The Hearing Journal/ InnoCaption Survey: Shifting Technological Recommendations for Audiologists

Summary Report

Wolters Kluwer

Executive Summary

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Assistive hearing technology is at a tipping point given the remote nature of our personal and working lives. While traditional resources, such as hearing aids, are still popular, new app-based technologies are gaining traction.

- Landline captioned phone services are still currently more prevalent in the market than captioning mobile app services and have higher reported patient satisfaction.
- Patients have become more accepting of hearing aids; however, some clinicians are concerned about OTC hearing aids.
  - 80% indicated that newly diagnosed hearing patients are more willing to use hearing aids than five years ago.
  - 44% believe that OTC hearing aid products will have a negative impact on existing practices/businesses over the next five years, compared to 33% who believe that they will have a positive impact.
- Smartphone-based phone captioning mobile apps and in-person captioning mobile apps showed the highest increase in the proportion of clinicians who will usually/always recommend them to patients over the next five years (from 34% to 49% and from 14% to 27%, respectively).

Executive Summary

Further adaptation will require broader technology adoption by patients and the education of clinicians on these tools. But there is still a lot of work to do on the education front, across users and clinicians. Further adoption could also be driven by satisfaction in tools currently available.

- Nearly all clinicians (93%) have major challenges limiting their likelihood to recommend a phone captioning mobile app service to patients. The most common are: 1) their patients aren't technologically savvy enough (51%), 2) the clinicians are not familiar with the technology (41%), and 3) their patients aren't interested or don't have a perceived need (39%).

Executive Summary

The increased use of app-based assistive technology coincides with the rise in telehealth, signaling more adoption of technology in healthcare over the next five years.

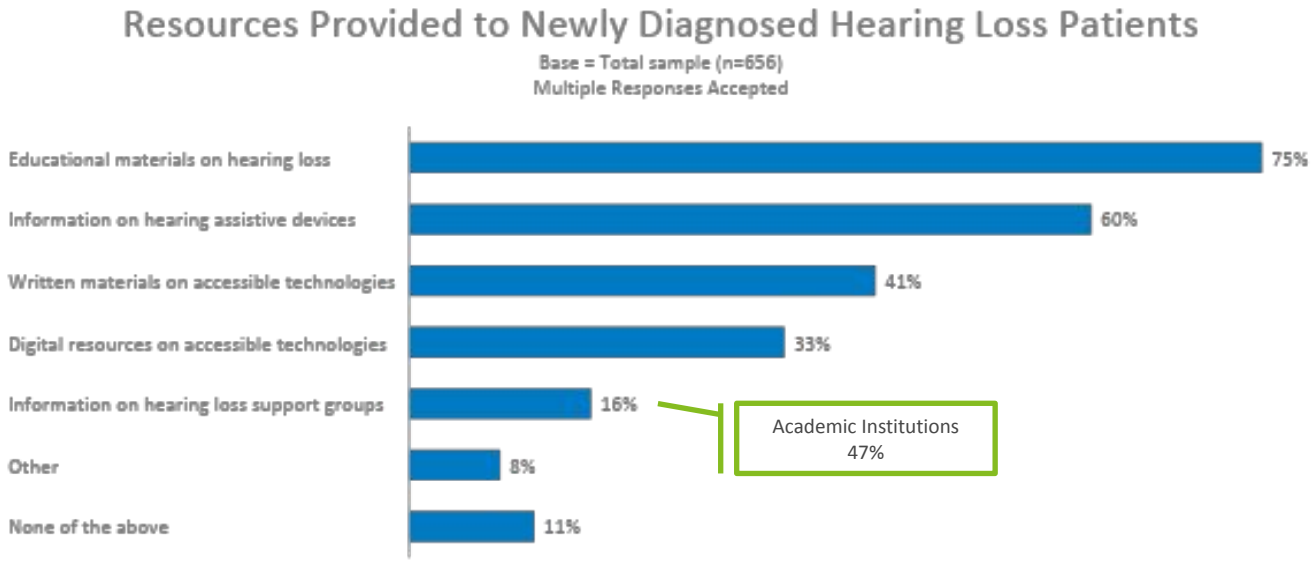
- Telehealth will remain common in the future – over the next five years, 11% expect to have large usage and 47% expect some usage of telehealth in their patient interactions.
  - Just 12% do not expect to use telehealth inpatient interactions over that time.
- In addition to the technologies listed, several commented on the importance of Bluetooth in the next five years.

