

**RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND TRAINING
WORKERS' COMPENSATION DIVISION**

**Dr. John E. Donley
Rehabilitation Center**

**Annual
Statistics
Report
2008**

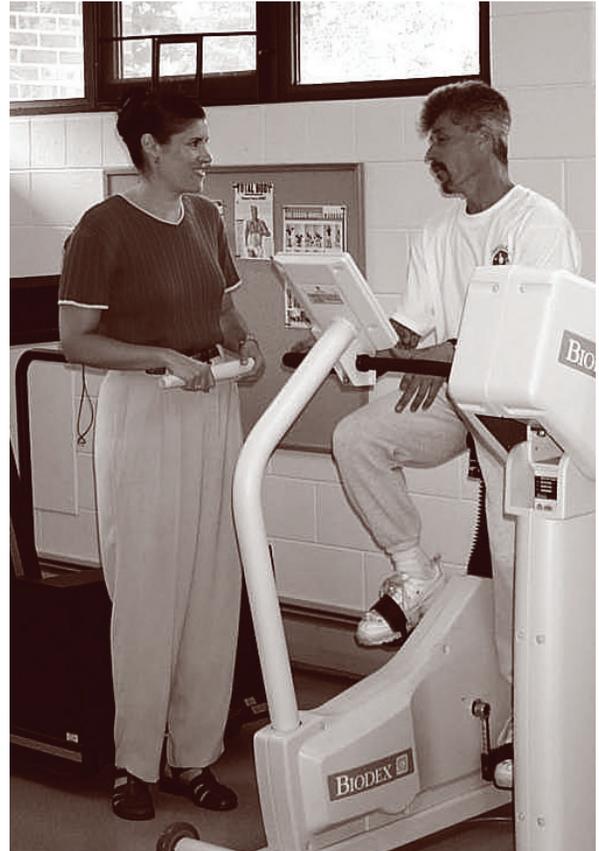


TABLE of CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Overview	4
Chart 1: Overview of All Cases	
Chart 2: Overview of Vocational Services	
Referrals	8
Graph 1: Total Number of Referrals, 2004-2008	
Graph 2: Total Number of Referring Physicians	
Admissions	9
Graph 3: Total Admissions	
Graph 4: Admissions by Referral Source, per Year	
Demographics	10
Graph 5: Length of Time from Injury to Admission	
Graph 6: Admissions by Level of Education	
Graph 7: Admissions by Number of Surgeries	
Outcomes	12
Graph 8: Return to Work Outcomes after Program Completion	
Graph 9: Return to Work Discharges, 2008	
Graph 10: Non-Return to Work Discharges, 2008	
Graph 11: Return to Work Outcome by Level of Education	
Graph 12: Return to Work Outcomes by Number of Surgeries, 2008	
Graph 13: Patients Still Working, One-Month Post-Discharge	
Impact	16
Graph 14: Estimated Indemnity Saved by Chronicity	
Chart 3: Estimated Indemnity Savings by Insurer	

About the Donley Center

The Donley Center is an outpatient facility under the Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training, established under Section 28-38-19 of the Rhode Island State Law through the R.I. Workers' Compensation Act. Through the Donley Center, the State of Rhode Island provides a unique opportunity for injured workers who are covered by the R.I. Workers' Compensation Act to obtain comprehensive rehabilitation services. These services include case management, physical and occupational therapy, aquatic physical therapy, work hardening/job simulation, behavioral medicine, and vocational rehabilitation services. The Donley Center facility is funded by a portion of the Workers' Compensation premium assessed to each Rhode Island-based company. Restoring injured workers' health so they may return to work in the timeliest manner has a profound financial impact on the Workers' Compensation system.



Executive Summary

This annual report continues the Donley Center's practice of keeping our stakeholders and other interested parties informed regarding the injured workers we serve and the outcomes we achieve. This report also uses our data to extrapolate how our success at achieving a return to work outcome can produce a cost savings for the Workers' Compensation system.

