

**New Hampshire Doctor Named 2018 Family Physician of the Year**  
*Suncook family physician recognized for his compassion and expertise  
caring for people who battle pain and addiction*

SAN ANTONIO — The American Academy of Family Physicians today awarded its highest honor to Gerard J. Hevern, MD, FAFAP, of Suncook, New Hampshire. Hevern was named the AAFP's national 2018 Family Physician of the Year, which honors one outstanding American family physician who provides patients with compassionate, comprehensive care, and serves as a role model in his or her community and to other health professionals.

As the United States finds itself amid an opioid crisis, Hevern's unique combination of excellence and experience as a family physician, an addiction specialist, and a pain management specialist make him an ideal and timely recipient for this year's award, which he accepted during the AAFP's annual meeting, the Family Medicine Experience.

For nearly four decades, Hevern has practiced the full scope of family medicine in a medically underserved community of 5,000 people in southern New Hampshire. It is here that he continues to provide the full spectrum of care ranging from obstetrics to pediatrics to hospital care and nursing home care of his patients as part of the Elliot Physician Network.

Hevern recognized very early in his career the integral role of family physicians in treating chronic pain and substance use disorders. Since 2008, he has served as medical director of comprehensive pain management at the Elliot Hospital Pain Management Center at River's Edge in neighboring Manchester, New Hampshire, where he employs a comprehensive treatment approach to help high-risk patients who suffer from chronic pain syndrome and addiction.

Previously, Hevern served as medical director at Riverway Center for Recovery at Catholic Medical Center in Manchester, where he helped develop a medical detoxification program for individuals voluntarily requesting safe detoxification from alcohol and drugs. He also served as medical director of CareUnit at Lakeshore Hospital in Manchester, where he implemented a substance abuse treatment model for the chemical dependency unit of the freestanding psychiatric hospital. And, from 1979 to 1985, he worked as a staff physician in the alcohol treatment unit of Catholic Medical Center, where he provided medical management and gave educational talks to people voluntarily admitted for help with their addiction.

Hevern's commitment to health and well-being extends beyond his practice to his community and elsewhere. He currently serves as a member of the Manchester Cooperative Pain and Opioid Project, a joint effort by local hospitals, health care systems and physicians to effectively deal with the surge in overdoses, emergency room visits, hospitalizations and deaths due to the community's opioid crisis. In addition, Hevern lectures at local and regional high schools, colleges and universities about substance abuse issues, and appears on local television programs to discuss prescription drug and alcohol abuse.

Hevern also has long dedicated himself to helping children. He was a leader with the New Hampshire Youth Advocacy Project, where he provided education to foster parents about caring for children at risk for substance use disorders. As chairman of the medical advisory committee to the New Hampshire Easter Seals affiliate, he worked diligently to assist children with disabilities and special needs. Hevern currently serves on the board of directors for the Thompson Island Outward Bound School in Boston.

Hevern lectures extensively throughout New England to audiences of physicians, physician assistants, nurses, pharmacists, addiction specialists, students, law enforcement and people in recovery on a variety of topics, including prescription drug misuse in the elderly, opioid and heroin withdrawal, addiction pharmacology, America's fascination with drugs, and multi-drug overdose, to name only a few.

Hevern earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in social relations (cum laude) from Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and his medical degree from the State University of New York in Stony Brook. He began his family medicine residency at the University of Western Ontario, St. Joseph's Hospital in London, Ontario, Canada, and finished at the State University of New York's family medicine residency program at Southside Hospital in Bay Shore. He has earned many certifications related to pain and addiction medicine.

Hevern is board certified by the American Board of Family Medicine. He has the AAFP Degree of Fellow, an earned degree awarded to family physicians for distinguished service and continuing medical education.

Editor's Note: To arrange an interview with Dr. Hevern, please contact Janelle Davis at (800) 274-2237, ext. 5222, or (913) 912-0377. A downloadable photo is available online here. <http://www.aafp.org:4502/cf#/content/aafp/media-center/releases-statements/all/2017/fpoy-2018-hevern.html>

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### **About the American Academy of Family Physicians**

Founded in 1947, the AAFP represents 129,000 physicians and medical students nationwide. It is the only medical society devoted solely to primary care.

Family physicians conduct approximately one in five office visits -- that's 192 million visits annually or 48 percent more than to the next most visited medical specialty. Today, family physicians provide more care for America's underserved and rural populations than any other medical specialty. Family medicine's cornerstone is an ongoing, personal patient-physician relationship focused on integrated care.

To learn more about the specialty of family medicine, the AAFP's positions on issues and clinical care, and for downloadable multi-media highlighting family medicine, visit [www.aafp.org/media](http://www.aafp.org/media). For information about health care, health conditions and wellness, please visit the AAFP's award-winning consumer website, [www.FamilyDoctor.org\(www.familydoctor.org\)](http://www.FamilyDoctor.org(www.familydoctor.org)).