Dear <<FACILITY CONTACT>>

The Maryland Healthcare Ethics Committee Network (MHECN) seeks your assistance in evaluating how Maryland’s Medical Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (MOLST) form is being used statewide. The MOLST form transforms life-sustaining treatment preferences into medical orders to be followed by emergency medical technicians, nursing facility staff, and other health professionals in times of crisis and transition from one setting to the next. With funding from the Office of Health Care Quality (OHCQ), we are conducting a chart review study of Maryland health care facilities. **Findings from this study will only be reported in the aggregate.** No HIPAA identifiers will be elicited on the patient/resident chart review forms. No individual facility information will be shared with OHCQ or anyone outside of the study team. The University of Maryland Institutional Review Board (IRB) determined that this study does not meet the criteria for human subjects research and thus does not require IRB oversight. You can review the study proposal and related documents on our website, at [http://www.law.umaryland.edu/mhecn](http://www.law.umaryland.edu/mhecn) (click on Projects and Services and see MOLST Study at bottom).

**We need your help to ensure that this evaluation project is a success!** The findings of this project will inform initiatives to improve end-of-life care in Maryland. No patient identifiers will be collected.

TARGET DATE FOR CHART REVIEW COMPLETION: FEBRUARY 28, 2014

We encourage all adult (non-psychiatric) hospitals, home care and hospice agencies, and dialysis centers in Maryland to participate in this important evaluation. In addition, we have randomly sampled nursing homes and assisted living facilities in the state to take part. **If you are reading this letter, it means your facility has been chosen to take part.** Please review the enclosed materials that outline steps involved and provide tips for performing your facility’s chart reviews. We realize this imposes a time burden, but we feel the knowledge to be gained will be worth the effort. We have a cadre of volunteers willing to assist facilities in these chart reviews. We hope you will partner with us!

Thank you in advance for participating in this MOLST form evaluation project, and for your commitment to improving end-of-life care in Maryland!

If you have any comments or questions, please contact Anita Tarzian (see contact info below).

Most sincerely yours,

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INSTRUCTIONS FOR HOSPITALS

1. FIRST STEP – INVITE VOLUNTEERS
We recommend that you begin by inviting allies from your facility to help with this project. Consider requesting members from your ethics committee to volunteer to help. See sample emails below. We also have MOLST STUDY VOLUNTEERS throughout the state who we will try to match with facilities requesting help completing the chart reviews. E-mail Anita Tarzian (atarzian@law.umaryland.edu) if you would like to be matched with a MOLST STUDY VOLUNTEER.

2. SECOND STEP – IDENTIFY APPROPRIATE CHARTS FOR REVIEW
The MOLST study is inviting ALL Maryland adult, non-psychiatric hospitals to take part. For hospitals with **300 beds or more**, the following charts should be identified for review:
- Last 20 adult discharges (not including psychiatric, trauma, or OB) to any of the following:
  - Nursing home
  - Assisted living facility
  - Home health agency
  - Hospice
- Last 10 adult deaths (not including deaths related to psychiatric, trauma, or OB admissions)
  - The last 10 adult deaths at the facility preceding the date the hospital review process is initiated, including only deaths from a disease process and not from admissions for trauma, psychiatric conditions, or obstetrics.

For hospitals with **<300 beds**: the same should be done but only 10 discharges and 5 deaths.

3. THIRD STEP – COMPLETE THE CHART REVIEWS
Complete one chart review form for each patient selected. Do not write the patient’s name or identifying information on the chart review forms. Attach copies of any MOLST order forms with patient identifiers redacted (for example, by concealing identifiers with a black permanent marker) and relevant pages of the patient’s living will, if available, by stapling these to the chart review form. Examples of the relevant pages of Maryland’s living will document are included in this packet.

4. FOURTH STEP – COMPLETE THE FACILITY DEMOGRAPHIC FORM
A person from your hospital’s MOLST STUDY TEAM who is most knowledgeable about MOLST use throughout the facility should complete the Facility Demographic Form. This should be placed on top of all completed chart reviews (with MOLST forms/Living Will excerpts for individual patients, if available, stapled to that patient’s chart review form).