Recommendations for hearing assistive technologies are expected to change. It is important for hearing professionals to take note of new technologies and make recommendations that can help their patients live more productive, meaningful lives.

Detailed Findings

Resources Provided to Hearing Loss Patients

- Respondents were most likely to provide hearing loss educational materials (75%) and hearing assistive device information (60%) to newly diagnosed hearing loss patients.
- They were also slightly more likely to provide written materials than digital resources (41% vs. 33%) on accessible technologies.

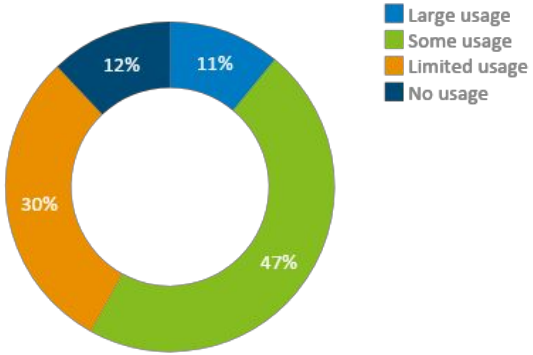


Future Use of Telehealth

- Nearly three in five (58%) expect to have at least some usage of telehealth in patient interactions over the next five years, though just 11% expect large usage of it. Just 12% do not expect to use telehealth in patient interactions over that time.
- Perceptions did not vary greatly among respondents by years in their position nor by role.

Expected Use of Telehealth in Patient Interactions Over Next Five Years

Base = Total sample (n=651)



Expected Use of Telehealth in Patient Interactions Over Next Five Years
Base = Total sample

	YEARS IN POSITION			ROLE	
	10 years or less (n=164)	11-20 years (n=168)	>20 years (n=318)	Audiologists (n=419)	HIS/HAS (n=156)
Large usage	13%	13%	8%	8%	14%
Some usage	47%	49%	46%	48%	51%
Limited usage	30%	27%	32%	33%	24%
No usage	10%	11%	14%	10%	11%

Recommendation of Technology: Now vs. Future

- Nine in ten respondents (91%) usually/always recommend Bluetooth enabled hearing aids. The next most common recommended technologies are wireless connectivity options (46%) and smartphone-based phone captioning mobile apps (34%).
- Over the next five years, more respondents expect to recommend smartphone-based captioning mobile apps and in-person captioning mobile apps (from 34% to 49% and from 14% to 27%, respectively).
  - In addition to the technologies listed, several commented on the importance of Bluetooth in the next five years.

Least likely to be recommended by those in hospitals

Most likely to be recommended by those in hospitals

Recommendation of Technology to Patients – % Usually/Always
Base = Total sample (n=566-579)

	Currently	In 5 Years	Change in %
Smartphone-based phone captioning mobile apps	34%	49%	+15
In-person captioning mobile apps	14%	27%	+13
Wireless connectivity options (e.g., Quattro, Roger Pen, etc.)	46%	51%	+5
Direct connectivity options (e.g., neck loops, Direct Audio Input)	27%	30%	+3
Cochlear implants	18%	21%	+3
Bluetooth enabled hearing aids	91%	93%	+2
Amplified telephones	20%	21%	+1
Telecoil hearing aids	28%	28%	0
Landline captioned telephones	20%	19%	-1

Recommendation of Technology: Now vs. Future (cont.)

