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**ZOGBY INTERNATIONAL**

**Speech And Language Pathologists'  
Observations On Recent Cases Of  
Traumatic Brain Injury**

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## I. Methodology

### **National Survey Of Businesses, 5/2/07 through 5/8/07**

This is a national telephone survey of businesses conducted by Zogby International. The target sample is 202 interviews with approximately 24 questions asked. Samples are randomly drawn from a client-supplied list of contacts. Zogby International surveys employ sampling strategies in which selection probabilities are proportional to population size within area codes and exchanges. Up to ten calls are made to reach a sampled phone number. Cooperation rates are calculated using one of AAPOR's approved methodologies<sup>1</sup> and are comparable to other professional public-opinion surveys conducted using similar sampling strategies.<sup>2</sup> Margin of error is +/- 7.1 percentage points. Margins of error are higher in sub-groups.

Zogby International's sampling and weighting procedures also have been validated through its political polling: more than 95% of the firm's polls have come within 1% of actual election-day outcomes.

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<sup>1</sup> See COOP4 (p.38) in *Standard Definitions: Final Dispositions of Case Codes and Outcome Rates of Surveys*. The American Association for Public Opinion Research, (2000).

<sup>2</sup> *Cooperation Tracking Study: April 2003 Update*, Jane M. Sheppard and Shelly Haas. The Council for Marketing & Opinion Research (CMOR). Cincinnati, Ohio (2003).

## II. Narrative Analysis

1. Over the past five years have you provided cognitive communication services to patients with Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) in the 18-64 year old age range?

Yes	99%
No	1

Virtually every respondent has provided cognitive communication services to 18-64 year-old patients with Traumatic Brain Injury over the past five years.

**Questions 2-19 are asked only of those who responded “yes” to Question 1.**

2. Approximately what percentage of your TBI patients are...?

**Table 1. Age Breakdown of TBI Patients**

	40 and younger	Over 40
Less than 10%	9	2
10% to 25%	14	19
26% to 50%	37	47
51% to 75%	26	14
More than 75%	13	18
Not sure	1	1

Close to half of respondents (47%) say that between 26% to 50% of their TBI patients are older than 40; one in five (21%) says that up to one-fourth of their TBI patients are of this age; one in three (32%) says that more than half of their TBI patients are older than 40.

Just over one-third (37%) say that between 26% to 50% of their TBI patients are 40 and younger; less than one in four (23%) say fewer than one-fourth of their TBI patients are in this age range; two in five (39%) say more than half of their TBI patients are 40 and younger.

3. *What percentage of your TBI patients are...?*

**Table 2. Gender Breakdown of TBI Patients**

	Male	Female
Less than 10%	1	11
10% to 25%	--	51
26% to 50%	9	36
51% to 75%	50	2
More than 75%	41	1

Half of respondents (51%) say that 10% to 25% of their TBI patients are female, while half (50%) say that between 51% and 75% of these patients are male.

4. *Do you see patients with TBI that is related to military service – either soldiers or veterans?*

Yes	19%
No	81

One-fifth of respondents (19%) see patients with TBI that is related to military service, while four times as many (81%) do not.

5. *In the past five years, has the number of patients you've seen with TBI increased, decreased, or stayed about the same?*

Increased	28%
Decreased	8
Stayed about the same	61
Not sure	3

Respondents are most likely to say that over the past five years, the number of patients they've seen with TBI has stayed about the same (61%). Half as many, however, have seen an increase in the number of such patients (28%), and only 8% have seen a decrease over that time period.

6. *(Asked only of those who have seen an increase or decrease.) In which of the following age groups has most of this increase or decrease occurred?*

40 and younger	78%
Over 40	15
Not sure	7

Most of the people who have seen increases or decreases in the amount of these patients over the past five years say they are mostly 40 and younger (78%). One-fifth as many respondents (15%) say most of these patients are older than 40.

7 – 10. For the following, could you please indicate what percentage of your patients have been diagnosed with each.

**Table 3. Percentage of Patients by Diagnosis**

	Cognitive-communication impairment	Dysarthria	Dysphagia	Language impairment
Less than 10%	2	6	7	2
10% to 25%	7	40	16	14
26% to 50%	15	41	37	38
51% to 75%	15	12	24	24
76% to 99%	27	1	17	16
100%	34	1	1	7
Not sure	--	1	--	--

One-third of respondents say that 100% of their patients have been diagnosed with cognitive-communication impairment. More than one-third say that 26% to 50% of patients have been diagnosed with dysphagia (37%) or language impairment (38%), and another one in four (24%) say that between 51% and 75% have been diagnosed with these ailments. Most respondents say that 10% to 50% of their patients have been diagnosed with dysarthria.

11. Over the past 5 years, have you been able to provide services to your TBI patients at a level of care that is satisfactory to you?

Yes	73%
No	27

Respondents are three times as likely than not (73% to 27%, respectively) to say they are satisfied with the levels of care they've provided their TBI patients over the past five years.

12. Which of the following factors, if any, do you feel limit your ability to provide care consistent with recognized standards? (**Choose all that apply.**)

Patients who don't follow through or comply with treatment	70%
Inadequate health insurance coverage or benefits	64
Lack of family support	53
No health insurance coverage	49
Lack of services (e.g., case management, social, and vocational) in patients' communities	45
None/Not sure	4

Respondents are most likely to feel their ability is limited because of patients who do not follow through or comply with treatment (70%). Nearly as many also feel this way due to inadequate health insurance coverage or benefits (64%). Lack of family support (53%), no health insurance coverage (49%), and lack of services (45%) are also factors cited by approximately half.

