

Pancare Foundation: empowering cancer patients with remote technology

Client profile

Pancare Foundation are a leading charity committed to inspiring hope, raising awareness, supporting families and funding research for upper gastrointestinal (GI) cancers.

They provide support for people living with cancer and their families from the point of diagnosis through to treatment and beyond. They also fund world-leading research to increase survival and improve treatment options.

Which technologies?

- Microsoft Teams
- NTT Studio

Which services?

- Consulting Services
- Technology Infrastructure Services
- Event Production Services

Which partners?

- Microsoft



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[Cara Markovic, Head of Programs, Pancare Foundation](#)

Summary

Pancare Foundation provides essential support to patients recently diagnosed and living with pancreatic and other upper gastrointestinal cancers. While they were planning on leveraging technology to expand their reach and engagement, the impact of COVID-19 accelerated this process.

Working with us they adopted Microsoft Teams to keep their employees connected and as a platform for their continuing education and support activities.

Through this they've been able to expand their reach across Australia, setting the stage for the next phase of their evolution.

Business need

Imagining a world without cancer

Pancare Foundation has a vision of a world free from pancreatic and uppergastrointestinal cancers. With 11,000 people diagnosed and 8,000 deaths per year in Australia, the support the Foundation provides is critical to the fight against this disease.

A core part of their efforts is the support they provide repeated to individuals and families recently diagnosed. This is provided through patient and carer education days, support groups and counselling services. They also organize community events to raise funds for research as well as for patient and carer services.

While the organization is based in Victoria, the demand for their services meant they were looking for ways to expand their reach nationally.

When Australia went into lockdown during COVID-19 they recognized that they needed to move quickly to find ways to deliver this support virtually.

“Cancer doesn’t go away during a pandemic, in fact, it gets a lot worse. What we wanted to do during the pandemic was to accelerate our plans and the best way to do this was to move our communications platforms online,” comments Cara Markovic, Head Of Programs at Pancare Foundation.

Solution

Embracing change and digitalizing support

“We’ve had to do things differently and really leverage technology to drive a digital transformation and accelerate the growth of the Foundation” says Doug Hawkins, CEO, Pancare Foundation. “Technology and digital is the cornerstone of that.”

With COVID-19 making physical interactions impossible the Foundation had to tackle the double challenge of keeping their employees connected, but also maintaining the support programs they offer.

They partnered with us to deploy Microsoft Teams as their core platform for communication collaboration. This integrates into a multi-room video conferencing solution which enables a high-class meeting experience for people working remotely and those based in the Foundation’s offices.

The technology solution was complemented by training provided at the Foundation’s offices.

“NTT enabled our team to get a head start and fast track their use of the tools,” he says.

The other essential component for them was being able to take their education and support services online.

“Lockdown prevented us from holding any events so we partnered with NTT to deliver our education programs in an online interactive format and created the Living Well series,” says Markovic.

This series enabled patients to get access to experts with immediate feedback, without them needing to leave their homes as well as interact with other patients who were going through similar issues.

The webinars provided key information to patients around issues such as nutrition and managing symptoms; with

practical tips that they could use in their daily lives and information on complementary therapies.

Moving online meant that many patients who may have struggled to attend physical sessions, even before lockdown, were able to attend.

Outcomes

Leveraging technology to expand their reach

Leveraging the power of Microsoft Teams and our expertise, Pancare Foundation have been able to continue delivering critical support to people living with cancer. In addition to keeping their employees connected, they’ve provided a vital support structure to patients and carers through the challenges that COVID-19 posed.

Staying connected through lockdown

When Melbourne went into lockdown as a result of COVID-19 we worked with the team at Pancare Foundation to transition and transform their business allowing them to communicate effectively in a video and webcasting format.

Nationwide reach

Shifting their outreach programs to Microsoft Teams enabled them to extend their reach to the whole of Australia, providing assistance to patients and carers wherever they’re located. Through the use of their Teams platform, they’re able to scale that their program, making them the first point of call that anybody dealing with an upper GI cancer.

Rita Surenda, one of the patients who participated in the webinars said: “The webinar sessions were very informative because there were experts who were guiding us and telling us where to go to get certain information. Because I was able to talk with likeminded people who went through similar problems it was easy for me to communicate and listen to others as well, and that way it was less stressful for me.”



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