Introduction

Free Open Access Medical Education (FOAM) has been defined as a movement “that provides medical education through a variety of social media platforms.”[1] FOAM has become prevalent over the last 15 years as a way to make learning materials and evidence-based information more accessible to all learners in medical education (MedEd).[1,2] In particular, podcasts have emerged as a particularly effective and widely accepted mode of FOAM.[3,4] The sphere of podcasts in MedEd is growing with increasing content geared towards medical students, residents, and other physicians in search of continuing or distributing medical education. Podcasts offer distinct advantages in medical education by creating flexible, low-pressure learning environments that seamlessly integrate into learners' daily routines.[5] Students can engage with clinical content during commutes, exercise sessions, or daily activities, maximizing educational opportunities outside traditional classroom settings.[1] The asynchronous, widely accessible nature of podcasts—often available free or at minimal cost—further enhances their educational value. MedEd podcasts specifically have been found to be a feasible, sustainable, and acceptable learning tool for medical students and residents.[5,6] To date, few podcasts deliver ObGyn clinical content focused on medical student clerkships in a digestible manner.[4]

Several ObGyn-related educational podcasts currently exist, each serving different audiences within the field. *Procedure Ready: Ob/Gyn* (formerly *Pimped Ob/Gyn*) is aimed at medical, physician assistant, and nurse practitioner students beginning their ObGyn rotations and emphasizes practical rotation guidance and preparation for common clinical questioning; however, episodes concluded in 2023 and do not include current event discussions or near-peer career insights.[7] *The OBG Med Student* similarly targeted clerkship learners but has been inactive since 2020 and provides a narrow set of episodes focused primarily on topic overviews.[8] *CREOGs Over Coffee* is designed specifically for Ob/Gyn resident education, while *Modern MedEd* primarily addresses faculty and educator needs.[9,10] Other podcasts, such as *BackTable OBGYN*, provide procedural and subspecialty perspectives tailored to practicing clinicians, and resources like *Ob/Gyn Time* and *Labor of Love* are oriented toward patient audiences rather than medical student learning.[11,12,13] Across this landscape, few podcasts offer concise, up-to-date, clerkship-level clinical content produced specifically for medical students, and none integrate near-peer discussions, current reproductive health events, and career exploration within a multimodal FOAM platform.

To address this gap, ObGyn Delivered—an existing student-led, multimodal, social media-based FOAM organization—created the ObGyn educational podcast

UltraSounds in March 2022. As of September 2025, the podcast was renamed to the *OBGYN Delivered Podcast* to improve searchability and maintain consistent branding. The *OBGYN Delivered Podcast* is a student-produced MedEd podcast covering clinical topic reviews, current event discussions, and career exploration with near-peers and reproductive health professionals targeted to a clerkship-level medical student audience. In this article, we describe the production process of the *OBGYN Delivered Podcast*, and evaluate our success as a FOAM resource through feasibility, sustainability, and acceptance metrics.

Methods

The podcast production process begins with recruiting faculty member experts in specific content areas through using networking connections or cold emails. Topics are selected based on high-yield areas from the NBME OB-GYN shelf content outline and student preferences.[14] Specialized topics aligned with faculty members' expertise have also been incorporated (e.g., opioid use disorder in pregnancy, reproductive justice) based on student interest. Scripts are prepared in advance by ObGyn Delivered students and shared with the faculty for review before recording. *OBGYN Delivered Podcast* episodes are then recorded over Zoom with two student podcast hosts and a faculty member.

Feasibility was assessed by the capacity to produce and disseminate biweekly podcasts. Factors that contributed to the evaluation of podcast feasibility included the monetary cost of production, costs for the audience, and the time commitment.

Sustainability was assessed by analyzing trends in streams per month, average listening duration, and the geographic and demographic distribution of listeners using data provided by our two leading streaming platforms: Spotify® and Apple Podcasts®. This data was broken down and assessed by “episode type” (e.g., topic review, career feature, near-peer career mentoring, career mentoring, current events, special topic, etc.).

Acceptance was assessed by the number of podcast followers, podcast reviews, and a public response feedback survey. This survey was conducted from June 2022 to November 2022, with 17 podcasts published at the time of survey distribution. The survey consisted of a 15-item questionnaire, which was distributed to listeners through podcast show notes, clerkship resources at several institutions, and social media. Dichotomous and five-point Likert-scale questions were used to understand current participant demographics and evaluate perceptions of podcast information,

entertainment, and helpfulness as a learning tool. Listener demographics were also collected through podcast hosting applications (e.g., Spotify for Podcasters® and Apple Podcasts®) to ensure that survey demographics were representative of the broader *OBGYN Delivered Podcast* audience. Survey data were analyzed using chi-square.

This study was declared exempt from review by the University of Michigan Health Sciences and Behavioral Sciences Institutional Review Board.

Results

Feasibility

As of January 2024, we have published 36 episodes over 21 months. Each episode requires approximately 5.5 – 7.5 hours to plan, record, and produce. Most podcast episodes are hosted by two student team members and an expert, most often a board certified ObGyn, with a few podcasts involving a board-certified family medicine physician or psychiatrist.