5. FINAL STEP – SEND COMPLETED CHART REVIEWS & FACILITY DEMOGRAPHIC SHEET TO MHECN
Send the completed chart review packet by **February 28, 2015** to:
Nadia Hay
UM Carey School of Law
500 W. Baltimore St.
Baltimore, MD 21201

Any questions? Please contact:
Anita Tarzian, PhD, RN, atarzian@law.umaryland.edu, (443) 794-4344
INSTRUCTIONS FOR NURSING HOMES

1. FIRST STEP – INVITE VOLUNTEERS
We recommend that you begin by inviting allies from your facility to help with this project. Consider requesting volunteers from your ethics committee or facility volunteer pool. See sample emails below. We also have MOLST STUDY VOLUNTEERS throughout the state who we will try to match with facilities requesting help completing the chart reviews. E-mail Anita Tarzian (atarzian@law.umaryland.edu) if you would like to be matched with a MOLST STUDY VOLUNTEER.

2. SECOND STEP – IDENTIFY APPROPRIATE CHARTS FOR REVIEW
The MOLST study is inviting a random selection of HALF of all Maryland nursing homes to take part. For nursing homes with **150 beds or more**, the following charts should be identified for review:

- Last 15 admissions to the facility at the time the facility review process is initiated
- Last 15 deaths at the facility at the time the facility review process is initiated

For nursing homes with **30-149 beds**: the last 8 admissions and the last 8 deaths should be identified

For nursing homes with **<30 beds**: all current residents should be included.

3. THIRD STEP – COMPLETE THE CHART REVIEWS
Complete one chart review form for each resident selected. Do not write the resident’s name or identifying information on the chart review forms. Attach copies of any MOLST order forms **with resident identifiers redacted** (for example, by concealing identifiers with a black permanent marker) and relevant pages of the resident’s living will, if available, by stapling these to the chart review form. Examples of the relevant pages of Maryland’s living will document are included in this packet.

4. FOURTH STEP – COMPLETE THE FACILITY DEMOGRAPHIC FORM
A person from your facility’s MOLST STUDY TEAM who is most knowledgeable about MOLST use throughout the facility should complete the Facility Demographic Form. This should be placed on top of all completed chart reviews (with MOLST forms/Living Will excerpts for individual residents, if available, stapled to that resident’s chart review form).

5. FINAL STEP – SEND COMPLETED CHART REVIEWS & FACILITY DEMOGRAPHIC SHEET TO MHECN
Send the completed chart review packet by **FEBRUARY 28, 2015** to:
Nadia Hay
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Baltimore, MD 21201

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Anita Tarzian, PhD, RN, atarzian@law.umaryland.edu, (443) 794-4344
INSTRUCTIONS FOR ASSISTED LIVING FACILITIES

1. FIRST STEP – INVITE VOLUNTEERS
We recommend that you begin by inviting allies from your facility to help with this project. Consider requesting volunteers from your ethics committee or facility volunteer pool. See sample emails below. We also have MOLST STUDY VOLUNTEERS throughout the state who we will try to match with facilities requesting help completing the chart reviews. E-mail Anita Tarzian (atarzian@law.umaryland.edu) if you would like to be matched with a MOLST STUDY VOLUNTEER.

2. SECOND STEP – IDENTIFY APPROPRIATE CHARTS FOR REVIEW
The MOLST study is inviting a random selection of HALF of all Maryland assisted living facilities (ALFs). For ALFs with **150 beds or more**, the following charts should be identified for review:
   - Last 15 admissions to the facility at the time the facility review process is initiated
   - Last 15 deaths at the facility at the time the facility review process is initiated

For ALFs with **30-149 beds**: the last 8 admissions and the last 8 deaths should be identified

For ALFs with **<30 beds**: all current residents should be included.

3. THIRD STEP – COMPLETE THE CHART REVIEWS
Complete one chart review form for each resident selected. Do not write the resident’s name or identifying information on the chart review forms. Attach copies of any MOLST order forms with resident identifiers redacted (for example, by concealing identifiers with a black permanent marker) and relevant pages of the resident’s living will, if available, by stapling these to the chart review form. Examples of the relevant pages of Maryland’s living will document are included in this packet.

