

# End-of-Life Care and MOLST Completion

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## Context

- End-of-life care is an essential part of the care provided by health care systems.
- Documenting and respecting patient wishes is integral to providing a high quality of end-of-life care.
- The MOLST form (Medical Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment) was introduced in New York State in 2003 with a primary goal of improving the quality of end-of-life care.
- Little has been published about use of the MOLST in the hospital setting.

## Design

Retrospective, random chart review of the terminal hospital stay among adult patients who died at a tertiary care center in Rochester, New York.

## Methods

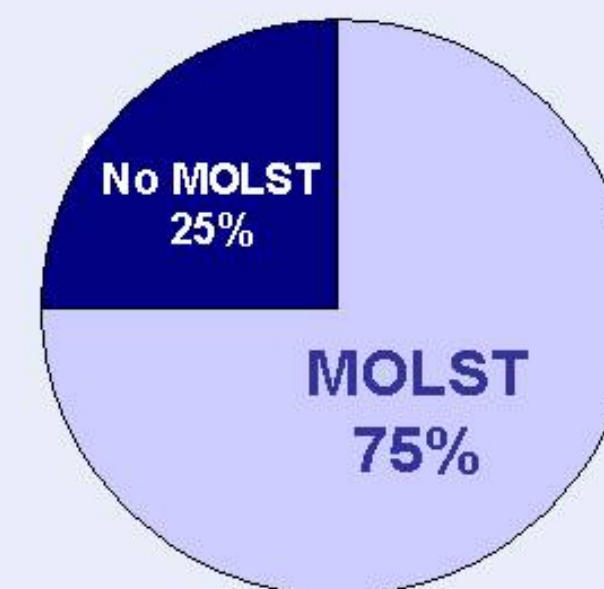
- A sample of 147 patients who died in the hospital was randomly chosen.
- Fifteen patients who died on the day of admission were excluded.
- Chart reviews were performed on the remaining 132 charts to determine MOLST presence or absence and limits to treatment as documented on this form.

## Demographics

		N	(%)
Gender	Male	75	(57%)
	Female	57	(43%)
Age	Age < 65	59	(45%)
	Age 65 and over	73	(55%)
Race	White	101	(77%)
	Black	20	(15%)
	Other	11	(8%)