*13. Over the past five years, have you felt that the services you've provided to your TBI patients have been adequate for their optimal recovery?*

Yes	76%
No	22
Not sure	2

Three in four (76%) feel their services over the past five years have been adequate for optimal recovery. Just over one in five (22%), however, do not feel such services have been adequate.

*14. Which of the following factors, if any, do you feel hinder your TBI patient's optimal recovery? (Choose all that apply.)*

Inadequate health insurance coverage or benefits	65%
Patients who don't follow through or comply with treatment	61
Lack of family support	49
Lack of services (e.g., case management, social, and vocational) in patients' communities	42
None/Not sure	7

Over three-fifths cite inadequate health insurance coverage/benefits (65%) and patient non-compliance (61%) as factors hindering patients' optimal recovery. Half (49%) cites a lack of family support, and over two-fifths (42%) say that lack of services hinder recovery.

*15. Over the past five years, has the amount of speech-language pathology services received by your TBI patients increased, decreased, or stayed about the same?*

Increased	26%
Decreased	21
Stayed about the same	52
Not sure	2

One-fourth of respondents (26%) have seen an increase in the amount of speech-language pathology services received by their TBI patients over than past five years. One in five (21%), though, has seen a decrease in these services, while half (52%) say the amount of these services has remained basically the same over that time period.

16. Over the past five years, has the amount of insurance coverage for TBI-related treatment increased, decreased, or stayed about the same?

Increased	7%
Decreased	43
Stayed about the same	38
Not sure	12

Respondents are most likely to say they have seen insurance coverage for TBI-related treatment decrease over the past five years (43%). Nearly as many (38%) say that insurance coverage over this time period has remained about the same, but only 7% say that insurance coverage has increased. One in eight (12%) is unsure.

17. Over the past five years, has the severity of the TBI cases you've seen increased, decreased, or stayed about the same?

Increased	28%
Decreased	8
Stayed about the same	62
Not sure	3

More than one in four (28%) have seen the severity of TBI cases increase over the past five years. Twice as many (62%) say that the severity of these cases has stayed about the same, and just 8% say that severity levels have decreased over that time period.

18. Over the past five years, approximately what percentage of your patients has been denied coverage for TBI-related treatment?

10% or less	56%
25%	20
50%	9
75%	--
More than 75%	1
Not sure	15

More than half of respondents say that less than 10% of their patients have been denied coverage for TBI-related treatment over the past five years. One-fifth say that about 25% of their patients have been denied such coverage, and 9% say that half of their patients have been denied this coverage. One in seven (15%) is not sure.

19. *Approximately what percentage of those patients has successfully appealed their denials?*

10% or less	54%
25%	2
50%	3
75%	--
More than 75%	2
Not sure	40

Over half (54%) say that only 10% or less of their patients have successfully appealed their denials for coverage. Two-fifths (40%) are unsure.

Now, a few questions about mild Traumatic Brain Injury.

20. *Do you treat patients with mild TBI?*

Yes	93%
No	7
Not sure	1

Most respondents (93%) treat patients with mild TBI, while only 7% do not.

**Questions 21-24 are asked only of those who responded “yes” to Question 20.**

21. *Over the past five years, has the percentage of the patients you’ve seen with mild TBI increased, decreased, or stayed about the same?*

Increased	48%
Decreased	9
Stayed about the same	42
Not sure	2

Almost half of respondents (48%) have seen an increase in the amount of patients with mild TBI over the past five years, while just 9% say the percentage of these patients has decreased. Two in five (42%) say that these levels have remain unchanged over this timeframe.

22. *Over the past five years, has the amount of speech-language pathology services received by your mild TBI patients, increased, decreased, or stayed about the same?*

Increased	30%
Decreased	15
Stayed about the same	51
Not sure	4

Respondents are twice as likely to say these services have increased (30%) rather than decreased (15%) over the past five years. Half (51%) say they have remained about the same.

23. *Over the past five years, what percentage of your patients with mild TBI was referred six or more months after the injury?*

10% or less	47%
25%	21
50%	14
75%	6
More than 75%	8
Not sure	4

Respondents are most likely to say that 10% or less of these patients were referred six or more months after their injury (47%). Half as many (21%) say that one-fourth of these patients were referred six months or later. One in seven (14%) says that half were referred six or more months after their injury. Six percent say that 75% were referred after this period of time, and 8% say that more than 75% of these patients were referred after this time period.

24. *Which of the following was the most common reason for a delayed referral?*

Other health care providers didn't identify problems or refer to a speech-language pathologist	51%
Lack of patient and/or family understanding and support for mild TBI and the recovery process	16
Patient didn't seek medical attention after the injury or report symptoms	11
Health plan coverage problem	4
Patient experienced a relapse or the treatment needed to sustain progress was not provided	4
*Other	8
Not sure	8

**\*Other responses:** (Number in parentheses denotes frequency of similar response)

I usually get them pretty fast (5); Acute (3)

**One each:** Doctor referral thinking it will get better on its own; None most of the patients have other therapy before they come to me; Patient had other services at Walter Reed; Patient was first getting OT and PT, then was ready to address speech language at a later point; Relocation from treatment at other area; The medical community is not thinking ahead or treating the more physical or life threatening injuries, so the patient's more subtle cognitive issues aren't more evident or looked for, so the problem is being overshadowed

The biggest reason cited for the delay is other health care providers not identifying problems or referring to a speech-language pathologist (51%).