



MAKE A DIFFERENCE WITH FREEDOM DAY USA 2017

Freedom Day USA gives dentists the opportunity to give back to military personnel, veterans and their families.

[curated by Dr. Lou Shuman with Wendy Boyce, National Marketing Director, Freedom Day USA]

If I had to pick one dentist to represent our whole profession at the White House or the United Nations, it would be Dr. Robert Martino—and I think that everyone who knows him would agree. Five years ago, in a never-ending quest to make a difference, Dr. Robert Martino created Freedom Day USA, an annual day of thanks that invites dental offices from around the country to provide free dentistry to military personnel, veterans and their families. It is a day that gives dentistry a great name, and for all those who participate it is a day they never forget.

This year, Freedom Day USA takes place on Oct. 12, 2017.

To provide more detail on this incredibly special initiative, I met with Wendy Boyce, national marketing director of Freedom Day USA, to discuss the most commonly asked questions about Freedom Day.

What exactly is Freedom Day USA and what is its goal?

Freedom Day USA is a national thank-you event that takes place one day each year. Dental teams across the nation provide complimentary services to our active military, their immediate families and to our veterans.

There is a significant unmet need among military veterans and their families for basic oral health care. Benefits are not universally available to all veterans, and both preventative care and reparative treatment often go neglected. So besides providing dental teams with a unique vehicle to directly thank our military, their families and all veterans for the sacrifices they have made for our freedom, we hope to unify the dental community as a voice for change to improve dental coverage and benefits for our veterans and their families.

Are there restrictions on the services that participating dental offices provide?

Not at all. Dental practices are listed as Freedom Day USA participants whether they see one patient or dedicate every chair on the schedule for Freedom Day USA guests. The dentist and his team determine the services they would like to provide. Many of our participants provide complimentary hygiene appointments along with same-day operative procedures, while others are more specific or limited in their offer. This “thank you” comes from the dentist and their team, so it’s completely up to each practice! The only thing we ask is that whatever services are provided are completely free.

Have past participants found that Freedom Day USA benefits their practice?

Absolutely. Along with being able to do something nice for the military/veteran community, Freedom Day USA is an amazing team-building experience for the office. While the main goal is to give back, we have many offices tell us that they experience an increase in new patients due to their involvement, and the media often showcases the practice (free advertising) as the event gets closer. Many teams appear on the news, in the paper and in magazines/articles.

How does the community find out that a local practice is participating?

Once an office signs up as a Freedom Day USA participant, we provide them with a media kit that contains press release templates, social media tips, planning guidance and more. These tools help them let their community and guests know about the event. The practice is also listed as a participating provider on the Freedom Day USA website and is included in social media posts in the days leading up to the event.

Is there any cost to participate?

Registering as a Freedom Day USA Participant is completely free. The only cost incurred is the value of the “thank-you”

offer (the services provided). Additionally, because we are a 501(c)(3) public charity, we suggest that providers check with their tax professional to see how participation may be tax deductible.

What’s involved in planning and holding the actual event?

After registering, the team schedules the guests as they call in, based on the practice’s specific thank-you offer. The practice will want to review the media kit and use the tools inside to raise awareness for what they are doing. On event day, they conduct business as usual (i.e. utilizing current practice forms, appointment times, etc.) We do ask providers to keep track of how many patients they see and an approximate value of the services they provide, as we’ll send a short survey following the event. Beyond that, it’s up to the individual office as to how event day works. Some make Freedom Day USA a celebration with decorations and door prizes donated from local businesses, or recruit other businesses around town to host events (making Freedom Day a community celebration). Others focus on providing services to the appointed Freedom Day USA patients, which is incredibly special by itself. Speaking directly to the dental community, “Freedom Day is about YOUR thank you. You design your day based on how you want to honor your Freedom Day USA guests.”

How does a practice become a part of Freedom Day USA?

It’s easy to register as a Freedom Day USA providing practice—just fill out the registration form at <http://www.freedomdayusa.org/business-participant-registration>. Once we receive the registration, we send out the media kit, populate our website listing and publish social media posts announcing new Freedom Day USA practices. New registrants are added to our mailing list and receive tips and other helpful info leading up to the event. Of course, the Freedom Day USA team is always available to support any informational needs that participating practices may have. ●