Initial start-up costs totaled $312 to purchase two microphones, a website host, and a website domain name. Website maintenance costs amount to $112 annually. All past and current podcast costs are funded through the University of Michigan

Medical School Capstone for Impact (CFI) Grant, which awarded our organization $2,000 in 2021.

Sustainability

The first podcast episode was released on March 29, 2022, and the most recent episode evaluated in this study was published on December 27, 2023, while the podcast continues to release new episodes to date. The medical student podcast team took a brief hiatus from June 2023 to September 2023 to re-envision podcast content and target a broader audience in response to feedback data gathered from listener surveys.

[Table 1]
Table 1. Listener demographic profile for the OBGYN Delivered Podcast. Values represent the number and percentage of listeners by gender, age group, and country.

The majority of podcast listeners are women aged 23-27 in the United States; listener demographics are summarized in Table 1. The *OBGYN Delivered Podcast* is available on multiple platforms, with the majority of listeners tuning in via Apple Podcasts® (4,851; 66%) and Spotify® (1,690; 23%). The podcast has gained a total of 470 followers across all platforms. As of January 2024, the podcast has accumulated a total

of 7,350 plays across all major streaming platforms, with plays defined as downloads or streams lasting at least 60 seconds (Figure 1). Each episode averages 23.9 minutes in length and receives approximately 198 plays. On average, listeners engage with 15.2 minutes of each episode, which is 63.6% of the total episode length.

[Figure 1]
Figure 1. Cumulative podcast plays from the release of the first episode (Month 0) through the most recent episode included in this study (Month 21).

Episode types consist of topic reviews, career features, near-peer mentoring, career mentorship, and current event discussions. Of these topic reviews, the majority (20; 67%) cover general obstetric and gynecologic topics, with fewer episodes covering subspecialty topic reviews. Subspecialty episodes include topics in pediatric and adolescent gynecology, urogynecology, maternal-fetal medicine, reproductive endocrinology, family planning, and breast and gynecologic cancer genetics. Providers featured in episodes included ObGyn physicians, family medicine physicians, senior medical students, and psychiatrists.

Overall, topic review episodes had a greater number of listens ($\mu_{\text{average plays}}$ = 206 plays) and increased consumption ($\mu_{\text{average consumption}}$ = 70.2%) compared

to other episode types ($\mu_{average\ plays}$ = 169 plays; $\mu_{average\ consumption}$ = 41.3%). Plays represent the average number of downloads or streams in which listeners engaged with an episode type for at least 60 seconds, and consumption represents the mean percentage of each episode that listeners engaged with within each episode type. These patterns indicate that topic review episodes consistently captured greater listener attention and sustained engagement across multiple metrics.

Podcast episodes ranged in the number of plays, with the top 10 highest-played episodes summarized in Figure 2. The duration of an episode was not correlated to the percent consumed (R^2 = 0.032).

[Figure 2]

Figure 2. Top ten OBGYN Delivered Podcast episodes by plays.

Acceptance

Survey participants included 73 medical students and 16 medical professionals ($n_{student}$=73, $n_{professional}$=16). Survey results showed no significant differences in participant age or gender (p= 0.968), with most participants identifying as females between the ages 23-27. This was representative of our broader audience demographic, verified

through Spotify for Podcasters® and Apple Podcasts®. On average, participants perceived the *OBGYN Delivered Podcast* as "very informative" ($\mu_{informative}$=4), "very helpful" ($\mu_{helpful}$= 3.6), and "very entertaining" ($\mu_{entertaining}$= 3.6). Medical students gave a higher overall rating ($\mu_{student}$= 4.06) than medical professionals ($\mu_{professional}$= 3.89) with both metrics correlating to "very good". There was no significant difference in overall rating between medical professionals and students (p=0.844). To date, the *OBGYN Delivered Podcast* has garnered 12 five-star ratings on Spotify® and 6 five-star ratings on Apple Podcasts®. On Apple Podcasts®, the *OBGYN Delivered Podcast* has one written review in which an audience member remarked that the podcast was "eye opening and full of facts backed by science."

Discussion

Feasibility, Sustainability, and Acceptance of Podcast

This paper builds upon previous work in the field of medical education demonstrating that FOAM and other multimodal forms of learning are excellent forms of supplemental education, particularly within the reproductive healthcare space.[2,3,4] We have demonstrated that the MedEd podcast, *OBGYN Delivered Podcast*, is a sustainable, feasible, and acceptable FOAM modality for disseminating reproductive health knowledge to clinical medical students. This initial review showcases that the *OBGYN Delivered Podcast* has met expectations in all three domains in the first 21 months since

its release.