The following are highlights of the Dr. John E. Donley Rehabilitation Center Annual Statistics Report 2008 with comment on their significance:



- Physician referrals accounted for 83 percent of our admissions in 2008. This is up slightly from previous years and continues to reflect the stable trend of physicians accounting for the overwhelming majority of our referrals.
- In keeping with the trend of fewer Workers' Compensation claims, the Donley Center experienced an eight percent reduction in referrals in 2008 compared to 2007. This was in contrast to the trend of increasing referrals to the Donley Center from 1997 through 2006 despite the overall trend of decreasing claims. The lag between reduced claims and reduced Donley utilization is likely accounted for by nature of the population we primarily serve: the chronic population.
- In 2008, 66 percent of the injured workers admitted to the Donley Center had a date of injury six months or older, with 40 percent of our admissions having a date of injury over one year. This follows a trend dating back to the 1990s and clearly establishes the niche of the Donley Center. The multidisciplinary treatment model of the Donley Center is highly recommended for the treatment of chronic pain in evidence-based medical treatment guidelines. Not only is this our niche, but the Donley Center affords injured workers a resource not readily available in the private sector.
- Timeliness is a critical variable in the Workers' Compensation system and remains important when dealing with the delayed recovery of chronic problems. In 2008, 77 percent of our injured workers were admitted within two weeks of receiving a referral and 77 percent of those admitted for treatment completed their treatment program within three months.
- Ultimately, the mandate of the Workers' Compensation system is to restore an injured worker's ability to return to gainful employment. This becomes more and more difficult the longer the injured worker remains out of work, in treatment, and immersed in the role of a patient. In 2008, the Donley Center maintained its trend of successfully rehabilitating injured workers with a chronic problem. Sixty-two percent of the injured workers who completed treatment returned to work and an additional nine percent achieved a therapeutic endpoint with a functional level consistent with return to work.
- By achieving this outcome, the estimated savings to the Workers' Compensation system in 2008 was \$19,959,215. This estimate was arrived at by extrapolating the cost to the system if these injured workers did not achieve a return to work status.

OVERVIEW

The following charts present key indicators for the Donley Center and document the change between 2007 and 2008. **Chart 1** reflects all cases, while **Chart 2** (pp. 4-5) focuses only on cases receiving vocational services as part of their admission to the Donley Center.

CHART 1: OVERVIEW OF ALL CASES

	2008	2007	% Change
Referrals			
Total	1073	1165	-8%
Physicians	899	941	-4%
WCC	108	162	-33%
Admissions			
Number	947	1124	-16%
% of Referrals	88%	96%	-8%
Timeliness of Admission			
Up to 7 days	36%	31%	5%
8-14 days	41%	50%	-9%
15-30 days	19%	16%	3%
31-90 days	3%	3%	0%
>90 days	1%	1%	0%
Chronicity			
Up to 30 days	3%	2%	1%
31-90 days	12%	11%	1%
91-180 days	19%	18%	1%
181-365 days	26%	27%	-1%
>365 days	40%	43%	-3%
> 6 months	66%	70%	
Time in Treatment			
Up to 30 days	32%	34%	-2%
31-90 days	45%	49%	-4%
91-180 days	18%	16%	2%
181-365 days	4%	2%	2%
>365 days	1%	0%	1%
Return to Work (RTW)			
	62%	68%	-5%
RTW Level			
	71%	75%	-4%



CHART 1: OVERVIEW OF ALL CASES, CONTINUED					
	2008	2007	% Change	RTWL 2008	RTWL 2007
Number of Surgeries					
0	56%	53%	3%	66%	73%
1	28%	31%	-3%	70%	78%
2	10%	11%	-1%	67%	70%
3	3%	3%	0	50%	57%
4+	4%	2%	2%	67%	58%
Education					
Missing data	9%	14%	-5%	64%	66%
Less than High School	17%	14%	3%	60%	72%
GED	9%	9%	0	64%	73%
HS Diploma	37%	34%	3%	70%	74%
Some College	28%	29%	-1%	71%	78%

OVERVIEW, CONT.

