

# AACN Beacon Award for Excellence®

The Beacon Award for Excellence provides a road map and tools to assist hospital units on their path to excellence, honoring individual units that distinguish themselves by improving every facet of patient care.

The Beacon Award's three levels of designation recognize significant milestones along a unit's journey to excellence.



## Why Strive for a Beacon Award?

**Recognition**—Beacon awardees set the standard for excellence in patient care environments by collecting and utilizing evidence-based information to improve patient outcomes, and patient and staff satisfaction. Highly regarded patient safety and quality programs consider a Beacon Award a significant achievement in their evaluation process.

**Recruitment and Retention**—Signifies a positive and supportive work environment with greater collaboration between colleagues and leaders, higher morale and lower turnover. Since Beacon is a unit-based award, the application can be driven by the nursing staff, helping to nurture empowerment and engagement.

**Credibility With Consumers**—Indicates exceptional patient-centered care through consistent processes that engage staff, stakeholders, patients and families.

**Tools to Measure Progress**—Beacon applicants and awardees receive a comprehensive feedback report, which includes strengths and opportunities for improvement to chart the excellence journey over time.

*More than 500 units have received a Beacon Award since 2010, which is a testament to the importance of achieving standards of excellence and the value of being recognized for their efforts.*

American Association of Critical-Care Nurses



## Who can apply?

- Any unit where patients receive their principal nursing care after hospital admission is eligible.
- Units must apply individually. If a hospital has multiple units seeking designation, each unit must submit an application.
- AACN membership is not required for a unit to apply.

## To be eligible to receive the Beacon Award, a unit must meet defined criteria in the following categories:

- Leadership Structures and Systems
- Appropriate Staffing and Staff Engagement
- Effective Communication, Knowledge Management and Learning Development
- Evidence-Based Practice and Processes
- Outcome Measurements

## How to get started—Learn more at [www.aacn.org/beacon](http://www.aacn.org/beacon)

- Download the Beacon Award for Excellence Application Handbook for all the details on the application development and submission process.
- To help your unit develop a strong Beacon application, review the resources and tools section of the website.
- For eligible units, the Beacon Award Audit Tool has a set of questions that will help determine where you are on the journey to excellence and whether you're ready to apply.

For questions regarding the AACN Beacon Award for Excellence, email [beacon@aacn.org](mailto:beacon@aacn.org).