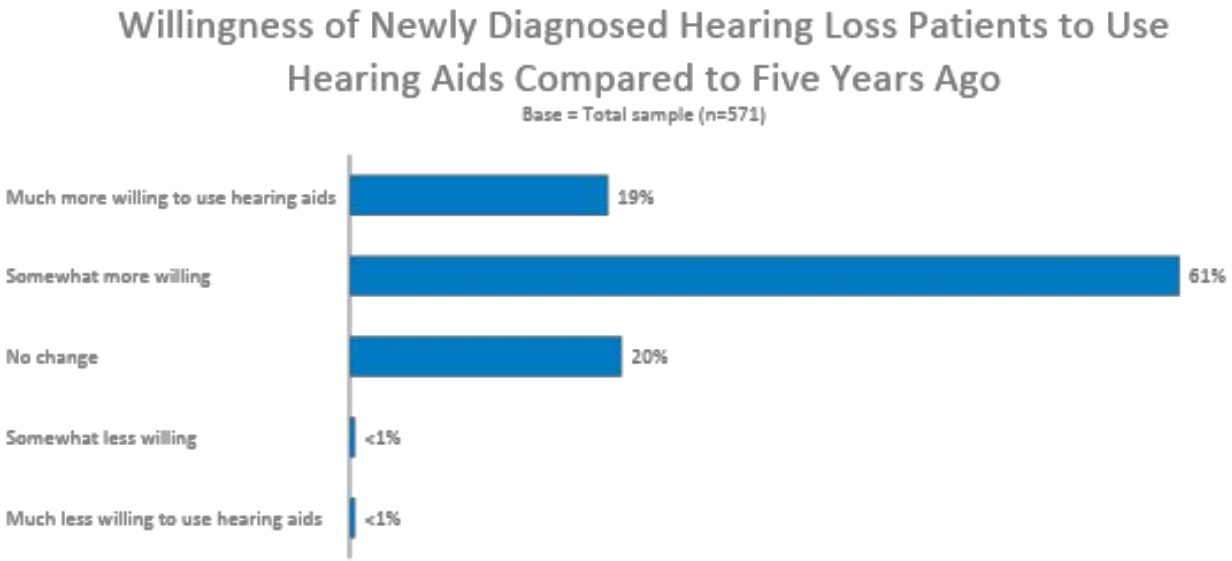
- Smartphone-based phone captioning mobile apps and in-person captioning mobile apps showed the highest increase in the proportion of clinicians who will usually/always recommend them to patients over the next five years (from 34% to 49% and from 14% to 27%, respectively).

Recommendation of Technology to Patients by Role – % Usually/Always
Base = Total sample

	ROLE					
	Audiologists (n=366-377)			HIS/HAS (n=137-145)		
	Currently	In 5 Years	Change in %	Currently	In 5 Years	Change in %
Smartphone-based phone captioning mobile apps	29%	45%	+16	47%	58%	+11
In-person captioning mobile apps	12%	27%	+15	17%	27%	+10
Wireless connectivity options (e.g., Quattro, Roger Pen, etc.)	45%	50%	+5	46%	56%	+10
Direct connectivity options (e.g., neck loops, Direct Audio Input)	26%	28%	+2	28%	34%	+6
Cochlear implants	22%	26%	+4	6%	6%	0
Bluetooth enabled hearing aids	91%	93%	+2	97%	97%	0
Amplified telephones	20%	20%	0	21%	23%	+2
Telecoil hearing aids	29%	28%	-1	25%	28%	+3
Landline captioned telephones	18%	17%	-1	26%	24%	-2