CHART 2: OVERVIEW OF VOCATIONAL SERVICES

	2006	2007	2008
Number of Referrals			
	236	214	220
Number of Admissions			
	234	205	197
Time from Referral to Admission			
Up to 7 days	48%	45%	44%
8 to 14 days	36%	40%	39%
15 to 30 days	14%	11%	15%
31 to 90 days	2%	2%	2%
91 to 180 days	0%	2%	0%
over 180 days	0%	0%	0%
Chronicity: DOI to Admission			
Up to 30 days	0%	0%	0%
31 to 90 days	5%	4%	6%
91 to 180 days	8%	7%	8%
181 days to 365 days	22%	21%	28%
over 365 days	65%	67%	58%
Time in Rehabilitation			
Up to 30 days	17%	18%	22%
31 days to 90 days	34%	39%	35%
91 days to 180 days	30%	32%	27%
181 days to 365 days	17%	11%	14%
Over 365 days	2%	0%	2%

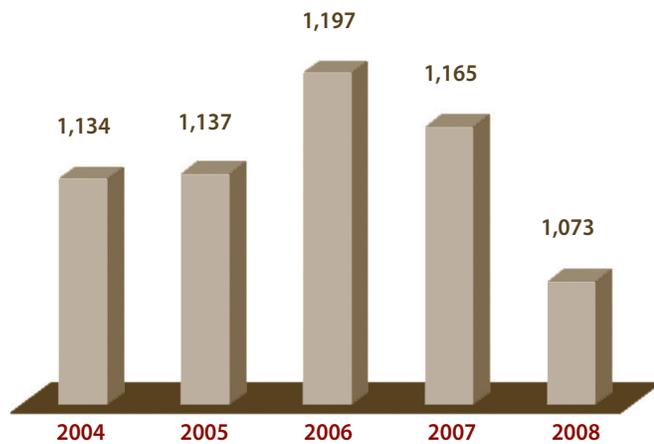
CHART 2: OVERVIEW OF VOCATIONAL SERVICES, CONTINUED

	2006		2007		2008	
RTW Discharge Codes						
	RTW Cases	All Cases	RTW Cases	All Cases	RTW Cases	All Cases
Same Employer with Same Job	4%	2%	0%	0%	6%	3%
Same Employer with Restrictions	6%	3%	3%	2%	3%	2%
New Employer	21%	11%	22%	12%	17%	10%
Completed Vocational Rehabilitation – Independent	59%	32%	54%	29%	64%	38%
RTW Level Achieved No RTW	10%	5%	20%	11%	10%	6%
TOTAL		54%		53%		59%
No RTW Discharge Codes						
	No RTW Cases	All Cases	No RTW Cases	All Cases	No RTW Cases	All Cases
Evaluation Only	44%	20%	29%	14%	52%	22%
Non-Compliance	34%	15%	37%	17%	18%	8%
Return to Referring MD	17%	8%	20%	10%	19%	8%
Physician Request	0%	0%	1%	1%	3%	1%
Secondary Medical	4%	2%	13%	6%	7%	3%
TOTAL		45%		48%		41%

REFERRALS

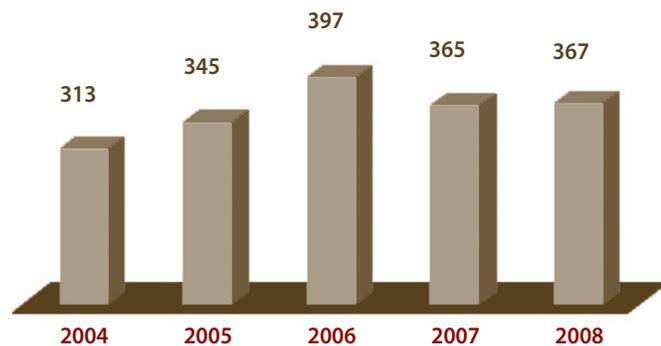
The following two graphs depict how many referrals have been received by the Donley Center over the last five years and how many physicians refer injured workers each year.

TOTAL NUMBER OF REFERRALS, BY YEAR



Graph 1: Total Referrals. Total referrals were down for the second year, reflecting the overall trend in injuries in the state.

