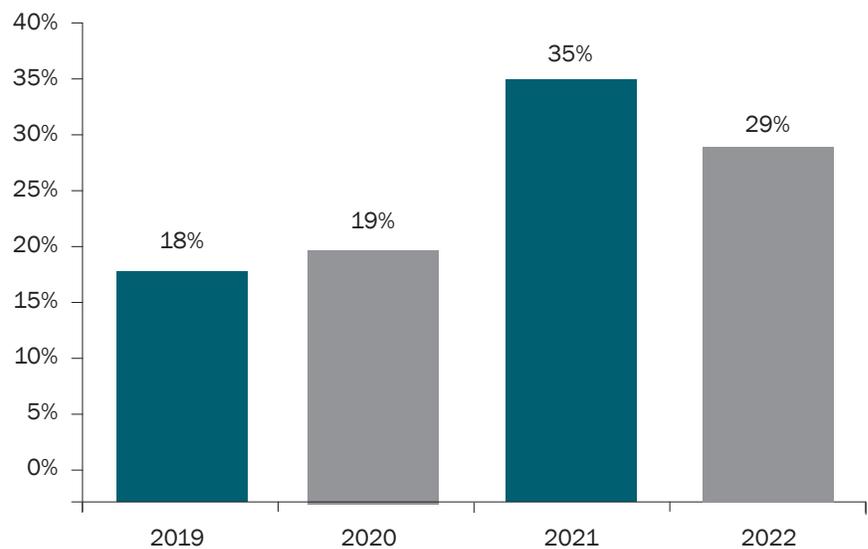


Overview

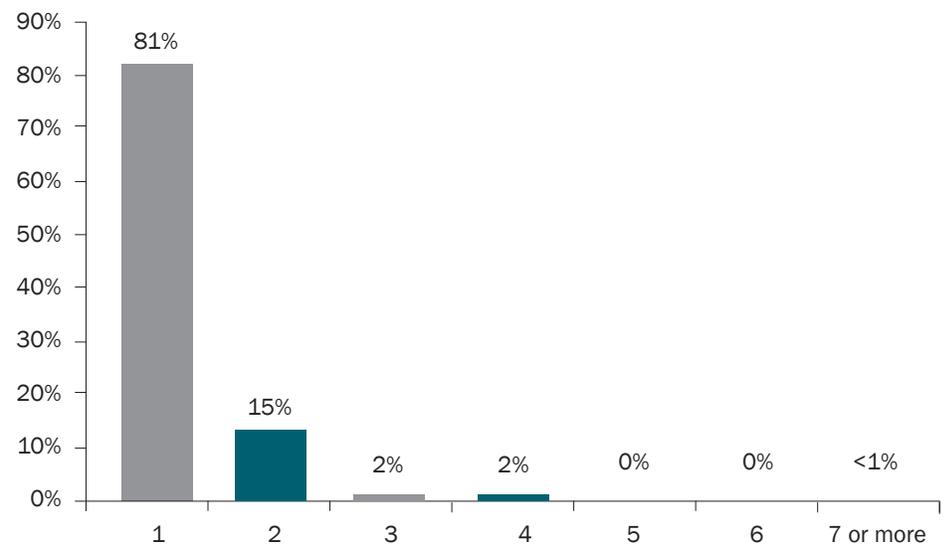
In 2022 the Hand Therapy Certification Commission conducted a follow up survey of therapists who passed the Hand Therapy Certification Examination in 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022. The purpose of this survey was to gather information about how successful candidates prepared for the examination, so that future candidates might benefit from their advice. Email invitations were sent to 1,061 of the successful candidates and 233 completed the following survey.

The Survey Questions and Answers

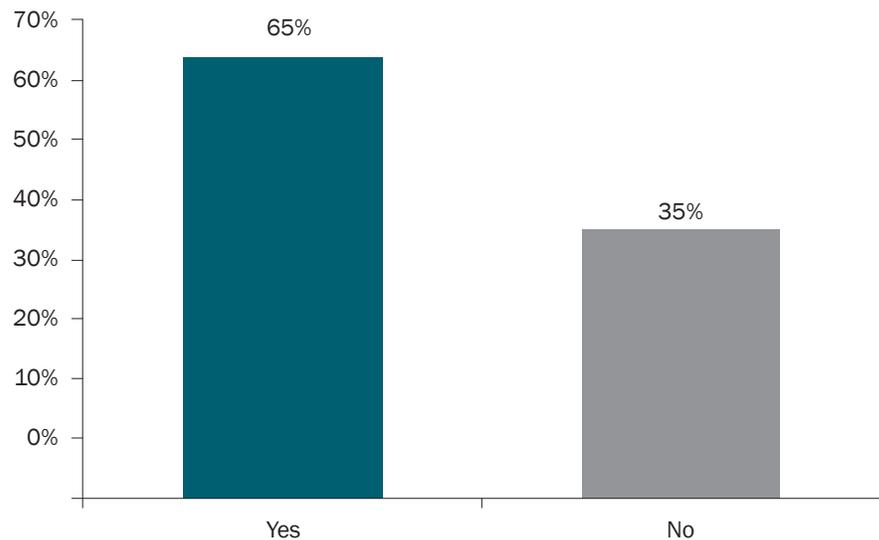
1. In what year did you pass the CHT Exam?



