April 28, 2016

Charles Rosenberg, M.P.P., J.D.
Acting Administrator
Drug Enforcement Administration
800 K Street NW, Suite 500
Washington, DC  20001

Dear Administrator Rosenberg:

On behalf of our 159,000 members, we are pleased to reiterate our enthusiastic support for the National Prescription Drug Take Back Initiative. This nationwide campaign provides periodic opportunities for people to safely dispose of their unused prescription drugs at participating collection sites throughout the country.

Opioid pain medications—such as hydrocodone (Vicodin®), oxycodone (OxyContin® or Percocet®), morphine, and codeine—have become a leading source of drug abuse among teens and young adults. Parents are sometimes fooled into handing over these drugs to treat an apparent symptom of physical distress or pain. More often, they are stolen from the medicine cabinet or lifted from the trash.

National Prescription Drug Take-Back events provide a safe, convenient, and responsible way for parents to dispose of unused prescription drugs. Prescription drug disposal sites are also a place where the general public can learn about the abuse potential of opioid pain medications. (Many parents don’t know that using these drugs other than prescribed is illegal, dangerous, and can even be fatal.)

As prescribers of opioid pain medications, dentists have a role to play in preventing their abuse, misuse, and diversion. One way is to counsel parents on how to safely secure and dispose of unused medications. Another is to tell patients about National Prescription Drug Take-Back events and prescription drug disposal sites in their area.

The ADA has proudly supported the National Prescription Drug Take Back Initiative since 2012, and we are pleased (once again) to offer our enthusiastic support. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Robert J. Burns at 202-789-5176 or burnsr@ada.org. Information is also available at ADA.org/opioids.

Sincerely,

/s/ Carol Gomez Summerhays, D.D.S.
President

/s/ Kathleen T. O’Loughlin, D.M.D., M.P.H.
Executive Director

CGS:KTO:rjb