

THERAPEUTICS INITIATIVE

Evidence Based Drug Therapy

Your opinions of the Therapeutics Initiative: The 2011 Survey

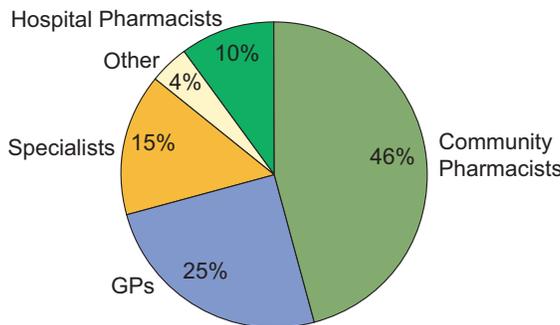
Since its inception in 1994, the Therapeutics Initiative (TI) has been committed to evaluating the impact of its educational activities. The TI has a growing number of educational tools including the Therapeutics Letter, educational events, podcasts, and our first attempts in the world of social media.

The 2011 survey was our fourth, following similar surveys conducted in 1996, 2000 and 2006. Because of new developments within the TI, this survey wasn't identical to the previous three surveys, but it contained some key questions in common with the previous surveys, thus making it possible to assess changes in response rates over time. Each time we randomly selected approximately 10% of the 10,000 physicians and pharmacists in BC who receive the Therapeutics Letter and mailed them a copy of the survey. The 2011 survey consisted of 10 sections assessing the readers' opinions of the educational activities of the Therapeutics Initiative. In October 2011 the survey was mailed to 870 randomly selected physicians and pharmacists throughout BC. In December 2011 and January 2012 we sent reminders to those who had not responded. As an enticement individuals who responded had a chance to win one of three iPads. We received 391 completed surveys, a final response rate of 45%.

In this Letter we summarize the answers to some of the questions included in the survey, comparing them, when possible, to the results of the previous surveys.

A report on responses received to all questions in the survey can be viewed at: www.ti.ubc.ca/survey

Figure 1: Survey Respondents, 2011



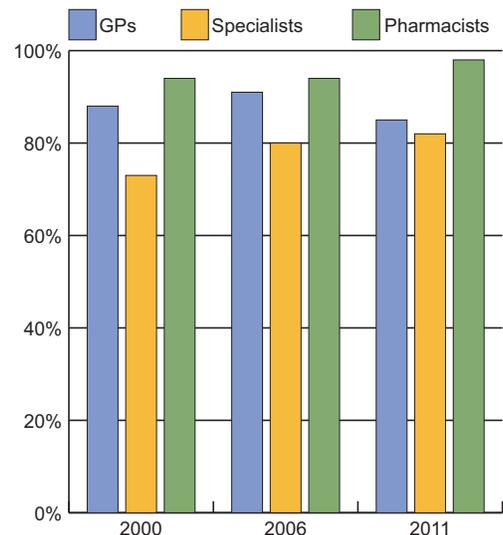
The respondents were a good representation of our audience (see Figure 1). Among the respondents we observed a greater proportion of pharmacists in 2011 (56%) compared to 2006 (43%).

MANDATE Has the TI been successful at meeting its mandate?

The Therapeutics Initiative was established in 1994 at UBC with the mandate to provide physicians and pharmacists with up-to-date, unbiased, evidence based, practical information about drug therapy.

This question was asked in the 2000, 2006 and 2011 surveys (see Figure 2). In 2011 over 80% of physicians and 98% of pharmacists responded that the TI has been successful at meeting its mandate.

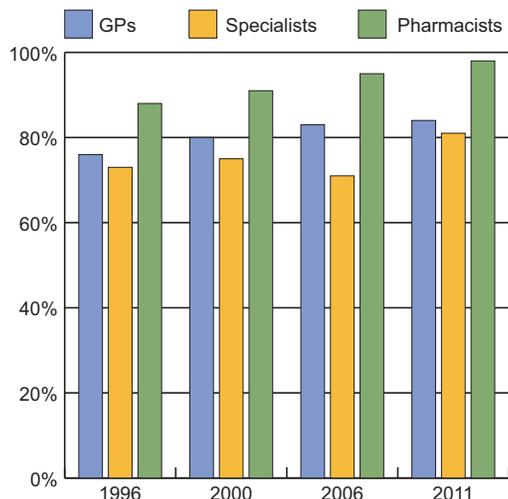
Figure 2: Percentage of respondents who agreed the TI meets its mandate



RELIABILITY Is the information in the Therapeutics Letter accurate and unbiased?

This question was asked in all 4 surveys (1996, 2000, 2006 and 2011, see Figure 3) and we observed a steady increase in the number of respondents who consider the information in the Therapeutics Letter accurate and unbiased.

Figure 3: Percentage of respondents agreeing that the TI Letter is accurate and unbiased



THERAPEUTICS LETTER FORMAT

Printed hardcopy or website?

This question was first asked in 2006 and we found that a large majority of physicians (95%) and pharmacists (92%) preferred the print format in 2006. Although the proportion of physicians and pharmacists choosing the website format has doubled in the last five years, the majority of physicians and pharmacists in 2011 continue to value the hardcopy format (83% of physicians and 73% of pharmacists).

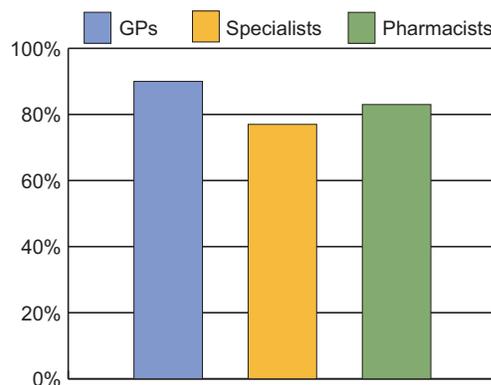
RELEVANCE & INDEPENDENCE

The TI strives to function independently from the pharmaceutical industry and the government and to produce practical, relevant information for health practitioners. To assess our success rate in meeting this objective we asked the respondents if they agreed with the following statements (see Table 1).

IMPACT Has the Therapeutics Letter changed your prescribing or recommendations?

One of the aims of the Therapeutics Initiative is to effect a change in prescribing and utilization of prescription drugs to better reflect the best available evidence. We asked this question to assess our perceived success in this regard. A large majority of the respondents strongly or somewhat agreed that they changed their prescribing or recommendations based on information found in the Therapeutics Letter (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Percentage of respondents strongly or somewhat agreeing that the Therapeutics Letter has changed their prescribing or recommendations



CONCLUSIONS

The survey results are encouraging and stable over the last 15 years. The TI continues to meet its mandate while enjoying the trust of healthcare providers in BC. There is a trend towards more utilization of the Therapeutics Letter on the website, but the majority of users still prefer the hardcopy format.

Future objectives

- To continue to provide clinicians with up-to-date, unbiased, evidence based, practical information about drug therapy.
- To continue disseminating the printed version of the Therapeutics Letter.
- To improve our outreach by disseminating evidence based messages through the website and an expanded range of other educational tools.

Table 1: Percentage of respondents strongly or somewhat agreeing to the following statements

The Therapeutics Initiative	GPs	Specialists	Pharmacists
Provides information that I use in my practice	92%	88%	94%
Provides useful information about the cost of drugs	96%	91%	78%
Functions independently from the drug industry	97%	96%	95%
Functions independently from the government	70%	82%	91%