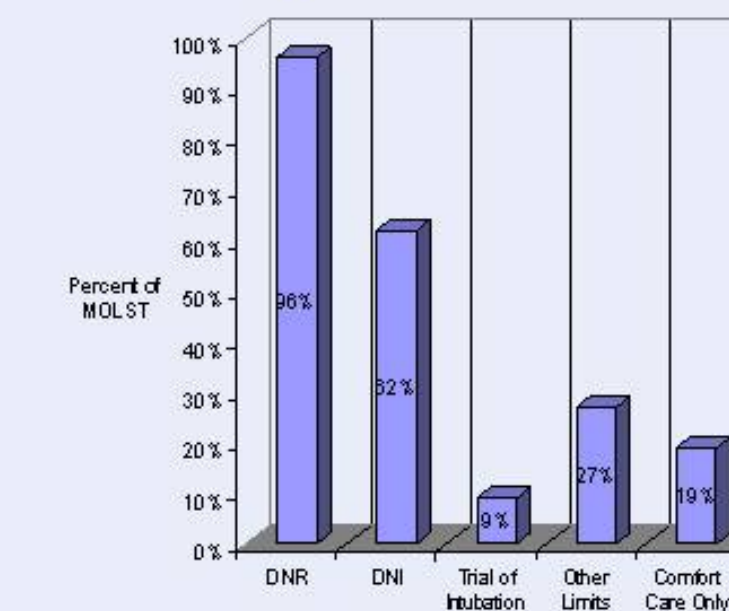
## Results

### Presence or Absence of MOLST in Reviewed Charts

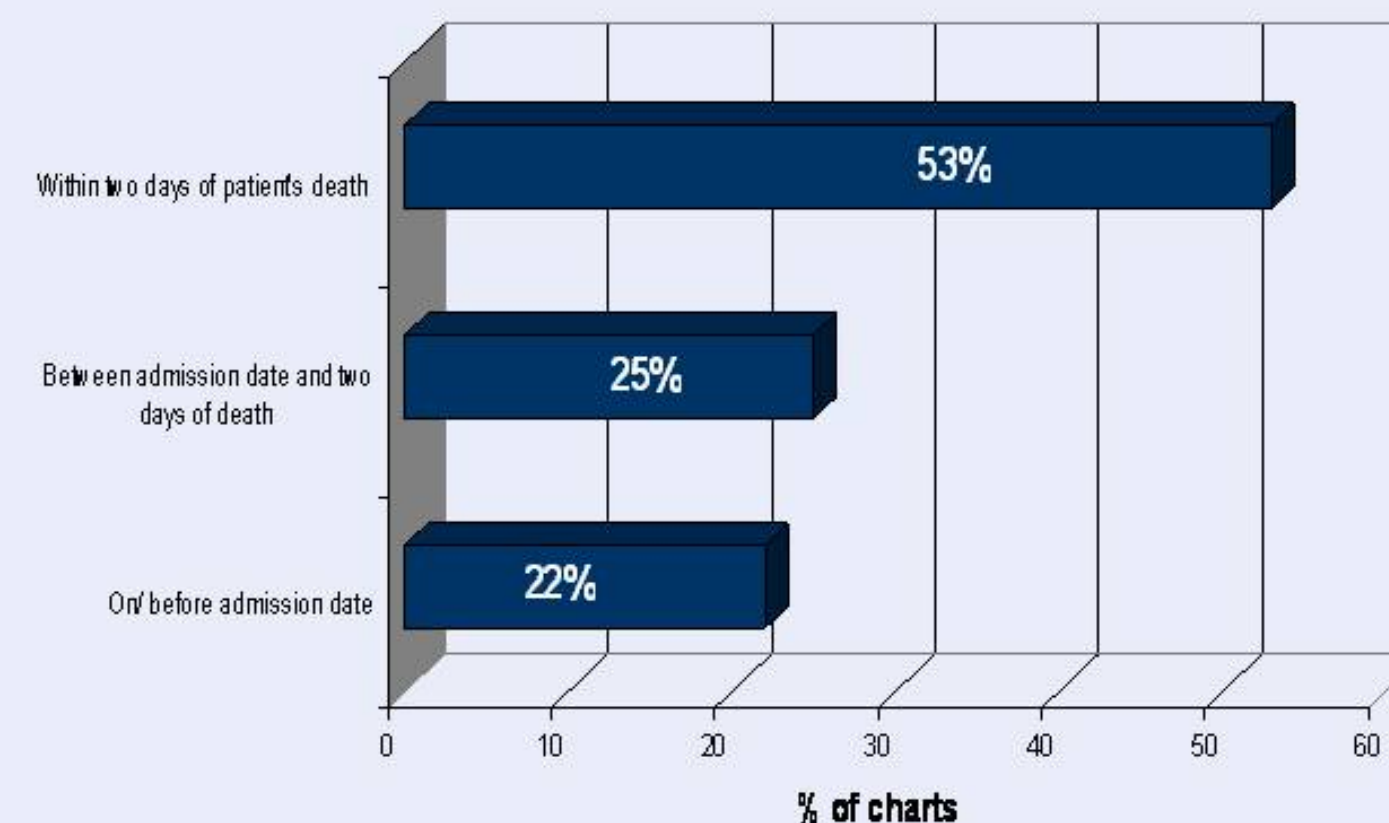


## The MOLST Form

### Limits to Treatment As Specified on MOLST



### When was the MOLST completed?



## Main Findings

- The MOLST form is present in charts for a majority of patients who died in the hospital (75%).
- When present, the MOLST almost always designates DNR (do not resuscitate) status (96%).
- CPR was not performed during the last 48 hours of life on any patient with a MOLST specifying DNR.
- CPR was performed during the terminal hospital stay on 52% of patients with no MOLST documentation.
- Over one-half (53%) of MOLST forms were completed within the last two days of life.
- The MOLST is infrequently used in the hospital setting to designate limits to treatment other than DNR or DNI (do not intubate). Only 27% of MOLST forms specified other limits, and the most frequent was "comfort care only" (19%).

## Future Directions

- What factors might account for the finding that a significant number of MOLST forms are completed within the final days of life?
- In those patients without MOLST forms who did not receive CPR, were limits to treatment specified in some other format?
- How does MOLST completion differ between an inpatient setting and a skilled nursing facility?