2. How many times did you take it before you passed?



3. If you took the test more than once, did you change the study methods you used in the year that you passed?



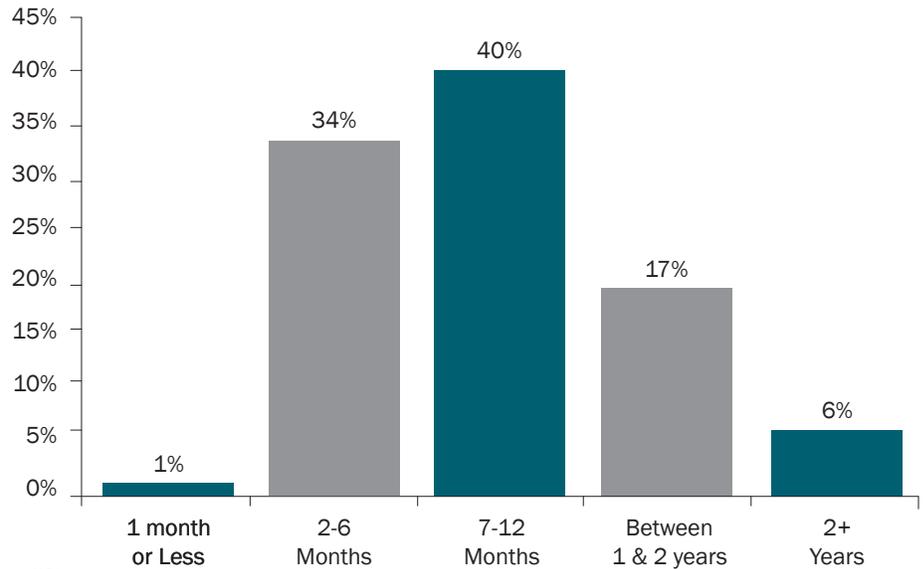
4. What did you do and how was it more effective?

Participated in study groups, found a study partner and/or mentor, attended ASHT's Hand Therapy Review Course¹, used practice exams², made and used flashcards, studied *Rehabilitation of the Hand*³ and *Hand Rehabilitation: A Quick Reference Guide and Review*⁴, ASHT's *Test Prep for the CHT Exam*⁵, and attended Medbridge courses were mentioned by many candidates as being more effective than their previous methods.

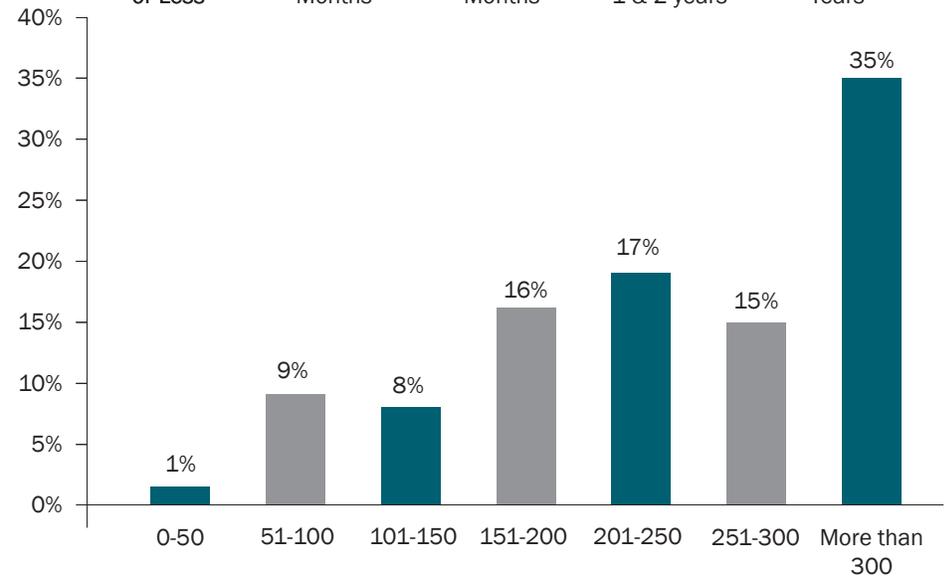
Other comments included:

- ▶ I used more practice questions.
- ▶ Listened to podcasts from different sources.
- ▶ I used an audio recorder. I made several copies for myself for things such as: brachial plexus, nerve transfers, course of all nerves and etc.
- ▶ I studied less hours in a day, instead of trying to study 8 hours a day, I would study only 2 hours a day, but spread the days apart.

