

10 WAYS TO CELEBRATE DENTAL ASSISTANTS RECOGNITION WEEK

By Patterson Dental

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Dental Assistants Recognition Week (#DARW21) is March 7-13, 2021. Held the first full week in March each year, DARW is organized by the American Dental Assistants Association (ADAA) and is meant to recognize dental assistants for the key role they play in dental practices throughout the year.

Dental assistants do more than simply assist the dentist during various treatment procedures. Dental assistants are skilled in both interpersonal and technical skills, performing a wide range of duties from taking X-rays and impressions to discussing oral hygiene strategies with patients and even serving as the infection control officer in some cases.

Dental Assistants Recognition Week is the perfect time to acknowledge and honor these professionals for the important work they perform in helping provide patients with quality dental care. To that end, we've put together this list of 10 ways to recognize the dental assistants at your office.

- 1. Give a social media shout out.** By publicly recognizing the dental assistants at your office, you're not only showing your staff you care, but also your patients.
- 2. Display a sign in the waiting room.** When the first thing a dental assistant sees when they walk in to the office is a sign thanking them for their contribution, they can't help but feel loved and appreciated.
- 3. Provide a staff breakfast or lunch.** A free meal for the office is always a welcomed gesture and can be an easy way to build camaraderie among staff. Bonus points if you order in food from a favorite local restaurant.
- 4. Share a personalized card.** Nothing is better than receiving a hand-written note and card expressing appreciation. Include a gift card to a local restaurant or store to take this gesture to the next level.
- 5. Plan a wellness day.** An employee wellness day can help build office camaraderie and keep staff happy and productive. Consider activities such as on-site massages, mindfulness sessions or fitness classes.
- 6. Gift official DAWR merchandise.** A [coffee tumbler or lunch tote with the DARW seal](#) would not only show you're thinking of them but is a practical gift they may just use all year long.

- 7. Send an email to patients about DAWR.** Bring attention to DAWR by highlighting dental assistants at your practice. A short bio of your dental assistant(s) and a ‘thank you’ will let your patients know you care about your staff.
- 8. Update your website to recognize DAWR.** Add a marquee to your homepage or a new post in your practice’s blog celebrating DAWR and thanking your dental assistants.
- 9. Donate to a charity in their name.** Show you care about their interests by donating to a charity of their choice.
- 10. Pay their ADAA dues.** Many dental practices cover the annual dues to ADAA and other professional organizations already. If your practice does not, announcing this new initiative during DARW is a great way to show you’re interested in their professional development and that you want to see them succeed.

Many of the above examples can be personalized to bring some added meaning to your show of gratitude. When possible, remember to single out each dental assistant to personally thank them and let them know you appreciate their hard work.

The theme for #DARW21 is “Dental Assistants - Our Heart Goes into Every Smile” and is meant to acknowledge the importance of dentistry's role in health care and the responsibilities of dental assistants. By dedicating a week at your practice to recognize the dental assistants at your office, you’re showing your staff and patients you support them and their career. We hope you find these ideas helpful – happy Dental Assistants Appreciation Week!

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