

Aphasia Insights!

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“The totality of beliefs and sentiments common to the average members of a society forms a determinate system with a life of its own. It can be termed the collective or creative consciousness.”

The Rules of Sociological Method, Sociology and Its Method

David Émile Durkheim (15 April 1858 – 15 November 1917) was a French sociologist. He formally established the academic discipline of sociology and—with Karl Marx, Max Weber and W.E.B. Dubois—is commonly cited as the principal architect of modern social science.

Stroke Educator, Inc. is committed to educating the wider public about stroke and the 50 state “*Aim High for Aphasia!*” Aphasia Awareness Campaign.

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Aphasia Awareness Needs to Go Viral (But Not COVID!) (2020 NAA Aphasia Awareness Survey)

By Tom Broussard, Ph.D.

In order to publicize Aphasia Awareness to the wider public, we require a plan (*Aphasia Awareness--Go Viral 2024*) that links the necessary information about aphasia to stroke in the public consciousness.

Pretty much everyone is “stroke aware,” yet a huge number of stroke survivors (25-40%) acquire this thing called aphasia that very few people know anything about.

This is the second [survey](#) about Aphasia Awareness by the National Aphasia Association (NAA)

The first survey, in 2016, reported 8.8% of the respondents were “aphasia aware.” This year the number dropped to 7%. We lost ground, but we can turn this around.

Many of the people in the 7% were aware of aphasia because they had

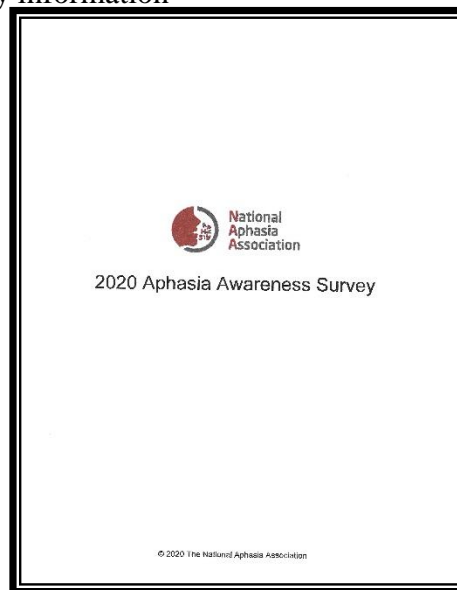
aphasia or knew someone who did. I assume that group includes SLPs, PWAs, OTs, PTs, caregivers, family members, stroke doctors, and nurses as well.

There are about 2.5 million people with aphasia in the U.S., making it more prevalent than cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson’s disease, or muscular dystrophy.

Aphasia is identified as a language disorder, but many hospitals and healthcare providers do not use the lexicon of “aphasia” in their website or public literature.

The *Aphasia in North America* white paper (Nina Simmons-Mackie, Ph.D., 2018) describes the #1 overall

gap summary as: “Insufficient awareness and knowledge of aphasia by health care providers and the wider public. ... In a recent public survey by the National Aphasia Association (2016), only 8.8% of respondents knew that aphasia is a language disorder. ... The New Jersey Aphasia Study Commission (2015) found a marked ‘need for awareness among public, medical and support personnel, and even patients and families themselves.’”



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Raising *public* awareness is the key to bridging the chasm between *stroke* awareness and *aphasia* awareness.

Hospitals, VA, American Heart Association/American Stroke Association, American Hospital Association, and other health-related institutions, as well as organizations such as churches, AARP, senior centers, and Council on Aging, can be a big factor in publicizing information about this life-changing language disorder.

The American Hospital Association website demonstrates the dearth of available information about aphasia: A recent search of “stroke” generated 145 hits, while a search of “aphasia” yielded only one.

Aphasia Awareness--Go Viral 2024 is a national aphasia awareness campaign with a mission to use hospitals and other organizations (large and small) as the best tools available to provide information about aphasia to the wider public.

More detailed information about *Aphasia Awareness--Go Viral 2024* will be provided in subsequent publications.

Signed: *The Johnny Appleseed of Aphasia Awareness.*

References

Simmons-Mackie N. *Aphasia In North America*, Frequency, Demographics, Impact of Aphasia, Communication Access, Services and Service Gaps. Aphasia Access White Paper (2018).