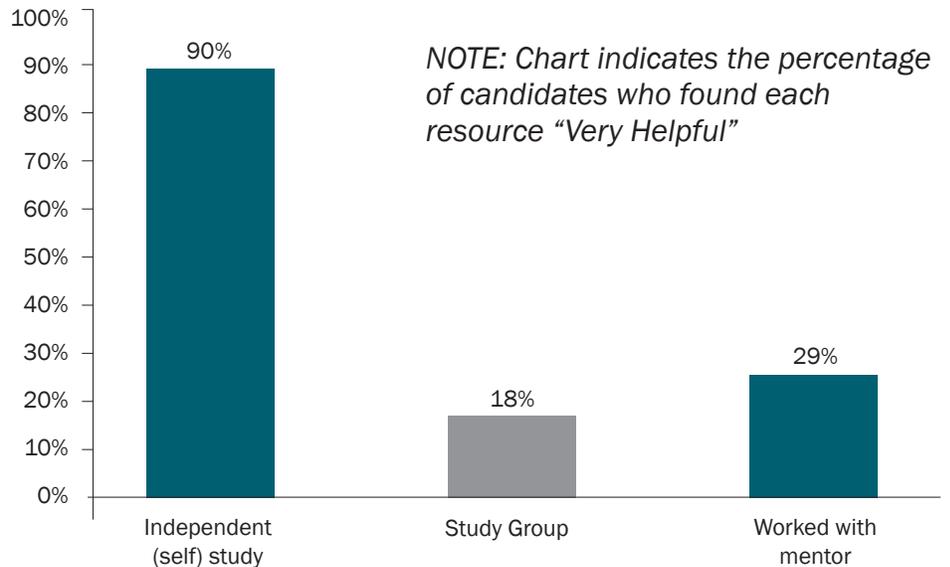
5. Approximately how long before the test did you start studying?



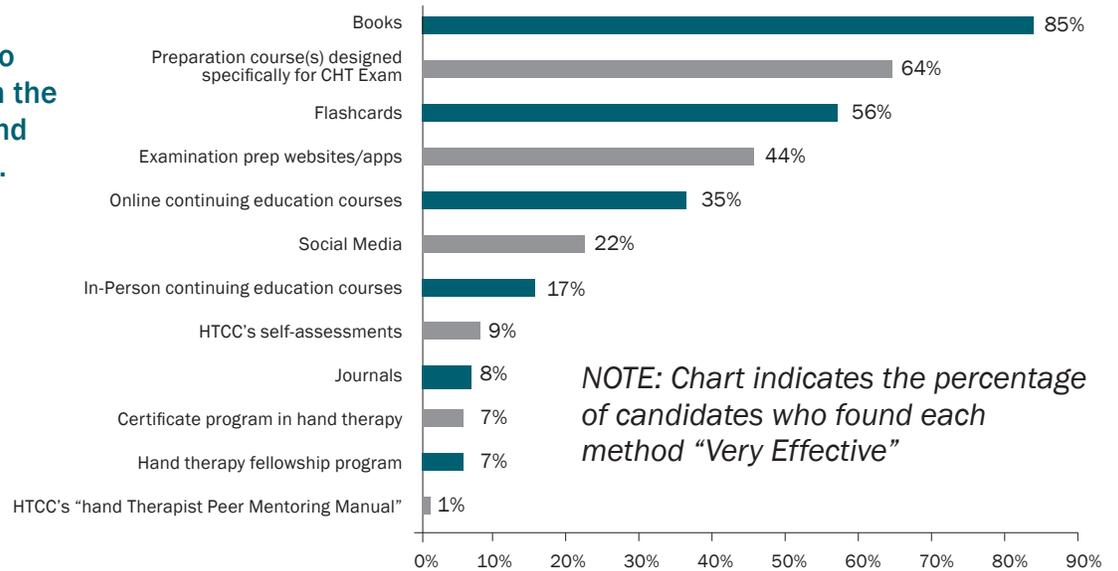
6. Approximately how many hours did you study in the year you passed?



7. Please indicate the method(s) you used to prepare for the exam in the year that you passed and rate its effectiveness.



8. Please indicate the resources(s) you used to prepare for the exam in the year that you passed and rate their effectiveness.



Comments on Resources Used

Books

Books were the highest rated study method and were used by 100% of the candidates. Top rated books included: *Rehabilitation of the Hand and Upper Extremity*; *Hand Rehabilitation: A Quick Reference Guide and Review ASHT's Test Prep for the CHT Exam*; physical agent modality books, and anatomy books.

