



NEWS RELEASE

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JOINT COMMISSION AND NATIONAL QUALITY FORUM ANNOUNCE 2005 JOHN M. EISENBERG PATIENT SAFETY AND QUALITY AWARDS

WASHINGTON, DC, and OAKBROOK TERRACE, IL--The National Quality Forum (NQF) and the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations today announced the 2005 recipients of the annual John M. Eisenberg Patient Safety and Quality Awards. Honorees were selected in three of the four Award categories. The honorees are:

Individual Achievement

Audrey L. Nelson, Ph.D., R.N., has led an array of research to improve the quality of care delivered to people with disabilities. A nationally recognized leader in clinical practice and research, she has magnified the scope of practice for patient safety and is a tireless advocate for those with disabilities. Dr. Nelson is Director, Patient Safety Research Center, at James A. Haley VA Hospital, Tampa, FL, and serves as Associate Director for Research for Nursing at the University of South Florida.

Innovation in Patient Safety and Quality at a National or Regional Level

Maryland Patient Safety Center, Maryland, implemented a unique and comprehensive statewide approach to patient safety improvement by bringing together a public-private partnership of health care providers and policymakers to study and learn from errors. Designated in 2004 by the Maryland Healthcare Commission, the Center seeks to make Maryland hospitals and nursing homes the safest in the nation.

Innovation in Patient Safety and Quality at a Local or Organizational Level (2 Recipients)

Meridian Health, New Jersey, realized significant improvements in the quality of care delivered to residents of Monmouth and Ocean counties in New Jersey just months after embedding evidence-based best practice guidelines into their computer-based physician order entry system. Physicians have embraced the use of the interactive practice guidelines for online ordering, resulting in the implementation of a dozen best practices into the system.

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Sentara Healthcare, Virginia and North Carolina, a not-for-profit health care provider in southeastern Virginia and northeastern North Carolina, established and continues to promote a system-wide culture of safety through a comprehensive, error-prevention initiative. Key strategies include setting error prevention expectations for all staff, implementing a 'Common Cause Analysis Program,' and re-designing key work processes to foster safety.

No award was given in the Research category.

"Dr. Nelson, the Maryland Patient Safety Center, Meridian Health, and Sentara Healthcare are examples of what is right with health care in the United States," said Kenneth W. Kizer, M.D., M.P.H., president and chief executive officer of NQF. "Their commitment to improving the quality and safety of American health care is to be applauded."

"We commend the Eisenberg Award honorees for measurably advancing patient safety in this country," said Dennis S. O'Leary, M.D., president of the Joint Commission. "Through their innovation and leadership, they have developed revolutionary solutions that will clearly help to make health care safer."

This year's awards will be presented at NQF's Sixth Annual Meeting on Thursday, October 6, in Washington, D.C. The December 2005 issue of the *Joint Commission Journal on Quality and Safety* will feature the achievements of each of the award recipients.

The patient safety awards program, launched in 2002 by NQF and the Joint Commission, honors John M. Eisenberg, M.D., M.B.A., administrator of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) at the time of his death in March of 2002. Dr. Eisenberg was one of the founding leaders of the NQF and sat on its Board of Directors. In his roles both as AHRQ administrator and chair of the federal government's Quality Inter-Agency Coordination Task Force, he was a passionate advocate for patient safety and health care quality and personally led AHRQ's grant program to support patient safety research.

Awards may be given in each category in any year. However, an award need not be given in each category every year. For more information about the awards, please call the Joint Commission's Customer Service Center at 630.792.5800.

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Founded in 1951, the **Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations** seeks to continuously improve the safety and quality of care provided to the public through the provision of health care accreditation and related services that support performance improvement in health care organizations. The Joint Commission evaluates and accredits more than 15,000 health care organizations and programs in the United States, including more than 8,200 hospitals and home care organizations, and more than 6,800 other health care organizations that provide long term care, assisted living, behavioral health care, laboratory and ambulatory care services. The Joint Commission also accredits health plans, integrated delivery networks, and other managed care entities. In addition, the Joint Commission provides certification of disease-specific care programs, primary stroke centers, and health care staffing services. An independent, not-for-profit organization, the Joint Commission is the nation's oldest and largest standards-setting and accrediting body in health care. Learn more about the Joint Commission at www.jcaho.org.

NQF is a private, not-for-profit, public benefit corporation created in 1999 to improve the quality of American healthcare through endorsement of consensus-based national voluntary consensus standards for measurement and public reporting of healthcare performance data that provide meaningful information about whether care is safe, timely, beneficial, patient-centered, equitable and efficient. Established as a unique public-private partnership, NQF has more than 260 members representing all parts of the healthcare industry. Visit NQF on the web at www.qualityforum.org.