

06/09/12 - Local Dentist Honored by State Foundation



The New Hampshire Dental Society Foundation recently honored Dr. John P. Ahern of Derry with its prestigious Charles Lambrukos Award. This award is given to an individual who goes beyond the ordinary to provide service to the local community. Dr. Ahern was part of the original stakeholders group of greater Derry dentists, educators, and school nurses who developed the 1993 pilot for a school dental program in Derry and Londonderry funded by the Alexander Eastman Foundation. John and Dr. Patricia Timmeny were the original supervising dentists for the program that quickly expanded from 2 pilot schools to 12 elementary schools in the 6 towns served by the AE Foundation.

Dr. Ahern has been a vocal advocate, advisor, and volunteer for the program, now called Children's Dental Network, since its inception. During his 20 years of service, the program has continued to expand to include Salem schools, middle schools, Head Start, and WIC ? 30 sites in all now.

John was an early supporter of the program's delivery of oral health education programs in all of the schools, visiting classrooms himself in the early years. He has supported the delivery of evidence-based services to the students treated by the program and along with several other area dentists donates dental treatments in his office for children referred by the Children's Dental Network. Almost 40 dentists volunteer their time each year to the Children's Dental Network. John Ahern is being singled out for recognition because of his leadership role for 20 years in promoting oral health and access.

Children are not the only direct beneficiaries of his access promotion activities. In 2003, John was very actively involved in the creation of an adult oral health program for members of Greater Derry Community Health Services (CHS). He was part of a group of local dentists who worked with CHS to create a program for members in which participating dentists treat them for only a small affordable fee for each appointment.

Children's Dental Network is now operated by a non-profit organization called Greater Derry Oral Health Collaborative Corporation. John, an original Board member of the non-profit's Board of Directors serves as a liaison to the Alexander Eastman Foundation. This year John is Chairman of the Alexander Eastman Foundation Board of Directors. This Foundation gives grants and scholarship assistance that promote good health and well-being for residents of the greater Derry area that improve the quality and availability of healthcare in the community.

Dr. Ahern has been a member of the New Hampshire Dental Society since 1989 and currently serves on the Council on Governmental Affairs. He and his wife Kelly have 3 adult children and they reside in Londonderry.