Flashcards

Over 90% of the candidates used flashcards in their study. Although there are commercial sources for flash cards, therapists noted the value in them was related to writing them out and reviewing them at every opportunity. Some comments were:

- ▶ I created notes while reading the materials described above and then created flashcards from the notes
- ▶ Great way to learn anatomy
- ▶ I used the flashcards on the Mentoring Section of the HTCC website in conjunction with the mobile app "Flash Card Deluxe"⁶
- ▶ I used self-made flashcards while outlining *Rehabilitation of the Hand*
- ▶ I used the "Quizlet App"⁷ and looked up other people's flashcard sets which matched the subject matter. I also used my anatomy flashcards from college.
- ▶ Flashcards written by myself as I read and studied.
- ▶ The Netter Anatomy Flashcards⁸
- ▶ I reviewed flashcards as I exercised, when stuck in traffic, when waiting for an appointment, when taking a coffee break, over lunch etc. For me, this was one of the most helpful tasks.

Prep Courses Designed for the Hand Therapy Certification Examination:

The most frequently mentioned preparation course was: *ASHT's Hand Therapy Review course*. Other frequently mentioned preparation courses included *Medbridge CHT Prep Program*⁹ and *Evidence in Motion Certificate for Advanced Practice in Hand Therapy*¹⁰

Examination Preparation Websites and Applications:

About 65% of the candidates used some type of electronic media or examination preparation website and most found them to be somewhat to very helpful. Recommendations included:

- ▶ *YouTube* videos
- ▶ The electronic version of *Rehabilitation of the Hand and Upper Extremity*
- ▶ Practice Tests from *Exploring Hand Therapy* (www.handtherapy.com) and (www.liveconferences.com)
- ▶ *Wheeless' Textbook, Electronic textbook of Orthopaedics from Duke University* (www.wheelessonline.com).
- ▶ *Hand Therapy Academy* (www.handtherapyacademy.com)

Social Media

Over half of the survey respondents indicated that they used social media to prepare for the examination. The most frequently mentioned social media platforms were Facebook and Instagram.

Traditional Continuing Education:

The majority of candidates attended either in-person or online continuing education programs in preparation for the examination. The courses were varied, from those presenting an overview of the upper quarter, to courses with content very specific to an anatomical location or diagnosis. The mostly commonly mentioned courses were:

- ▶ Annual meetings of the American Society of Hand Therapists (www.asht.org)
- ▶ ASHT Hand Therapy Review Course (www.asht.org)
- ▶ *Doctors Demystify Courses* (www.doctorsdemystify.com)
- ▶ *Hand Care* courses sponsored in even years by the Indiana Hand to Shoulder Center (www.indianahandtoshoulder.com)
- ▶ *Hand Therapy Symposium*, sponsored annually by the Philadelphia Hand Foundation (www.handfoundation.org)
- ▶ *OccupationalTherapy.com* courses (www.occupationaltherapy.com)
- ▶ *Medbridge* courses related to hand therapy (www.medbridgeeducation.com)

Journals:

About 40% of the candidates reviewed journal articles in preparation for the examination, this number decreased by 40% since the last survey. *The Journal of Hand Therapy* (www.jhandtherapy.org) was listed almost exclusively by the respondents.

Hand Therapy Fellowship and Certificate Programs

Only a small percentage of respondents indicated that they attended a Hand Therapy Fellowship or Certificate Program. Programs that candidates participated in included:

- ▶ [The Advanced Practice Certificate in Hand & Upper Limb Rehabilitation](#) offered by Thomas Jefferson University.
- ▶ [AOTA Hand Therapy and Upper Extremity Fellowship Programs](#)
- ▶ [Evidence in Motion Certificate for Advanced Practice in Hand Therapy](#)

General Tips:

A number of suggestions were made to make studying more fun and to reduce stress, such as keep your sense of humor, study while you exercise, “don’t take it too seriously—it’s only a test,” get plenty of rest, “have a CHT on speed dial for encouragement,” have a supportive spouse/family, “keep a book in the bathroom,” make up lots of funny mnemonics and stories to help with memorizing, take Friday or Saturday night off for relaxation, don’t plan a wedding or have a baby the year you take the test. Relax and enjoy life learning.