4. FOURTH STEP – COMPLETE THE FACILITY DEMOGRAPHIC FORM
A person from your facility’s MOLST STUDY TEAM who is most knowledgeable about MOLST use throughout the facility should complete the Facility Demographic Form. This should be placed on top of all completed chart reviews (with MOLST forms/Living Will excerpts for individual residents, if available, stapled to that resident’s chart review form).

5. FINAL STEP – SEND COMPLETED CHART REVIEWS & FACILITY DEMOGRAPHIC SHEET TO MHECN
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Baltimore, MD 21201

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Anita Tarzian, PhD, RN, atarzian@law.umaryland.edu, (443) 794-4344
INSTRUCTIONS FOR HOSPICES

1. FIRST STEP – INVITE VOLUNTEERS
We recommend that you begin by inviting allies from your facility to help with this project. Consider requesting volunteers from your ethics committee or facility volunteer pool. See sample emails below. We also have MOLST STUDY VOLUNTEERS throughout the state who we will try to match with facilities requesting help completing the chart reviews. E-mail Anita Tarzian (atarzian@law.umaryland.edu) if you would like to be matched with a MOLST STUDY VOLUNTEER.

2. SECOND STEP – IDENTIFY APPROPRIATE CHARTS FOR REVIEW
The MOLST study is inviting ALL Maryland hospice agencies to take part.
- For hospices with 30 or more active patients at the time the review is initiated, the last 30 patient deaths should be included in the review.
- For hospices with fewer than 30 active patients at the time the review is initiated, all current hospice patients should be included in the review.

3. THIRD STEP – COMPLETE THE CHART REVIEWS
Complete one chart review form for each patient selected. Do not write the patient’s name or identifying information on the chart review forms. Attach copies of any MOLST order forms with patient identifiers redacted (for example, by concealing identifiers with a black permanent marker) and relevant pages of the patient’s living will, if available, by stapling these to the chart review form. Examples of the relevant pages of Maryland’s living will document are included in this packet.

4. FOURTH STEP – COMPLETE THE FACILITY DEMOGRAPHIC FORM
A person from your facility’s MOLST STUDY TEAM who is most knowledgeable about MOLST use throughout the hospice agency should complete the Facility Demographic Form. This should be placed on top of all completed chart reviews (with MOLST forms/Living Will excerpts for individual patients, if available, stapled to that patient’s chart review form).

5. FINAL STEP – SEND COMPLETED CHART REVIEWS & FACILITY DEMOGRAPHIC SHEET TO MHECN
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Anita Tarzian, PhD, RN, atarzian@law.umaryland.edu, (443) 794-4344
INSTRUCTIONS FOR HOME HEALTH AGENCIES

1. FIRST STEP – INVITE VOLUNTEERS
We recommend that you begin by inviting allies from your home health agency (HHA) to help with this project. Consider requesting volunteers from your ethics committee or facility volunteer pool. See sample emails below. We also have MOLST STUDY VOLUNTEERS throughout the state who we will try to match with facilities requesting help completing the chart reviews. E-mail Anita Tarzian (atarzian@law.umaryland.edu) if you would like to be matched with a MOLST STUDY VOLUNTEER.

2. SECOND STEP – IDENTIFY APPROPRIATE CHARTS FOR REVIEW
The MOLST study is inviting ALL Maryland HHAs to take part.
   • For HHAs with 30 or more active patients at the time the review is initiated, the last 30 patient admissions (patients not enrolled in hospice) should be included in the review.
   • For HHAs with fewer than 30 active patients at the time the review is initiated, all current patients (patients not enrolled in hospice) should be included in the review.

3. THIRD STEP – COMPLETE THE CHART REVIEWS
Complete one chart review form for each patient selected. Do not write the patient’s name or identifying information on the chart review forms. Attach copies of any MOLST order forms with patient identifiers redacted (for example, by concealing identifiers with a black permanent marker) and relevant pages of the patient’s living will, if available, by stapling these to the chart review form. Examples of the relevant pages of Maryland’s living will document are included in this packet.

