
Listen and learn: the podcast movement



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As experienced critical care providers, we are overly familiar with the concept of continuing education. For many years, the only avenues available for obtaining this knowledge were via textbook, medical journal or formal classroom setting. Whether fulfilling a certification requirement or going above and beyond to expand our knowledge of patient care, it took time, money, and diligence to conform to these narrow pathways and obtain the necessary information. Because of this harsh reality, many craved a way to receive the same valuable education in a manner that was readily available and free to access. After many years and advancements in technology, the answer finally came to fruition in the form of medical podcasts.

"Why a podcast about critical care?" you may ask. The answer is simple: healthcare providers are busy people. Whether working overtime, fulfilling personal obligations, or striving to meet our institution's minimum requirements, we find ourselves lacking the necessary spare time to better ourselves and our knowledge base. Podcasts are available on most media platforms, so they allow individuals to listen at their convenience. Podcasts also tend to be concise in nature. Rather than sifting through a wordy journal to obtain the key pearls that will be applicable to your particular practice, podcasts have the ability to summarise the information for easy digestion. Additionally, many employed as critical care transport and/or flight providers commute longer than normal distances, so they look for ways to use this time wisely. Podcasts are perfect for scenarios such as these.

Many may find themselves hesitant to view podcasts as reputable sources of education due to their informality. As with any newly acquired information, it falls on the responsibility of the listener to verify their sources and use sound clinical judgment before application in the field. Most medical podcasts cite their references in the show notes of each episode for this very reason. Furthermore, many medical podcasts are affiliated with educational institutions that verify their information and offer continuing education units (CEUs) to those listeners who are appropriately registered to receive them. This is a similar process to any other CE provider that may be offering contact hours through a particular healthcare organisation.

Podcasts are only one piece of the Free Open Access Medical Education (FOAMed) movement. FOAMed is made up of clinical educators and providers alike with an unyielding desire to learn and teach the absolute best way to care for critically ill and injured patients. Most creators spend hours upon hours compiling content for the benefit of others; spending thousands of dollars of their own money to maintain their specific platform. This level of passion is unsurpassable and is reflected in the content that is provided. When we ourselves were seeking to learn via this model, we found that there was an opportunity to add to what was currently available; particularly from a nursing perspective. This love of education coupled with previous experience in audio and video ultimately resulted in creating our own podcast and blog. As co-creators of [Heavy Lies the Helmet](#), it has been a privilege to participate in this movement, and we truly hope you take the time to listen and learn.

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