Other suggestions were more practical:

- ▶ Study a little bit daily vs. marathon study sessions
- ▶ Hand Therapist Peer Mentoring Manual by HTCC¹⁰
- ▶ Apply concepts to real people
- ▶ Ask co-workers to spot quiz you on specific cases
- ▶ Cross-reference sources by topic
- ▶ Do not cram, commit at least 6 months for studying
- ▶ Set a schedule to study 5-10 hours a week and do it
- ▶ Stop studying 3 days before taking the exam
- ▶ Study at least 4-5 hours a week with 6 months remaining
- ▶ Study at the library with no distractions
- ▶ Don’t get too detailed - get the overall concepts
- ▶ Do not study obscure information
- ▶ Focus on areas that are your “weakness”
- ▶ Focus on learning the material and the concept - not memorization

General Tips *(continued)*

- ▶ Use the HTCC Blueprint as a starting point – it tells you what you need to know for the test
- ▶ Keep track of the questions you answered wrong on practice tests
- ▶ Know your own study habits, don't worry about others
- ▶ Study new concepts/evidence-based practice
- ▶ Read, read and read
- ▶ Study in a quiet place
- ▶ Do not solely focus on the practice exams
- ▶ Fabricate a personal “CHT study guide” binder
- ▶ Find a challenging work environment
- ▶ Try to observe surgery
- ▶ Incorporate your current caseload into your studies
- ▶ Keep reviewing previously studied materials
- ▶ Keep a notebook with items you found difficult
- ▶ Know healing timelines for structures/protocols
- ▶ Know the “hows” of modalities as well as the “whys”
- ▶ Know the protocols, but also the clinical reasoning behind them
- ▶ Review manual therapy books
- ▶ Muscle test everybody!
- ▶ Remember the importance of research
- ▶ Study alone and phone a friend with questions
- ▶ Take a study leave (4 hours/week) if you can – it is invaluable
- ▶ Think global, big picture
- ▶ Don't be afraid of splinting
- ▶ Study anatomy
- ▶ Work with a mentor
- ▶ Take practice exams
- ▶ Establish a timeline
- ▶ Draw brachial plexus/anatomy
- ▶ YouTube videos

General Tips *(continued)*

Finally, candidates made suggestions for the day of the test:

- ▶ Rest before the exam, eat a good breakfast
- ▶ Don't try studying the morning of the test
- ▶ Complete at least 50 questions every hour during test
- ▶ Don't panic
- ▶ Don't over-analyze the questions
- ▶ Don't second guess your answers

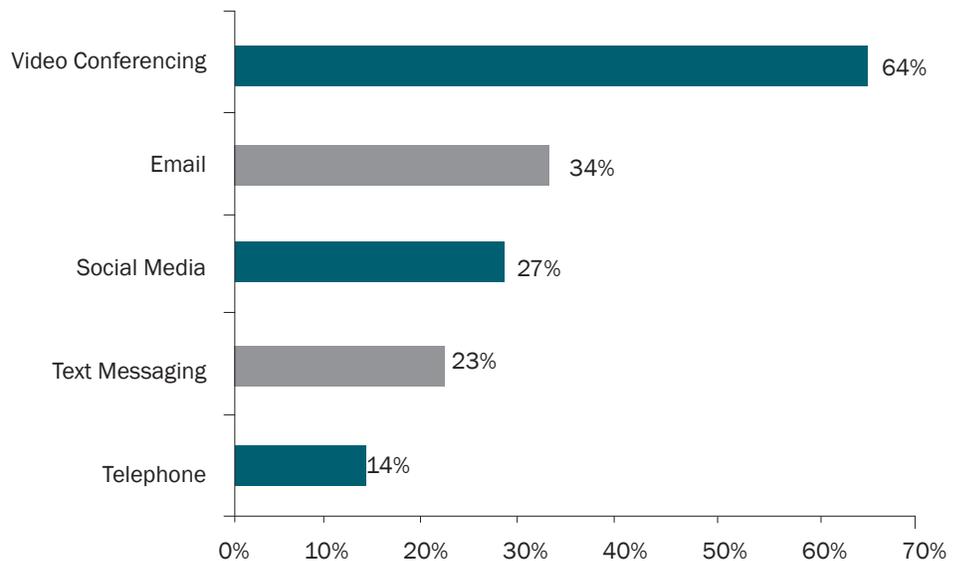
Study Groups

Therapists were also asked how study groups were utilized by those who participated in them while preparing for the examination.

