

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT

Ernest Codman



Early Life

Codman was born in Boston in 1869. Codman entered Harvard College in 1887 and subsequently graduated from Medical School in 1895. As part of his studies he travelled across Europe and to Egypt.



Initial Career

Codman began his medical career at Massachusetts General Hospital and joined the surgical staff. In 1914 the hospital refused his plan for evaluating surgeon competence and he lost his privileges and left.



End Result Idea

Codman subsequently set up his own hospital which he called the 'End Result Hospital'. This adopted the then controversial idea that every hospital should follow every patient it treats long enough to determine if care was successful.



Key publication

Codman's *A Study in Hospital Efficiency* published results of his own practice. Of the 337 patients discharged Codman recorded 123 errors. He then helped found the American College of Surgeons and its Hospital Standardisation Programme.



Other work

Codman's work was wide and varied. Closely related to his 'End Result System', Codman set up his registry on bone sarcoma in 1920. His interest in the shoulder joint led to his expert book *The Shoulder* in 1934. He published over 100 books/papers.



Pioneer

Codman must be viewed a crusader and pioneer whose ground-breaking work is now common place. His 'End Result Idea' was a forerunner of today's 'evidence-based medicine'. His use of outcome measures are now widely used to improve quality and safety.