

RFHD Press Release 1

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Volunteer for Rotary Family Health Days 2016

Recently, Mandela Day highlighted the power of ordinary citizens to give back. For those of you who are looking to make even more of a difference, Rotary Family Health Days offers another great opportunity for volunteers to get involved.

The fourth annual Rotary Family Health Days will be held at sites across South Africa over three days from October 12 – 14 October 2016. Members of underprivileged communities get access to vital basic health care, including free health screenings and immunizations. Months of preparation go into making the event a success, and it couldn't happen without the contribution of many dedicated volunteers.

Rotary is well-known as the world's largest volunteer service organization. The story of Rotary Family Health Days goes back to one Rotarian, Marion Bunch, who lost her son to AIDS in 1994. Determined to turn her grief into a positive force for change, Marion founded Rotarians for Family Health & Aids Prevention (RFHA) in 2004. In 2013, RFHA launched the first Rotary Family Health Days event in South Africa. In 2015, Rotary Family Health Days became part of the National Department of Health's annual program of activities, with RFHA as the convener and managing partner of the event.

Rotary Family Health Days 2016 will therefore be an example of public-private partnership at its best. The logistics for the sites will be provided by the National Department of Health provides the logistics for the sites with support from Rotary volunteers. Sponsorship is provided by Gilead, the California-based biopharmaceutical company. Media support for awareness of the campaign will be provided by the SABC, Caxton, Independent Newspapers and Media24.

This year, there is a particular focus on adolescent girls and young women as part of the National Department of Health's strategic plan. The campaign will fast track efforts to empower young people, especially adolescent girls and women. High HIV incidence in young women and girls is compounded by high levels of teenage pregnancy, school dropout, and gender based violence, and occurs in a context where there are limited economic opportunities for young people.

If you would like to get involved with Rotary Family Health Days, go to rfha.org.za and click on "How to volunteer". Simply fill in the form and Rotary will contact you.