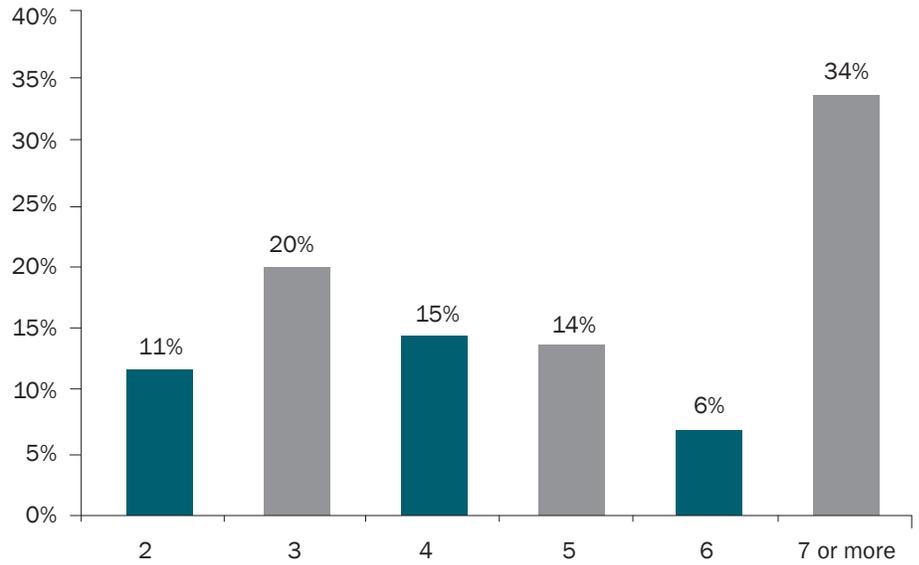
9. How did your group meet?

About 30% of the therapist's surveyed indicated that they participated in a study group with the majority (67%) meeting online

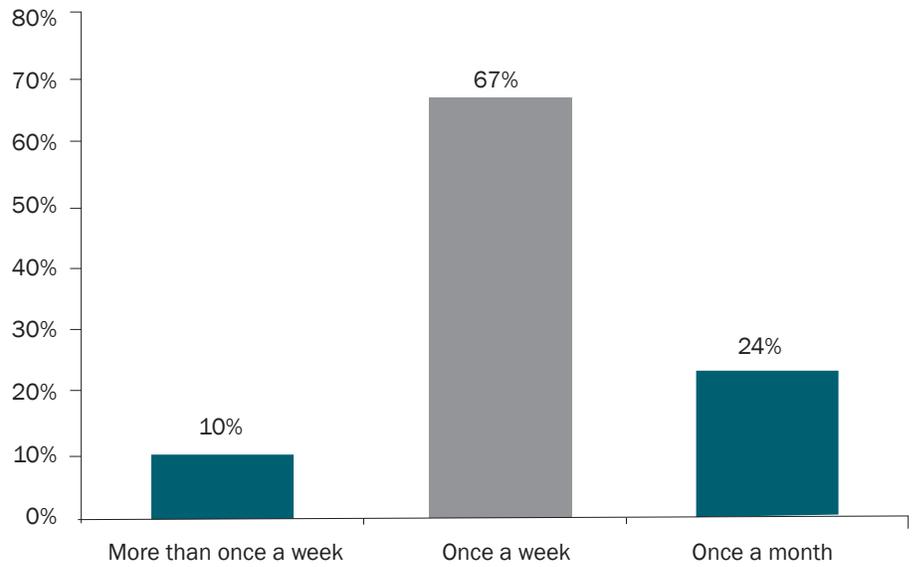
10. If your study group was online, how did you communicate with your group *(choose all that apply)*



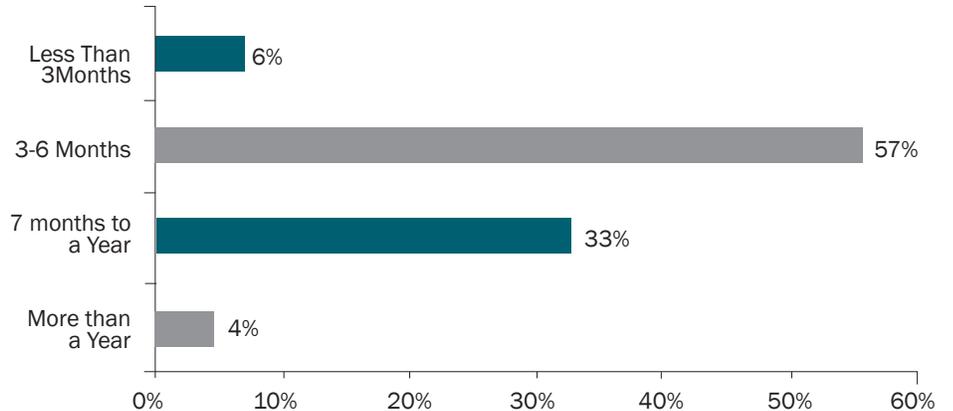
11. How many members were in your study group?



