

Background

- Social media use amongst healthcare professionals is on the rise¹, and it is increasingly being used by paramedics as a platform for continuing education and international collaboration.^{2,3}
- In February 2014 the hashtag “#FOAMems” was registered.
- It is used by paramedics and other clinicians who are involved in sharing knowledge related to emergency medical services (EMS), paramedicine and prehospital care.
- It is an extension of the FOAM (free open access medical education) movement.

Objective

- The purpose of this study was to characterise and evaluate the content of #FOAMems tweets in the first two years of operation.

Methods

- An analytical report and transcript for #FOAMems was generated on symplur.com, with a search date from 4th February 2014 to 4th February 2016, a total period of 24 months.
- Analysis of all tweets for a random one month period (1st-31st October 2015) containing the hashtag was also generated on both symplur.com and Followthehashtag.
- All tweets were reviewed and categorised by two reviewers. Data from all methods was combined to obtain the results presented.

Results

- During the study period, there were over 42,000 tweets containing #FOAMems, generated by over 6,000 participants.
- These tweets resulted in over 60 million impressions or potential views by others.
- The top 92 tweeters of #FOAMems during this period were analysed for professional qualification or professional identity. Of these 92 individuals, 52% were paramedics (n=48).
- Tweets were also categorised based on content, source (original tweet or retweet) and whether they linked to referenced material or not.

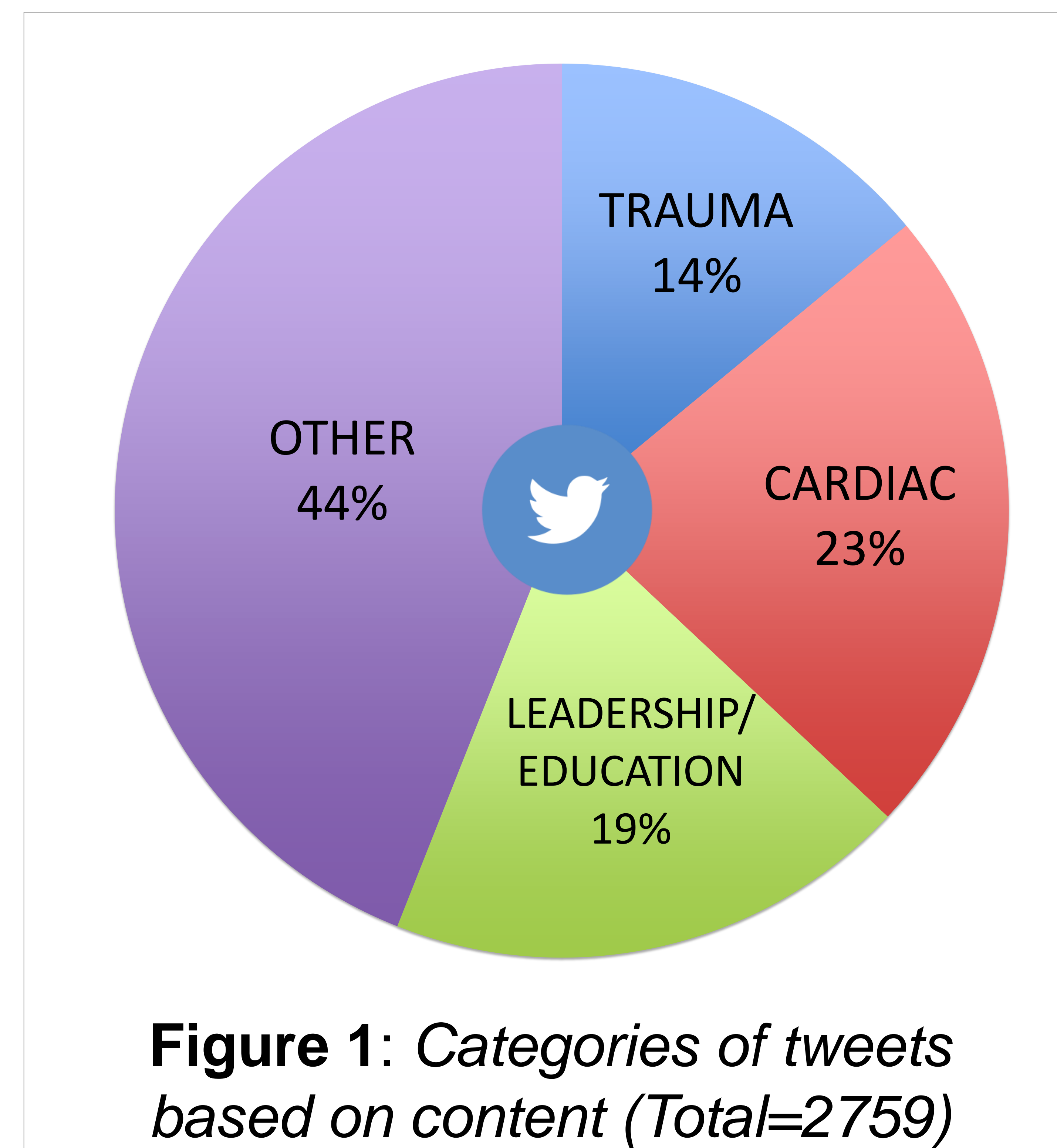
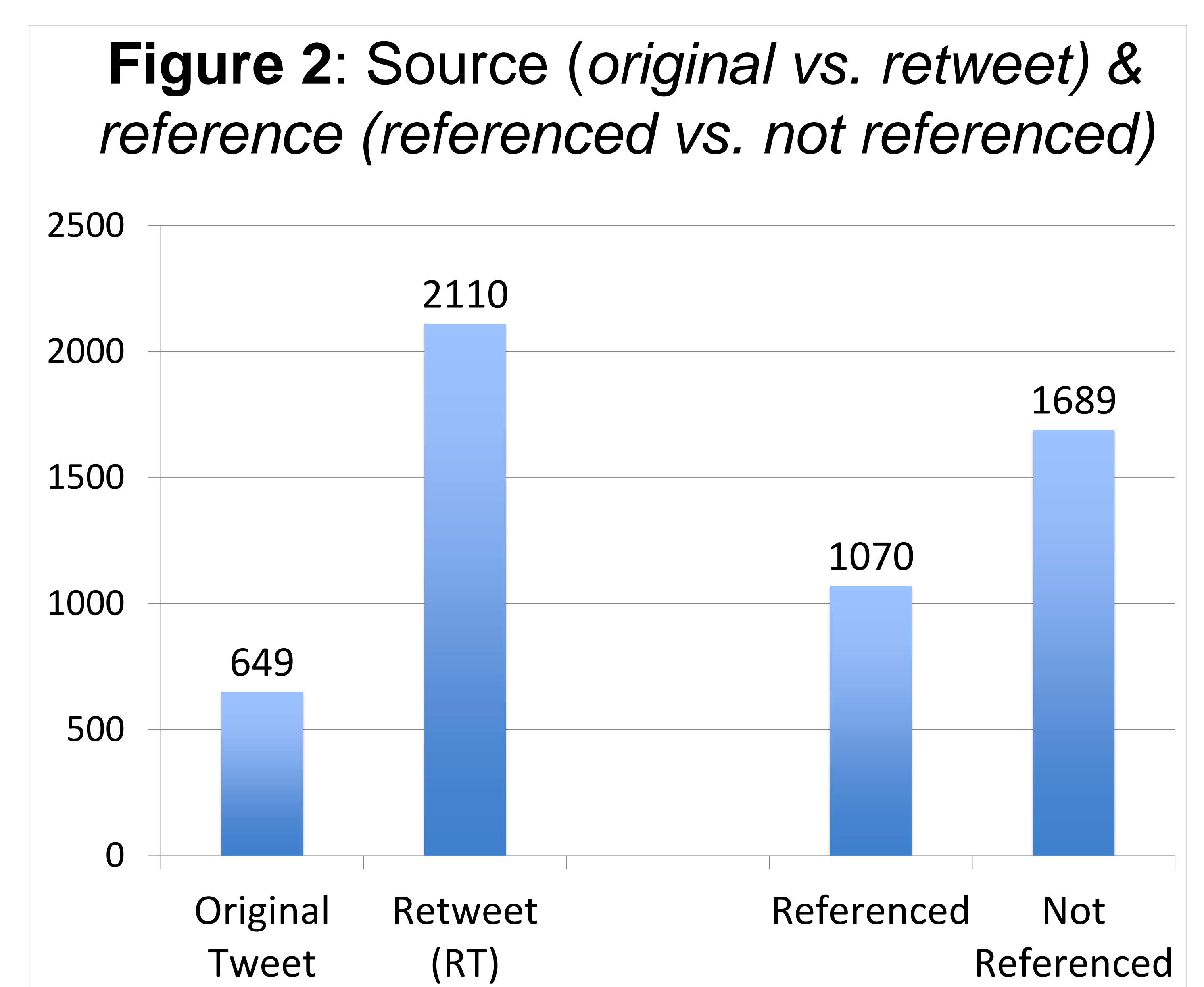


