



# The power of podcasting: A journey into PREGNANCY UNCUT

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**Introduction:** In the current media climate of unqualified influencers, maternity care in Australia is at risk of compromise to safety through the spread of misinformation, mistrust and misrepresentation. In addition, there is heightened public interest in addressing birth trauma and more informed birthing choices. Medical experts need to be part of the conversation.

Pregnancy and birth complications still carry much social stigma. Issues like infertility, pregnancy & baby loss, and perinatal mental health have been off limits in everyday conversations, so too for the experiences of marginalised birthing groups.

When it comes to addressing pregnancy and birth complications and normalising these complex conversations in our community, leaders need to ensure representation, foster trust in our expertise, and demonstrate we are listening and responsive.

**Project Aim:** We aimed to develop a podcast based on lived experience of diverse pregnancy and birth-related challenges and build an inclusive and evidence-based resource for patients and health practitioners. We aimed to destigmatise previously taboo topics and develop dialogue in the birthing space, especially for marginalised and underrepresented groups.

**Method:** We established our not-for-profit mission, branding, media, production and publication methods. Each episode uses the transformative power of storytelling to unpack the often-hidden complications and health inequities in maternity care, with expert commentary from multi-disciplinary health professionals.



Figure 1. Dr Alex and Dr Kara record the first episode of Pregnancy Uncut (2021).

**Results:** Our podcast is freely available on all mainstream platforms. Over three years and five seasons, we produced fifty episodes, listened to 70,000 times and rated 4.9 stars on Apple Podcasts (Figure 2). Featured episodes include topics of miscarriage, stillbirth, birth-related trauma, post-partum depression and psychosis, and stories from marginalised groups (Figure 3).

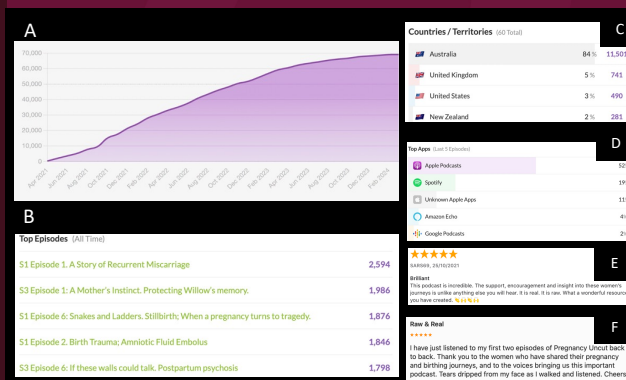


Figure 2. (A) Cumulative episode downloads over period 2021-2024, (B) Top rating episodes by downloads, (C) Top four audience by country, (D) Top five applications for access to podcast, (E and F) Five star audience review on Apple Podcasts.

Through episode conversations, we deconstructed structural biases with indigenous, transgendered, large-bodied and autistic guests, and opened complex discussions on domestic abuse, surrogacy, donor conception and childlessness. Our project generated national media including print and radio articles in the Australian Broadcasting Cooperation (Figure 4).

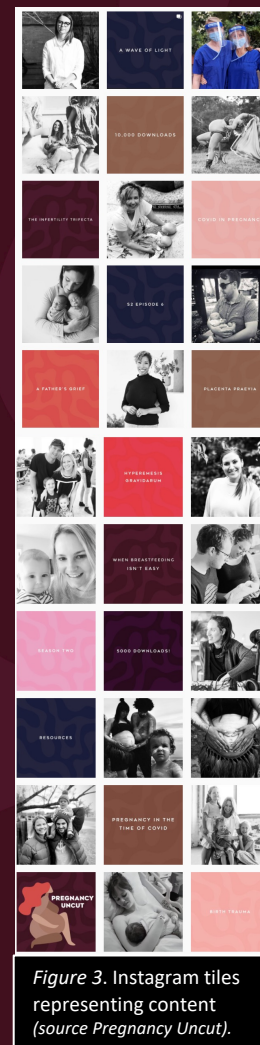


Figure 3. Instagram tiles representing content (source Pregnancy Uncut).

## Outcomes – An accessible and influential resource

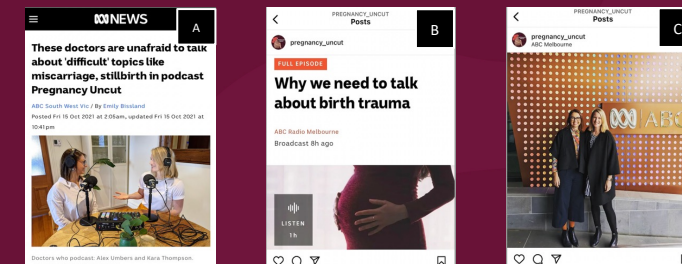


Figure 4. Extending the reach to mainstream media, (A) Feature article ABC 2021, (B) ABC Radio 2022, and (C) ABC Afternoons with Jacinta Parsons, 2022.

## Raising awareness in audience

- unique insights into pregnancy and birth complications through lived experience
- destigmatisation of hidden health issues
- therapeutic validation – doctors are listening
- deconstructing power imbalance between Drs & patients
- expert commentary and reach in mainstream media

## Changing clinical practice for care providers

- consumers as drivers of positive change
- patient as teachers - understanding impact of care journey (importance of language, consent, debrief)
- enduring impact of experience (ripple/bystander effects)
- representation of diverse and marginalised voices

**Conclusion:** In an era of proliferating online medical misinformation, we created an accessible and trusted resource that has raised awareness, influenced clinical practice and informed national conversations in pregnancy & birthing care.