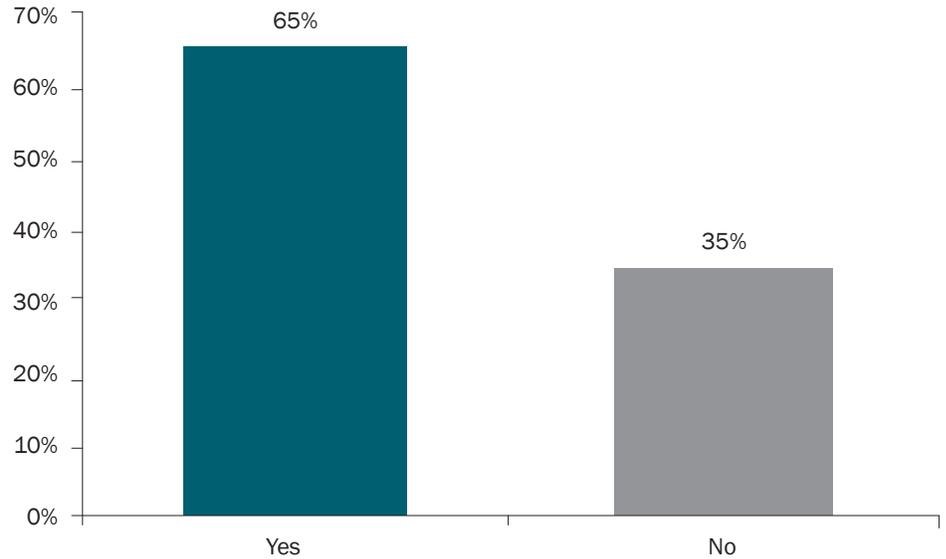
12. How often did your study group meet?



13. How long did your study group meet?

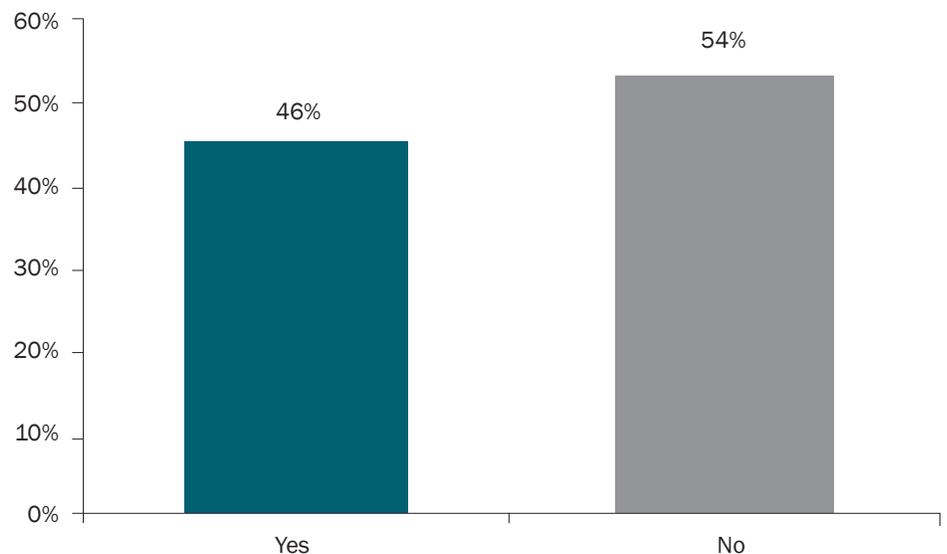


14. Did you assign topics?



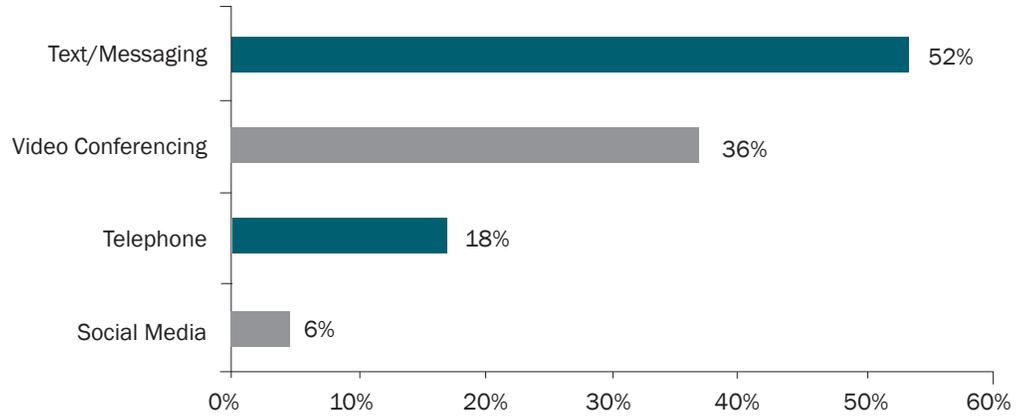
The majority of study groups assigned topics according to a reference such as *Rehabilitation of the Hand and Upper Extremity*, American Society of Hand Therapists (ASHT) *Test Prep for the CHT Exam* or *Hand Rehabilitation: A Quick Reference Guide*. Chapters in these reference books were divided amongst the group members and presented during the study group time. In some instances, sample test questions were generated based on assigned topics.