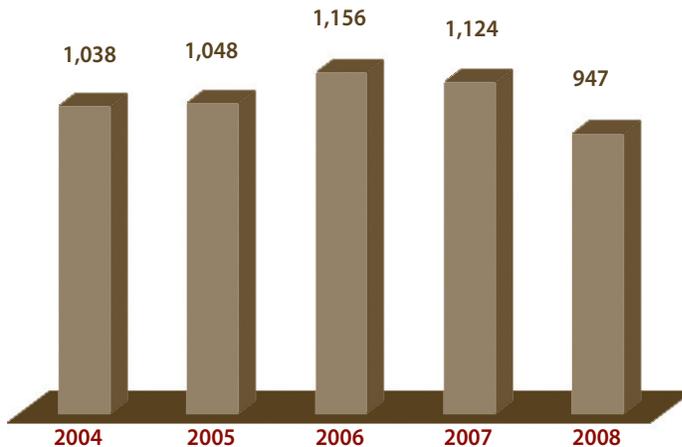
TOTAL NUMBER OF REFERRING PHYSICIANS, BY YEAR



ADMISSIONS

The following two graphs illustrate admissions data for the Donley Center over the past five years, charting our total number of admissions and the referral source of accounting for these admissions.

TOTAL NUMBER OF ADMISSIONS

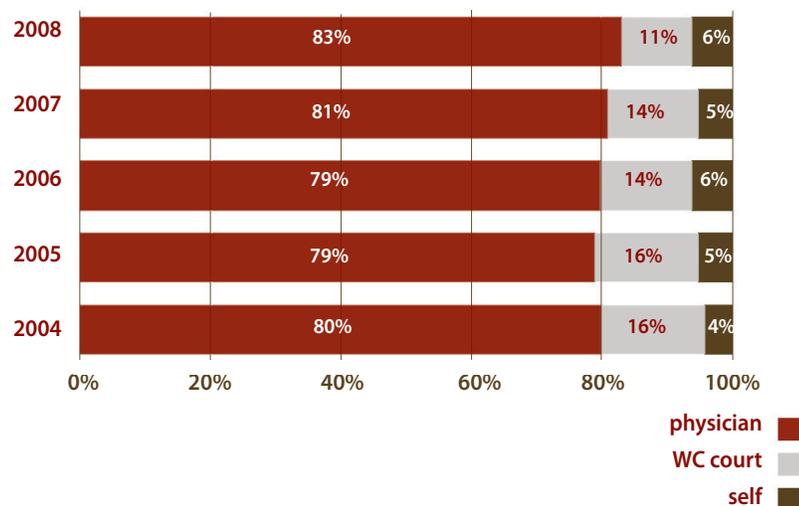


Graph 3: Total Admissions. This chart demonstrates that admissions were down 16 percent from 2007. This downward trend is consistent with the overall trend of decreasing injuries within the Rhode Island Workers' Compensation system, as well as the decreasing trend nationally. This trend has only impacted the Donley Center in the last two years, while this decreasing trend has been occurring in the state since 2001.

Graph 4: Referral Sources.

This graph illustrates the distribution of Donley Center admissions from all sources of referrals: Physicians, the Workers' Compensation Court (WCC), and the Injured Worker (Self). In 2008, 83 percent of referrals came from physicians, 11 percent of referrals from the WCC and the remaining 6 percent of referrals were initiated by the injured workers themselves for vocational services. This graph also demonstrates marked stability in the distribution of Donley Center admissions across these referral sources.

