



December 19, 2011

## EDAC Hits a Momentous Milestone

EDAC has hit a momentous milestone, not only for the program but for the industry, as well. One thousand industry professionals, from all parts of our industry—interior designers, architects, physicians, nurses, healthcare executives, and product manufacturers, to name just a few—have successfully studied for and passed the exam, and are now EDAC certified.

### The history

Though the EDAC exam has been available publicly for less than three years, the road to this milestone started more than eight years ago.

EDAC, an acronym for Evidenced-Based Design Accreditation and Certification, was the brainchild of Kirk Hamilton, a board member emeritus of [The Center for Health Design](#), who proposed it in the fall of 2003, during a board meeting's strategic planning session. The idea was to create a process similar to LEED that would certify individuals by assessing their knowledge of how to apply an evidence-based design (EBD) process when creating healthcare facilities. Hamilton also envisioned that at some point in the future, we could parlay that base of knowledge into accreditation of buildings or spaces that used an EBD process.

Initial funding for EDAC was provided by a grant from the [Robert Wood Johnson Foundation](#) to develop the framework for the program. However, it was the partnership and funding support of our EDAC Educational Partner Nurture by Steelcase and the thousands of volunteer hours donated by more than 100 individuals from all areas of the industry that elevated the concept of EDAC into the program it is today.

EDAC is a thriving community of individuals who are interested in EBD and want to understand how to best put the process into practice. It is a community that stretches across the globe. There are EDAC-certified individuals not only in the United States and Canada, but in New Zealand, the Netherlands, Brazil, Istanbul, Denmark, India, and Jordan.

The timing for EBD could not be more critical. Buildings are the largest capital investment for healthcare organizations, and, designed well, they can be used as a tool to improve desired patient, staff, environmental, and operational outcomes. Not only can the building play a role in improved outcomes, it can help to reduce the cost of care and the overall financial burden putting pressure on the U.S. healthcare system.

In addition to building a community of likeminded individuals, EDAC has served as a networking device, opening the channels of communication between the design and healthcare communities. For many, it serves as a jumping-off point to open conversations about a variety of different topics as well as to help ensure that people are working from the same common vocabulary in spite of potentially diverse backgrounds.

Barbara Dellinger, MA, AAHID, IIDA, CID, EDAC, Associate Vice President at [HDR Architecture Inc.](#), told us, "As an interior designer, the EDAC certification definitely raises the bar and shows a level of competency regarding research. For me, the essence of EDAC is being able to interpret the results of research studies and to share that information with the various disciplines involved in the design of our projects. This includes medical planning, equipment planning, architecture, MEP, and landscape architecture, so when I have information or knowledge to share, I do now ... because I have the research to back it up. In the past, before EDAC, I may not have been so bold when I felt strongly about something. Now I don't back down. It's amazing how it has broadened the communication between all of the disciplines."

### What's next?

EDAC's mission to create a community of individuals who have knowledge about and are committed to using evidence-based design is well on its way. The 1,000 individuals in this healthcare and design community now have a better understanding about what the EBD process is and want to apply this process in their projects and work.

To help them do this, The Center for Health Design, with the continued support of Nurture by Steelcase, is engaged in expanding and developing more resources and tools to assist EDAC-certified individuals with the integration of EBD into their day-to-day work. This includes tools such as the RIPPLE database and Clinic Design website, which help them find relevant research from a common database as well as case studies and stories to help industry members learn more about how others have succeeded in doing this well. Training and educational sessions, like the "Practice EBD Clinic" offered at the HEALTHCARE DESIGN conference in Nashville last month, provide access to industry experts, and coaching and support in learning the practical application of EBD.

We're also looking at ways we can encourage more people to engage research teams to conduct post-occupancy evaluations that create new research to add to the existing body of knowledge.

### Call to action

If you would like to join the movement and become EDAC certified, join one of the many EDAC study groups that are popping up across the country or start one of your own. The Center for Health Design's staff can support you to help create groups in your community. If you are already EDAC certified, join the EDAC LinkedIn group. This diverse group of individuals is frequently posting questions and resources to the LinkedIn page that are sure to be of interest to you. And, if you have not yet thought about taking the exam, download the free EDAC Study Guide 1 from The Center for Health Design's website at <http://tinyurl.com/5t1jayh>.

As always, I welcome your ideas and comments on EDAC or any of the other Center for Health Design programs. You can reach me at [dlevin@healthdesign.org](mailto:dlevin@healthdesign.org) or sign up to follow me on Twitter @CHD\_DeBraLevin.

Wishing you all a wonderful holiday season filled with friends and family, and good health and great adventures in the New Year. HCD

For more information on The Center for Health Design, please visit [www.healthdesign.org](http://www.healthdesign.org).

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# Leading the way

EDAC Champion and Advocate firms as well as Pebble Pioneers are leaders in the industry who have taken a bold stance to support the use of an evidence-based design practice. Champion firms helped the process early on by developing content and helping support the launch of the exam. Advocate firms are helping to advance the mission by committing to have 25% of their healthcare design team certified within one year of signing up. Pebble Pioneers commit a minimum of six individuals to become EDAC certified and to document their evidence-based design process. Below is a list of Champion and Advocate firms, and Pebble Pioneers, at press time.

## Champion firms

- American Art Resources
- CAMA Inc.
- Cannon Design
- Harley Ellis Devereaux
- Kahler Slater Architects Inc.
- Salvatore Associates

## Advocate firms

- B+H Architects
- CBLH Design Inc.
- CEI Architecture
- Cogdell Spencer ERDMAN
- Cotter Architects
- Czopek & Erdenberger Inc.
- Earl Swensson Associates
- Gensler
- Gresham, Smith & Partners
- HDR Architecture Inc.
- Healthcare Art Consulting
- Jain Malkin Inc.
- Kasian Architecture Interior Design & Planning
- Leo A Daly
- Silver Thomas Hanley
- Stantec Architecture
- T<sup>2</sup> Designs Inc.
- Visions in Architecture
- Wellness Environments

## Pebble Pioneer

- WellStar Health System
- Provincial Health Services Authority