15. Did you prepare for the exam working with a mentor?

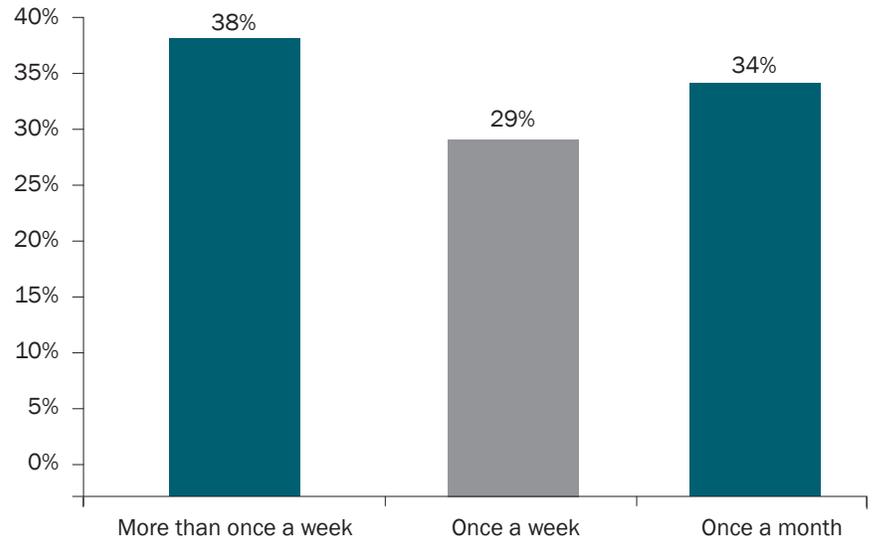


Of those who worked with a mentor 87% met in-person and 13% met online.

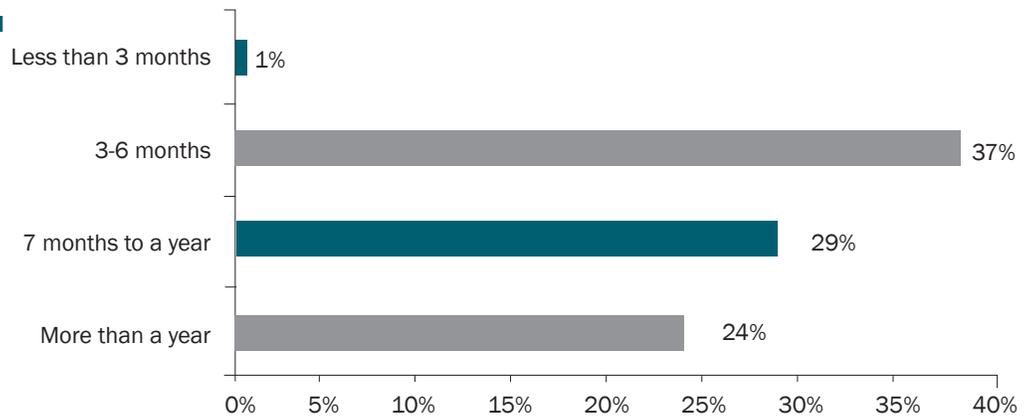
16. If you and your mentor met online, how did you communicate with each other?



17. How often did you and your mentor meet?



18. How many months did you and your mentor meet?



References and Contact Information for Suggested Resources

HTCC would like to thank to all the candidates who completed the survey. We think that their advice will be invaluable to future candidates. For more information about the CHT credential, please visit www.htcc.org or call 916-566-1140.

¹ ASHT Hand Therapy Review Course www.asht.org

² Exploring Hand Therapy Practice Exams www.handtherapy.com

³ Rehabilitation of the Hand and Upper Extremity: Mackin, E., Callahan, A.D., Skirven, T., Schneider, L.H., & Osterman, A.L. (Eds.)

⁴ Hand Rehabilitation: A Quick Reference Guide and Review: Falkenstein, N., Weiss, S.

⁵ ASHT Test Prep for the CHT Exam www.asht.org

⁶ Flashcard Delux: www.flashcardsdeluxe.com/flashcards/

⁷ Quizlet www.quizlet.com/

⁸ Netter Anatomy Flashcards, available at Amazon.com

⁹ Medbridge CHT Prep Program
www.medbridgeeducation.com/cht-prep

¹⁰ Evidence in Motion Advanced Practice in Hand Therapy
www.evidenceinmotion.com

Disclaimer: HTCC is providing aggregated survey data to be used only for informational purposes. HTCC does not endorse, promote, review, or warrant the accuracy of any information provided, nor by providing this information does HTCC suggest, directly or indirectly, what study methods should be used, nor does HTCC imply that following the suggested methods will result in successful passage of the CHT examination.