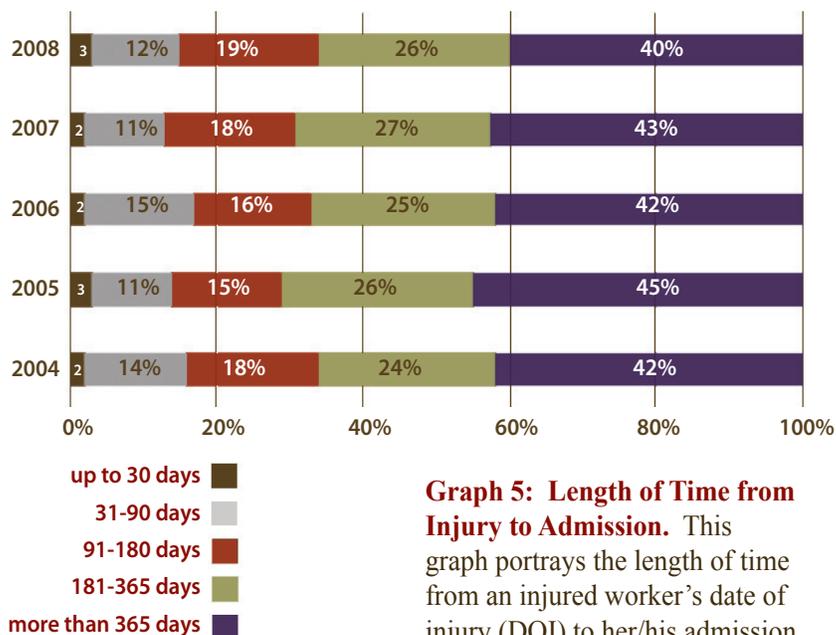
ADMISSIONS BY REFERRAL SOURCE



DEMOGRAPHICS

The following graphs capture the data elements that describe our population. We will continue to examine this data in addition to other relevant variables over the next several years in order to develop programs and workshops that may better prepare our injured workers for re-entry into the labor market.

LENGTH OF TIME FROM INJURY TO ADMISSION

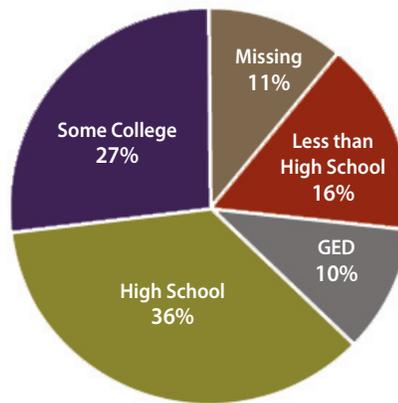


Graph 5: Length of Time from Injury to Admission. This graph portrays the length of time from an injured worker's date of injury (DOI) to her/his admission into rehabilitation at the Donley Center in 2008. The length of time between DOI and admission vividly demonstrates the chronic nature of the problems presented by the majority of our patient population and the need for a wide range of services to address these problems.

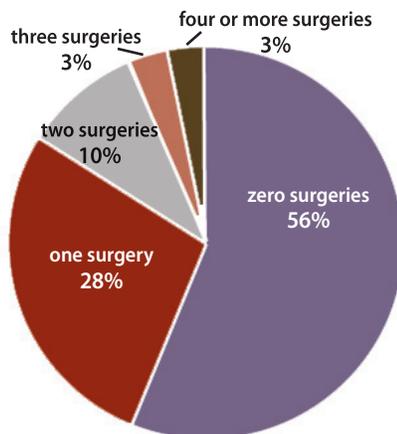
Graph 6: Level of Education.

This graph illustrates the educational background of the patients we served in 2008. Seventy-four percent of our admissions were high school graduates, had earned a GED, or had earned college/technical education credits. These demographics are important in planning the services provided by our Vocational Department.

ADMISSIONS BY EDUCATION LEVEL



ADMISSIONS BY NUMBER OF SURGERIES



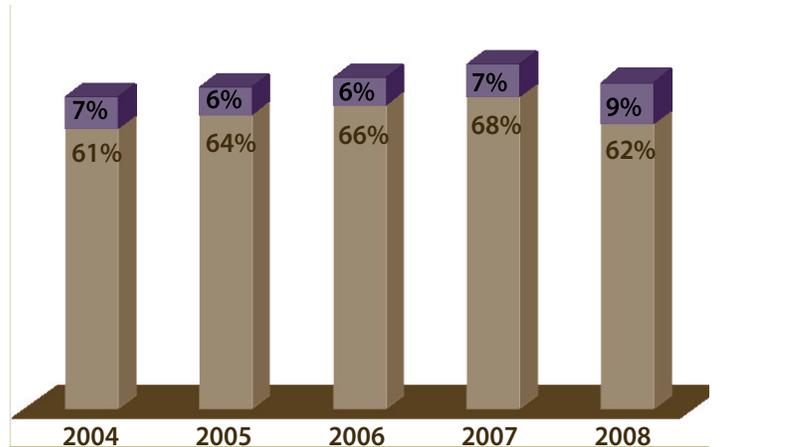
Graph 7: Number of Surgeries.

