2003 Ernest Amory Codman Award Recipient

Individual Award

Linda H. Aiken, Ph.D., FAAN, FRCN, R.N.

Dr. Aiken is the single most influential nurse leader and researcher in the field of nursing outcomes research. She has received every top research award in nursing and many awards in interdisciplinary fields like health services research, including this year's Article of the Year Award from Academy Health for her Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) paper on hospital nurse staffing, nurse retention and patient mortality. For two decades, Dr. Aiken has been at the forefront of the development and testing of hospital performance measures. Her many accomplishments include:

- Developing and testing measures and research methods to document the significant contributions of nurses to hospital quality of care and patient outcomes.
- Creating survey techniques and measures to collect standard information on organizational features and culture across large numbers of hospitals. This information provided the basis for understanding how certain characteristics of hospitals can alter processes of care that can either protect or imperil patients.
- Pioneering efforts that made it possible to conduct international hospital outcomes studies that lend fresh perspective to the common wisdom that nursing shortages in the U.S. are due to uniquely American phenomena. Dr. Aiken collected standardized organizational and outcomes data on hospitals in six countries through the International Hospital Outcomes Consortium, an organization she founded and led.
- Being the first to apply failure-to-rescue to measure the outcomes of hospital nursing care. Failure-to-rescue is a measure of the success of a hospital in saving the life of a patient who develops a serious complication after admission. Dr. Aiken's use of failure-to-rescue is predicated on her work showing that nurse surveillance is critical to early detection and successful management of unexpected complications.
- Using performance measurement in the study of magnet hospitals that has established the evidence base behind the magnet hospital movement that more than any other single factor has propelled the concept of magnet hospitals into the mainstream of hospital quality improvement in the U.S. and abroad.