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HELP FIGHT OPIOID EPIDEMIC WITH NATIONAL DRUG TAKE-BACK DAY ON SATURDAY, OCT. 26

Dentists encourage safe disposal of unused, unneeded medications

SEATTLE – Oct, 25, 2019 – The Washington State Dental Association (WSDA) is encouraging all Washingtonians to participate in National Drug Take-Back Day this Saturday, Oct. 26. Prescription medications can be dropped off at participating law enforcement agencies from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Over the last five years, dentists have written nearly half a million fewer opioid prescriptions than they did in the previous five said WSDA Executive Director Bracken Killpack. However, despite a concerted effort to reduce access to opioids, more than 6 million Americans misuse controlled prescription drugs, according to the 2017 National Survey on Drug Use and Health.

The study also found that a majority of abused prescription drugs were obtained from family and friends, often from the home medicine cabinet. This unintended access is especially true for teenagers and young adults.

"Like our counterparts throughout the medical community, WSDA member dentists are committed to the best health outcomes for their patients, including careful administration of opioids and other prescription medications," said Killpack. "Individuals can take the small but important step of reducing the amount of unused prescription medicines at home. It's critically important that unused and unneeded prescription medications – opioids and non-opioids alike — be disposed of safely and responsibly."

National Drug Take-Back Days are sponsored by the Drug Enforcement Administration twice each year, in October and April. They are designed to provide everyone with a safe, convenient and responsible way of disposing of prescription drugs. Working with community partners, the DEA has helped get more than 12 million pounds of excess prescription drugs out of American homes and keep them off the streets.

“We urge you to consider joining the fight against opioid abuse by taking a few minutes to safely dispose of unused and unneeded prescription medicines on Oct. 26th,” added Killpack.

“It can make a big difference in the fight to combat the opioid epidemic in our community.”

To find a location near you, please visit: https://takebackday.dea.gov/.

-30-

About the WSDA

The Washington State Dental Association’s 4,400 member dentists are committed to solutions that prevent disease and ensure quality oral health for all Washingtonians. WSDA empowers its members to advocate for and provide optimal oral health care.