In 2008, 44 percent of Donley Center patients had undergone at least one surgery. Over the next several years, we are very interested in tracking any trends in the number of surgeries our patients have undergone, especially as it relates to the injured body part and the outcomes of our patients' functional restoration programs.

OUTCOMES

The focus of our outcome statistics remains the return to work (RTW) rate. The Donley Center treatment program has consistently achieved excellent outcomes in returning injured patients to work. These outcomes become even more significant when examining our patient population. In 2008, 66 percent of our admissions were out of work for more than six months with 40 percent out of work over one year after their date of injury. The potential savings that can be realized by achieving a return to work level in these injured workers is of particular importance. This impact is extrapolated and displayed in [Graphs 14 and Chart 3](#) (pp. 16 and 17).

RETURN TO WORK OUTCOMES AFTER PROGRAM COMPLETION

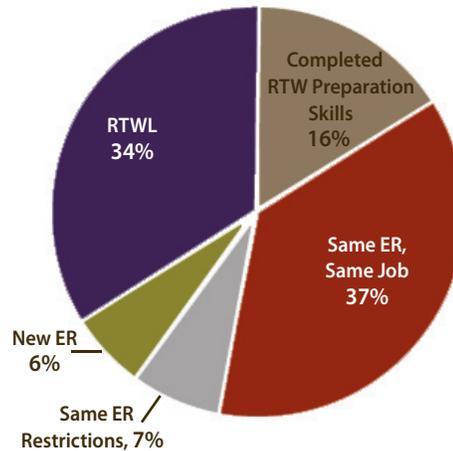


Graph 8: Return to Work Outcomes. This graph compares the number of patients over the last six years who returned to work or achieved a level of function consistent with RTW (RTWL) after completing their treatment program at the Donley Center. Even with the chronic and subsequently more challenging population, 62 percent of our patients completing treatment RTW with an additional 9 percent achieving a RTWL, thus resulting in 71 percent of our patients achieving a return to work level of function in 2008.

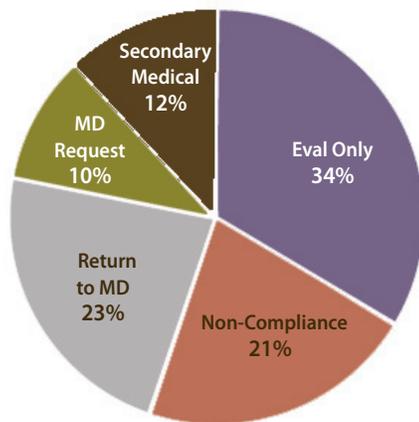
Graph 9: RTW Discharges

(right). This graph demonstrates the disposition of the Donley Center patients whose successful treatment outcomes allowed them to achieve a return to work level. Thirty-six percent of these injured workers returned to work in the same job with the same employer and 7 percent returned to their same employer, working with restrictions. Six percent returned to work with a new employer and 34 percent achieved a functional level consistent with return to work (RTWL); however, the actual RTW did not occur at the time of discharge. An additional 16 percent completed vocational services and were prepared to continue their job search independently.