Recent literature has demonstrated that medical students are increasingly utilizing FOAMed resources as an integral part of their self-determined learning, particularly among Gen Z and millennial learners who strongly gravitate toward technology-enhanced, convenient, and personalized educational approaches.[15] Morgan's 2025 systematic review of FOAMed use in medical students found that these resources have evolved from grassroots initiatives to widely accepted educational tools, with students demonstrating significant engagement across multiple platforms including podcasts, blogs, and social media.[15] However, the review also identified a critical gap: while students are actively seeking out FOAMed resources independently, most universities fail to formally integrate these resources into curricula.[15] Additionally, the review highlighted concerns regarding quality assurance, sustainability due to creator burnout, and the need for more specialty-specific and stage-appropriate educational content.[15] The *OBGYN Delivered Podcast* is written and hosted by medical students that have recently completed their OBGYN clerkships, an experience that allows them to highlight content that is important and appropriate for clerkship-level learners in obstetrics and gynecology. This ensures that *OBGYN Delivered Podcast* content addresses the gap in specialty-specific and stage-appropriate FOAM resources. By incorporating diverse episode types (e.g., topic reviews, near-peer mentoring, and

current events), securing institutional funding to ensure sustainability, and targeting content to high-yield clinical material aligned with NBME shelf exam objectives, the *OBGYN Delivered Podcast* exemplifies how student-driven FOAMed initiatives can fill crucial educational voids while maintaining feasibility, acceptability, and longevity in an evolving digital learning landscape.

Feasibility strengths of the *OBGYN Delivered Podcast* include its cost effectiveness; diversity of guest provider expertise; and enthusiasm and willingness of podcast guests, including medical and allied health professionals, to participate in episodes. In terms of sustainability, the steady growth of podcast listens indicates listeners' continued interest in the *OBGYN Delivered Podcast* as a medical education resource. As new episodes continue to be released, the pool of content for listeners will expand further. A recent response letter to a Canadian medical education podcast highlighted that although there are some reproductive MedEd podcasts, several of these modalities lack longevity due to podcast host burnout.[16] The hosts of the *OBGYN Delivered Podcast* faced similar challenges in the first year of its release as we worked to understand which episodes were the most effective and useful to listeners. To combat burnout, the *OBGYN Delivered Podcast* took a temporary hiatus to brainstorm podcast content and review listener survey data to guide future podcast directions. Since this brief hiatus, we have worked to diversify episode type and provider expertise incorporated in podcast content

to increase global podcast sustainability. Feasibility and sustainability of this podcast are also largely attributable to the support of faculty and staff at the University of Michigan Medical School, who provided critical guidance, subject-matter expertise, and contributions to podcast content.

For podcast acceptability, our preliminary findings from our listener survey data indicate that the *OBGYN Delivered Podcast* is an acceptable and valuable learning resource for not only students, our original intended audience, but also for healthcare professionals. Moreover, survey responses demonstrated that the podcast was perceived as an entertaining, informative, and acceptable learning platform for both students and professionals. Similar perspectives were highlighted in listener reviews on podcast platforms.

Limitations

This review has several limitations in evaluating the *OBGYN Delivered Podcast*. A challenge in podcast feasibility and sustainability we did not address in our data collection is interest and availability of future medical students to continue producing the podcast as current students graduate and move on to residency, during which it may be less feasible to dedicate time to this medical education endeavor.

For acceptability, the methodology for collecting demographic and listener data garnered from the podcast hosting platforms is unclear and unknown to the writers. Additionally, given that listener recruitment for survey response was through convenience sampling, it is possible that data garnered from this listener subset is not reflective of all audience members. Moreover, the number of ratings and reviews on podcast platforms of the *OBGYN Delivered Podcast* is limited and may not be representative of all listener perspectives.

Future Directions

Analysis of listener data revealed that topic review episodes, which had higher average listens, are particularly well-received by medical student learners when covering heavily tested areas on NBME® clinical shelf exams. Thus, we will continue to build our topic review content on subjects that students are most likely to encounter in clinical and/or testing settings to continue meeting the *OBGYN Delivered Podcast's* primary goal of providing educational content relevant to clerkship-level medical students. We also hope to continue addressing the need for career and near-peer mentoring for medical students interested in reproductive health care with episodes focused on these topics.

Future research studying learner perspectives on episode topics is needed to ensure

that the

OBGYN Delivered Podcast continues to serve its role as a sustainable medical education platform that is acceptable to listeners. Understanding how listeners select which episodes to listen to and why listeners stop listening to an episode would also be helpful to tailor future podcast content. Qualitative interviews of listeners exploring these questions would be beneficial to continue improving the sustainability and acceptance of the *OBGYN Delivered Podcast*. Similarly, evaluation of podcast effectiveness in accomplishing learning objectives could be garnered through conducting pre- and post-test surveys assessing knowledge of podcast content.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the *OBGYN Delivered Podcast* is a feasible, sustainable, and acceptable FOAM modality for reproductive health education for medical students. Diversity of provider expertise, near-peer mentorship, and variety of episode types are unique aspects of the *OBGYN Delivered Podcast* that have contributed to the podcast's sustainability. Additional work is needed to evaluate the *OBGYN Delivered Podcast's* effectiveness in improving learning outcomes, standardized test scores, and generalized interest in reproductive healthcare careers for medical students.

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