#FOAMems – The Impact to Date

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Introduction

- Social media use amongst healthcare professionals is on the rise and it is increasingly being used by paramedics as a platform for continuing education and international collaboration.
- 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, Paramedicine, and prehospital care.
- **#FOAMems** is an extension of the FOAM (free open access medical education) movement.

- **The purpose of this study was to characterize 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 categorized by two reviewers. Data from all methods was combined to obtain the results.

http://www.symplur.com/healthcare-hashtags/foamems/

Results

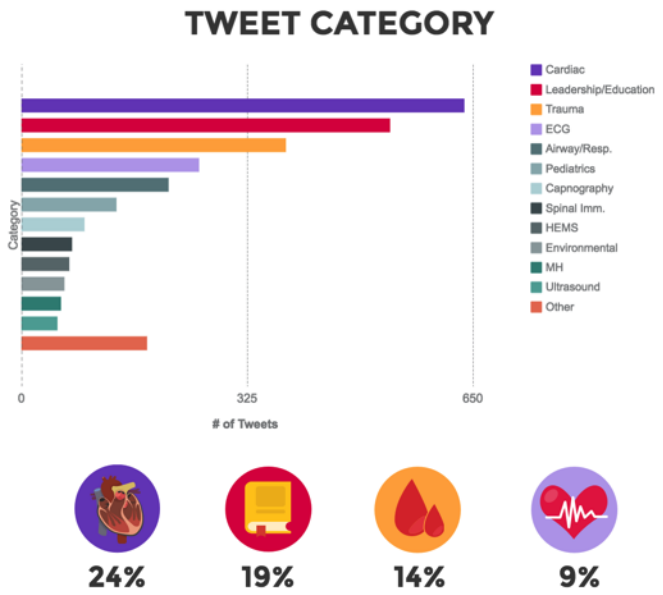
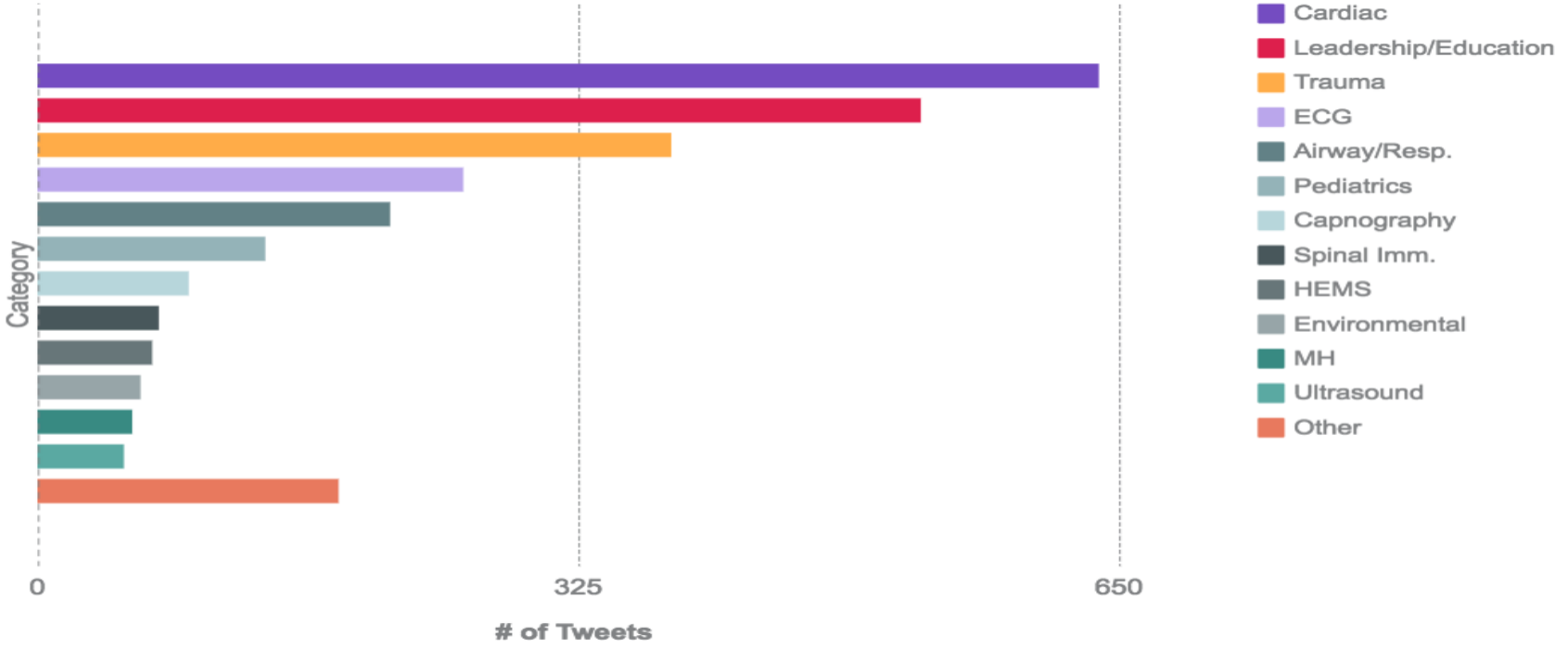


Figure 1: *Categories of tweets based on content (n=2759)*

- 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.


Cardiac
Leadership/Education
Trauma
ECG
Airway/Resp.
Pediatrics
Capnography
Spinal Imm.
HEMS
Environmental
MH
Ultrasound
Other
Category
0
325
650
# of Tweets

24%

19%

14%

9%

Results Continued

- 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 categorized based on content, source (original tweet or retweet) and whether they linked to referenced material or not.

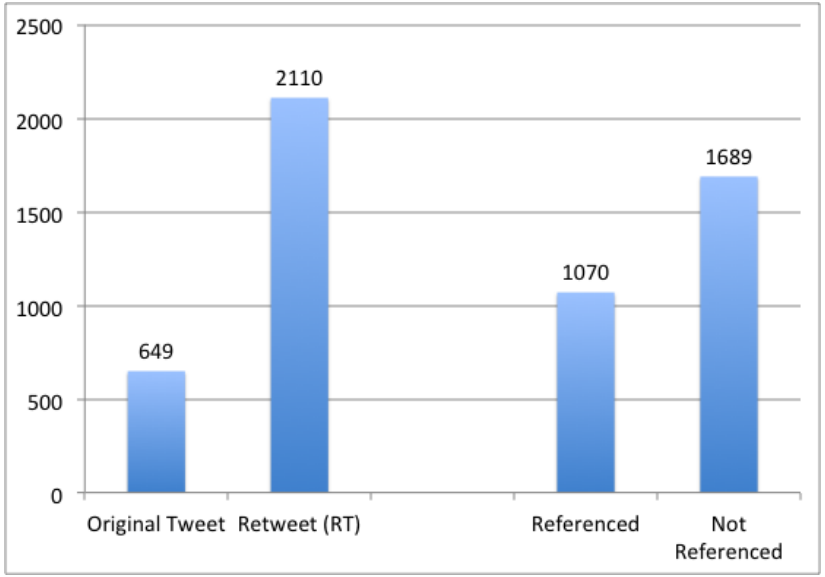


Figure 2: Source (*original vs. retweet) & reference (referenced vs. not referenced)*

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Conclusions

- 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

FOAM – Free Open Access Meducation – Medical education for anyone, anywhere, anytime.