RETURN TO WORK DISCHARGES, 2008



NON-RETURN TO WORK DISCHARGES, 2008

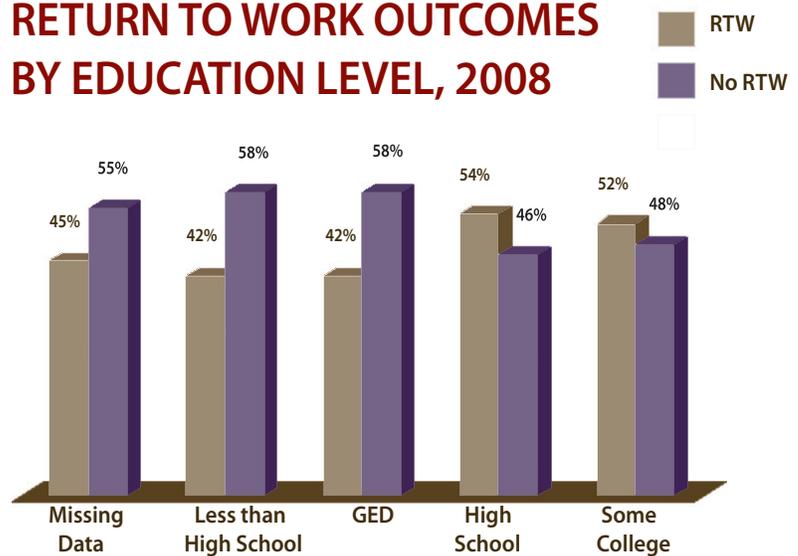


Graph 10: NON-RTW

Discharges (left). This graph depicts the disposition of Donley Center patients discharged with a non-return-to-work status. As shown, 34 percent of the injured workers who did not achieve a RTW discharge status were discharged upon completing an evaluation only. One percent of the patients were discharged for secondary medical issues presenting a health risk from a medical disorder not related to the injury. This is noteworthy in that some of these problems would not have been identified had the injured worker not been in rehabilitation at the Donley Center and in many of these cases, the Donley Center patient care coordinators (PCCs) were advocates in coordinating and ensuring follow-up for these risk factors with their patients' primary care physicians, or other medical resources.

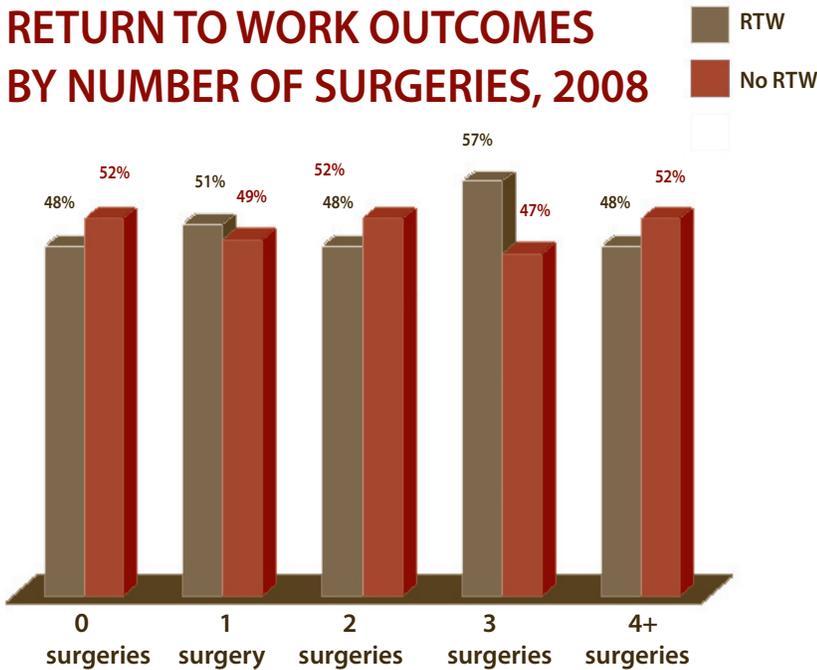
OUTCOMES, CONT.

RETURN TO WORK OUTCOMES BY EDUCATION LEVEL, 2008



Graph 11: RTW by Level of Education. This graph depicts the distribution of RTW and Non-RTW discharges sorted by the injured workers' level of education. In 2008 we achieved a good RTW rate for a chronic population regardless of the level of education, but appeared to do better with injured workers with at least a high school education.

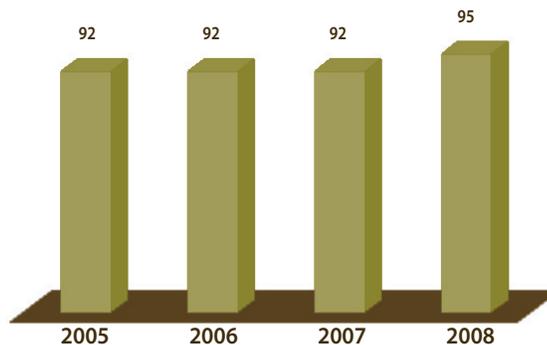
RETURN TO WORK OUTCOMES BY NUMBER OF SURGERIES, 2008



Graph 12: RTW Outcome by Number of Surgeries. This graph depicts the RTW outcomes of the patients who completed treatment sorted by the number of surgeries they reported for their work injury. As with the other graphs, speculating about the apparent distribution depicted in the graph below is premature, but it will be important and interesting to observe the results of tracking this particular demographic variable over the coming years.

