Dr. Patterson is professor emeritus in the Department of Family Medicine at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health in Madison, WI. In this role, he maintains an active family practice and teaches residents in family medicine.

He has been active in Physicians for Social Responsibility and has twice served as president of PSR. PSR is the US affiliate of The International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, winners of the 1985 Nobel Peace Prize.

He has traveled extensively in the former USSR and has lectured about the effects of nuclear weapons and radiation there, in Europe, as well as in Japan and the US. Dr. Patterson has visited Chernobyl and the Fukushima area as well as sites of nuclear testing in the former Soviet Union and the US. His special interests include the effects of radiation, non-violent alternatives to war as means of preventing war, and sustainable methods of ameliorating climate change.

Dr. Patterson is the medical director of the Hackett Hemwall Foundation (HHF), a charitable foundation doing medical work in Honduras, Mexico, and the Philippines. Through the foundation, with the help of many dedicated volunteers, he has taught physicians from over 28 countries around the world the procedure of prolotherapy to treat chronic pain.