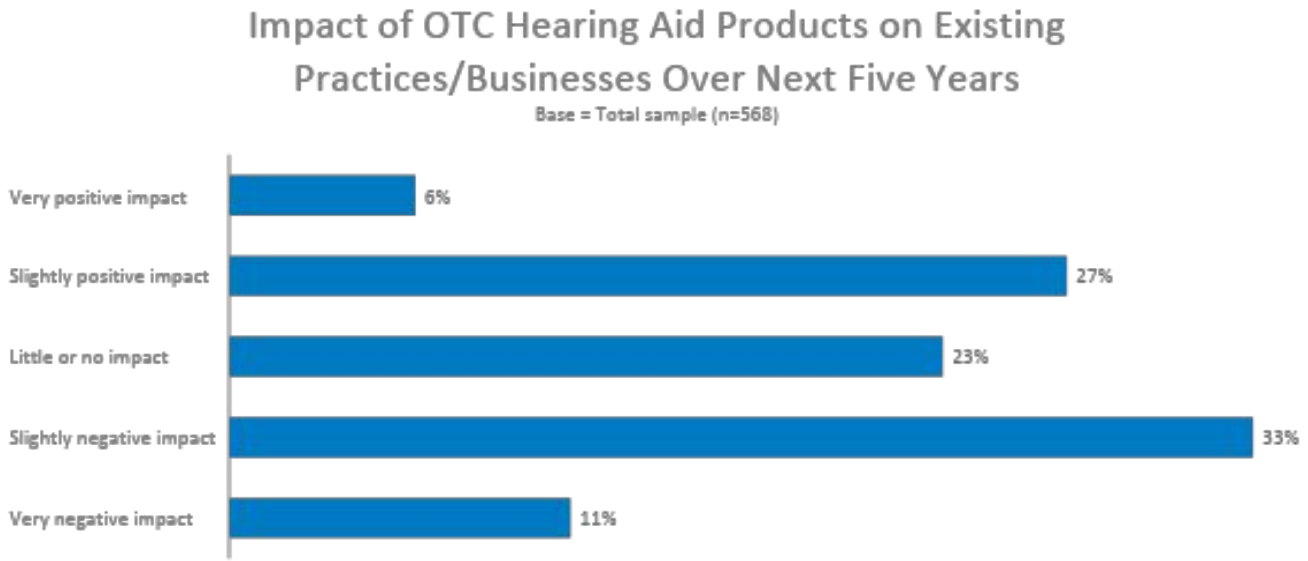
Change in Patient Willingness to Use Hearing Aids

- Eight in ten respondents (80%) indicated that newly diagnosed hearing patients are more willing to use hearing aids than five years ago, with most others (20%) saying there has been no change.