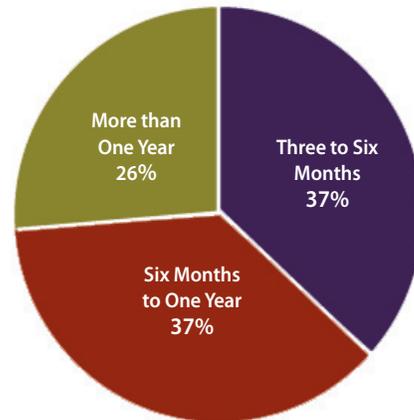
Graph 13: Patients Maintaining Employment. This graph compares the percentage of patients over the last four years who returned to work after completing their treatment program at the Donley Center and remained working one month later. This data is based on the questionnaire responses received from these patients following their discharge from the Center.

PATIENTS STILL WORKING ONE MONTH POST-DISCHARGE



IMPACT

ESTIMATED INDEMNITY SAVED BY CHRONICITY



Graph 14: Estimated Indemnity Saved by Chronicity. This graph displays the estimated financial impact of successful RTW on Workers' Compensation in the state of Rhode Island as measured by indemnity dollars saved. This estimate was obtained by subtracting the return to work date from the date of the "312-Week Gate" and calculating the amount of indemnity that would have been paid. This estimated savings of \$19,959,215 confirms the importance of returning the more chronic population to work. Not included in [Graph 15](#) are patients who were admitted less than three months after their date of injury (DOI).

Chart 3: Estimated Indemnity Savings by Insurer. This chart demonstrates how the estimated financial impact of successful RTW is distributed among Workers' Compensation insurers in the state of Rhode Island, as measured by the percentage of cases attributable to each type of Workers' Compensation carrier in Rhode Island.

Total savings reach beyond indemnity savings alone. Many patients at the Donley Center participate in valuable therapeutic, psychological, and vocational programs and workshops. These services help restore both physical and social functioning for injured workers, thereby reducing the cost of future palliative care and/or social programs.

ESTIMATED INDEMNITY SAVINGS BY INSURER				
Type of Insurer	Time Between Injury and Admission for All Injuries	Number of Injured Workers Returned to Work	Estimated Weeks of Indemnity Saved	Estimated Amount of Indemnity Saved
All Injuries	3 to 6 months	57	16,151	\$7,431,274
	6 months to 1 year	63	16,617	\$7,645,747
	Over 1 year	59	10,611	\$4,882,194
	Total for All Injuries	179	43,379	\$19,959,215
Beacon Mutual	3 to 6 months	23	6,502	\$2,991,491
	6 months to 1 year	26	6,808	\$3,132,482
	Over 1 year	32	5,877	\$2,704,116
	Total for Beacon Mutual	81	19,187	\$8,828,089
Self-Insured	3 to 6 months	13	3,681	\$1,693,856
	6 months to 1 year	8	2,095	\$963,926
	Over 1 year	6	1,192	\$548,316
	Total for Self-Insured	27	6,968	\$3,206,098
State Employees	3 to 6 months	2	577	\$265,680
	6 months to 1 year	5	1,351	\$621,736
	Over 1 year	5	1,102	\$506,907
	Total for State Employees	12	3,030	\$1,394,323
Insurers	3 to 6 months	17	4,831	\$2,222,980
	6 months to 1 year	22	5,835	\$2,684,666
	Over 1 year	15	2,238	\$1,029,848
	Total for Insurers	54	12,905	\$5,937,494
Interlocal Risk Trust	3 to 6 months	2	559	\$257,267
	6 months to 1 year	2	528	\$242,937
	Over 1 year	1	202	\$93,007
	Total for Interlocal Risk Trust	5	1,289	\$593,211

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