

## **2017 IFNA Award Nomination: Innovative Contribution to Family Nursing Award**

### **Nomination of Akiko Araki, RN, PHN, DNSc, MBA**

by: Kiyoko Kamibepu RN, PHN, PhD

Dr. Akiko Araki currently serves as Director of Nursing at Chiba Rehabilitation Center and has enjoyed an unparalleled career as a family nursing scholar, academic, and senior health care administrator in Japan who has consistently prioritized the advancement of family nursing knowledge to improve the care of families who have children experiencing severe physical disabilities.

Her advocacy for families with disabled children first began as a staff nurse at Chiba Rehabilitation Center, one of Japan's leading rehabilitation programs, following her baccalaureate nursing education in 1988. Realizing the need for more education, she completed her MSN and DNSc degrees at Chiba University while involved in academic teaching and research at Gunma Medical College of Technology, Iwate Prefectural University, and Chiba University. In 2005, Dr. Araki was awarded an International Nursing Scholar grant by the Japanese Ministry of Education to study with Dr. Diane Holditch-Davis at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. In 2008, Dr. Araki returned to Chiba Rehabilitation Center to serve as the Associate Director of Nursing and in 2010 she was also asked to fill the role of Director of Human Resources Management. Realizing again the need for more learning, she successfully completed her MBA degree in 2013 and assumed her new appointment as Director of Nursing of Chiba Rehabilitation Center. Her career choices are a testament to her deep commitment to families, her development and dissemination of family nursing knowledge, and her vision for excellence across all three domains of family nursing practice, education, and research.

Dr. Araki's program of research began with a focus on family nursing with families of children with severe disabilities and the promotion of mother and child interaction in the early phases of family development and normalization. An emphasis on practice-based research remains consistent across all of her funded research projects. In her academic roles, her research was consistently conducted in early intervention practice units for children with disabilities where she developed and tested intervention skills for promoting mother and child interaction. Following her international research collaboration in the USA, she developed the Parenting Stress Index (PSI) Short Form which is now widely used in practice and research to assess parental distress in Japanese families of children with disabilities. She is currently a co-investigator on a Japanese research team who have received consecutive funding to explore beliefs of families who have children with disabilities. This work is now moving forward with the design of intervention studies and the development a research instrument to measure family beliefs. Since 2008, she has also served as a co-investigator with a team of midwifery researchers who are examining the experience of Japanese families who are raising grandchildren with special needs. Her concurrent responsibilities as a senior nurse administrator of a large rehabilitation center have allowed her the opportunity to promote a philosophy of patient and family centered care through interprofessional education of the rehabilitation team. She is now implementing a knowledge transfer project which will examine the outcomes of teaching rehabilitation nurses the knowledge

and skills of family nursing. The results of this research will be reported at the 13<sup>th</sup> International Family Nursing Conference in Pamplona, Spain in June 2017.

Throughout her career, Dr. Araki has volunteered her time and expertise to family nursing leadership in Japan and beyond. She is a long-standing member of the Board of Directors of the Japanese Association for Research in Family Nursing (JARFN), has served on the Policy, Research and Finance Committees of JARFN and is now the Chair of the Public Relations Committee of JARFN. She currently has the honor of being chosen to serve as the Chair of the 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of JARFN which will be held September 2-3, 2017 in Chiba, Japan. This is the first time that the Chair of the Annual JARFN conference is a family nursing scholar in a clinical role. The theme of the 2017 conference is “*The Practice of Family Nursing Expected in the Era of Community Inclusive Care*” with the goal of strengthening the links between research and clinical practice.

Dr. Araki is an influential member of other nursing societies and government committees in Japan: Committee Member, Japan Society of Child Health Nursing engaged in developing a policy proposal related to Child Nursing; Member of the Editorial Board for the Japan Academy of Nursing Science; Member of the Editorial Board and a Committee Member of Research/Scientific Information; and President, Japan Rehabilitation Nursing Association. In her position as a senior nurse administrator, Dr. Araki consults with the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare about care that contributes to nursing for families. For example, respite hospitalization at medical-setting disabled child care facilities were experiencing low price per bed and poor profitability. As a result of Dr. Araki’s suggestion of new cost calculations to the Ministry, the medical fee has now been revised and the treatment fee for medical care can more efficiently be calculated.

Dr. Araki has been a member of IFNA since 2009 and has presented at each International Family Nursing Conference. She served as a member of the IFNA Nominating Committee from 2014-2015 and her efforts helped to further understanding about talented family nursing leaders in Japan and develop stronger networks of relationships between IFNA and family nurses in Asia.

Dr. Araki’s tireless and bold efforts to provide an unusual combination of family nursing leadership roles in practice, research, and education in Japan are deserving of an Innovative Contribution to Family Nursing Award. She has been very skillful and visionary in developing and implementing family nursing knowledge as a family nursing scholar. She has combined this academic scholarship with her outstanding clinical scholarship and leadership which has created unprecedented possibilities for transforming care for families with children with special needs in Japan and expanding a new vision of leadership for the next generation of family nurses.