4. FOURTH STEP – COMPLETE THE FACILITY DEMOGRAPHIC FORM
A person from your agency’s MOLST STUDY TEAM who is most knowledgeable about MOLST use throughout the HHA should complete the Facility Demographic Form. This should be placed on top of all completed chart reviews (with MOLST forms/Living Will excerpts for individual patients, if available, stapled to that patient’s chart review form).

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INSTRUCTIONS FOR DIALYSIS CENTERS

1. FIRST STEP – INVITE VOLUNTEERS
We recommend that you begin by inviting allies from your facility to help with this project. Consider requesting volunteers from your ethics committee or facility volunteer pool, if available. See sample emails below. We also have MOLST STUDY VOLUNTEERS throughout the state who we will try to match with facilities requesting help completing the chart reviews. E-mail Anita Tarzian (atarzian@law.umaryland.edu) if you would like to be matched with a MOLST STUDY VOLUNTEER.

2. SECOND STEP – IDENTIFY APPROPRIATE CHARTS FOR REVIEW
The MOLST study is inviting ALL Maryland dialysis centers to take part.

• For dialysis centers with **more than 30** active dialysis patients at the time the review is initiated, a random selection of 30 active patients should be included in the review.

• For dialysis centers with **30 or fewer** active dialysis patients at the time the review is initiated, all current patients should be included in the review.

3. THIRD STEP – COMPLETE THE CHART REVIEWS
Complete one chart review form for each patient selected. Do not write the patient’s name or identifying information on the chart review forms. Attach copies of any MOLST order forms with patient identifiers redacted (for example, by concealing identifiers with a black permanent marker) and relevant pages of the patient’s living will, if available, by stapling these to the chart review form. Examples of the relevant pages of Maryland’s living will document are included in this packet.

4. FOURTH STEP – COMPLETE THE FACILITY DEMOGRAPHIC FORM
One person from your facility’s MOLST STUDY TEAM who is most knowledgeable about MOLST use throughout the facility should complete the Facility Demographic Form. This should be placed on top of all completed chart reviews (with MOLST forms/Living Will excerpts for individual patients, if available, stapled to that patient’s chart review form).

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SAMPLE EMAILS TO SOLICIT FACILITY MOLST STUDY VOLUNTEERS

Are you interested in volunteering to help improve end-of-life care in Maryland? [FACILITY NAME] has been invited to take part in a state-wide evaluation study of Maryland’s Medical Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (MOLST) Program. This project is being implemented by the Maryland Healthcare Ethics Committee Network at the UM Carey School of Law. It is being funded by the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, in collaboration with the State Advisory Council Quality Care at the End-of-Life. **We are soliciting volunteers to assist with chart reviews.** This will help inform ways to improve MOLST form use and end-of-life care at healthcare facilities across the state.

Please contact [NAME/E-mail] by [DATE] if you are willing to help with this project! Thank you!

INVITATION TO JOIN MOLST STUDY VOLUNTEER POOL

Are you interested in volunteering to help improve end-of-life care in Maryland? The Maryland Healthcare Ethics Committee Network at the UM Carey School of Law, has received funding from the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to conduct a state-wide evaluation study of Maryland’s Medical Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (MOLST) Program. **We are soliciting volunteers to assist with health care facility chart reviews** across the state. This is a wonderful learning opportunity for students interested in learning more about the research process, evidence-based practice, and end-of-life care!

Please contact Anita Tarzian at atarzian@law.umaryland.edu by XXX if you are willing to be listed as a MOLST STUDY VOLUNTEER (include in your email whether you are a registered nurse and the zip code where you live). We plan to match individuals from our volunteer pool to facilities requesting MOLST STUDY volunteers to assist with their MOLST STUDY chart reviews (based on zip code). The target date for facilities to complete chart reviews is FEBRUARY 28, 2015, so most data collection is expected to take place between December, 2014 through February, 2015.

Thank you!