Figure 1: Categories of tweets based on content (Total=2759)



Conclusion

- Paramedics are engaging with both clinical and non-clinical content on Twitter using #FOAMems, with the majority of tweets relating to clinical issues.
- Social media resources are widely tweeted and re-tweeted, which is in line with the FOAM movement’s philosophy.
- Opportunities exist for paramedics to share further clinical, educational and technical knowledge supported by referenced material.

References

1. Cadogan M, Thoma B, Chan TM, Lin M. Free open access medication (FOAM): The rise of emergency medicine and critical care blogs and podcasts (2002-2013). *Emergency Medicine Journal* 31(1)
2. Batt AM, Cummins NM. (2016). E-learning on the Road – Irish Pre-Hospital Practitioners’ Experiences of Online Technology and Social Media for Continuous Professional Competency. *National Institute of Health Sciences Research Bulletin*, March 2016.
3. Escajeda J, Martin-Gill C (2016) Prehospital providers’ utilization of online medical education resources and social media. Poster presentation at NAEMSP.

References

1. Cadogan M, Thoma B, Chan TM, Lin M. Free open access meducation (FOAM): The rise of emergency medicine and critical care blogs and podcasts (2002-2013). *Emergency Medicine Journal* 31(1)
2. Batt A, Cummins N. (2016). E-learning on the Road – Irish Pre-Hospital Practitioners' Experiences of Online Technology and Social Media for Continuous Professional Competency. *National Institute of Health Sciences Research Bulletin* 7(3),84. March 2016.
3. Escajeda J, Martin-Gill C (2016) Prehospital providers' utilization of online medical education resources and social media. Poster presentation at NAEMSP.