are provided and CPR is not attempted.

Section B orders apply to emergency medical circumstances for a person who has a pulse and/or is breathing. These range from full treatment to comfort measures only. If all life-sustaining treatments are desired the "Full Treatment" box is checked. However, if the person desires some limitation, then either the "Comfort Measures Only" box or the "Limited Additional Interventions" box is checked. EMS first will administer the level of emergency medical services ordered and then contact medical control as needed. Comfort care is always provided regardless of indicated level of EMS treatment.

If Attempt Resuscitation in Section A is checked, then Full Treatment in Section B is checked. Full resuscitation implies full treatment.

Section D validates the order with the dated signatures of the physician and patient (or recognized decision maker).

### **When can EMS honor the TPOPP form?**

EMS personnel can honor the TPOPP form in any situation in which a valid TPOPP form is presented for the patient requiring emergency medical care.

### **Will the person still have or need a signed Outside the Hospital Do Not resuscitate (DNR) form?**

Your organization/agency will determine the specific policies associated with TPOPP. Remember, that if DNAR is selected in Section A and the form is valid, you have a physician's order not to resuscitate.

### **Is a copy or faxed copy of the form acceptable?**

Yes – A copy, faxed copy, or electronic representation of the TPOPP form is acceptable provided it has the person's name and signatures of the physician and patient (or recognized decision maker).

### **Where can I get more information?**

Visit the website of the Center for Practical Bioethics at [www.practicalbioethics.org](http://www.practicalbioethics.org), send an e-mail to [TPOPP@practicalbioethics.org](mailto:TPOPP@practicalbioethics.org) or call the TPOPP Managing Director at 816-979-1366.