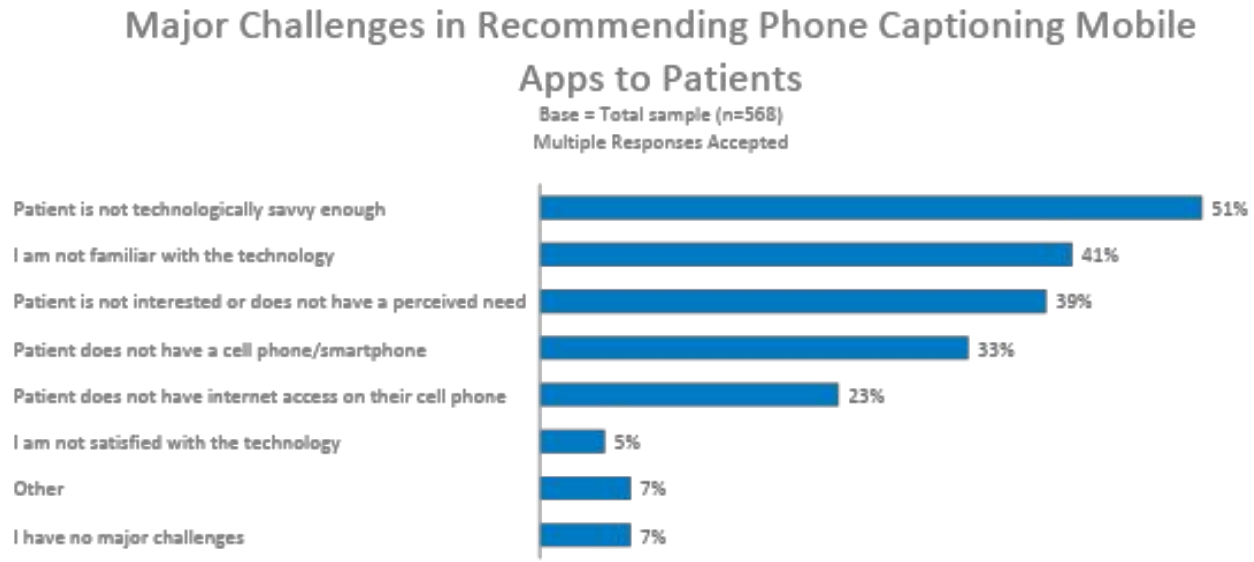
Future Impact of OTC Hearing Aids

- Respondents suggested that the OTC hearing aid products will have a mixed impact on existing practices/businesses over the next five years – 33% believe it will have a positive impact while 44% believe it will have a negative impact.



Challenges in Recommending Phone Captioning Mobile Apps

- More than nine in ten respondents (93%) indicated that they have at least one major challenge in recommending a phone captioning mobile app service.
- Half (51%) reported that their patients are not technologically savvy enough. Two in five said that they are not familiar with the technology (41%) and/or the patient isn't interested or doesn't have a perceived need (39%).



Methodology

- Survey questionnaire was developed within Wolters Kluwer in collaboration with InnoCaption
- Survey conducted online through SurveyMonkey
- Survey deployment and data collection were managed by Wolters Kluwer
- Respondents were entered in a drawing for an Apple iPad
- Data collection details:
  - Fieldwork was conducted in August 2021
  - Survey link was emailed to a random selection of *The Hearing Journal* subscribers
  - 4,834 invitations were emailed
  - 722 survey responses were collected (14.9% response rate)

Respondent Profile

Respondent Profile

Current Job Role Base = Total sample (n=722)	
Audiologist	63%
Hearing Instrument/Aid Specialist (HIS/HAS)	23%
ENT doctor	2%
Student	1%
Other	11%

Years Worked in Practice Area Base = Total sample (n=708)	
Less than 2 years	3%
2 – 5 years	8%
6 – 10 years	15%
11 – 15 years	13%
16 – 20 years	11%
21 years or more	49%

Primary Work Setting Base = Total sample (n=702)	
Private practice	46%
Hospital	12%
Group owned practice	12%
Academic institution (university/college)	6%
Other: K-12 school	3%
Other: Manufacturer	4%
Other: ENT office/clinic	4%
Other: Retail	2%
Other: Government/Military/VA	2%
Other: Clinic/Community center	2%
Other: Retired	1%
Other	6%

Hearing Healthcare Staff at Primary Work Setting Base = Total sample (n=691)	
1 – 2 members	44%
2 – 4 members	27%
5+ members	29%

Work Location Base = Total sample (n=669)			
Florida	8%	Minnesota	4%
Other: Canada	8%	Ohio	3%
California	7%	Pennsylvania	3%
New York	6%	New Jersey	3%
Texas	5%	North Carolina	3%
Illinois	4%	Georgia	3%
Michigan	4%	Other	40%

Respondent Profile (cont.)

Years Worked in Practice Area
Base = Total sample

	ROLE	
	Audiologists (n=450)	**HIS/HAS** (n=163)
Less than 2 years	2%	2%
2 – 5 years	6%	11%
6 – 10 years	14%	17%
11 – 15 years	13%	17%
16 – 20 years	10%	17%
21 years or more	54%	36%

Primary Work Setting
Base = Total sample

	ROLE	
	Audiologists (n=446)	**HIS/HAS** (n=163)
Private practice	42%	63%
Hospital	18%	1%
Group owned practice	8%	25%
Academic institution (university/college)	7%	1%
Other: K-12 school	6%	-
Other: Manufacturer	3%	2%
Other: ENT office/clinic	5%	1%
Other: Retail	1%	6%
Other: Government/Military/VA	3%	-
Other: Clinic/Community center	2%	-
Other: Retired	<1%	-
Other	4%	2%