

Case study: Pancreatic Cancer UK and Semafone Safeguarding Donations During Coronavirus: Secure Payment Links Enable Charity to Continue Vital Fundraising Work

Background

Working hard to transform the future of those affected by pancreatic cancer, Pancreatic Cancer UK works with researchers, policymakers, UK National Health Service partners and health professionals to improve access to treatments and the quality-of-care delivery for people with pancreatic cancer. As the biggest pancreatic cancer charity in the UK, the organization provides UK-wide support and advisory services to patients and their families, funds pioneering research, campaigns to raise greater awareness of the symptoms of the disease, and delivers updates, insights and education to health professionals.

The Challenge

The charity are totally reliant on the fundraising activities of volunteers, and gifts and donations from supporters. When the first UK lockdown was imposed in response to COVID-19, personnel who usually staff the charity's donations phone lines had to work from home and they stopped accepting donations over the phone.

"With no government funding, donations are our life blood," explains Anne Davies, Supporter Care Manager at Pancreatic Cancer UK. "When we first went into lockdown, we took the decision to stop taking phone donations – posting a message on our website advising supporters of our decision. However, once it became clear that we would be working remotely for the foreseeable future, we urgently needed to solve the challenge of securely accepting monetary donations from the many supporters who were similarly constrained by stay-at-home orders."

The demographic makeup of the charity's supporters meant that making donations over the phone using a credit or debit card is one of the most popular channels for those wanting to give money to support the work of the charity.



"We needed to find a PCI DSS compliant and secure way of taking donations over the phone that would give our donors absolute confidence that we had taken appropriate steps to safeguard their payment data. It was also vital to ensure that we protected our staff from being needlessly exposed to sensitive personal payment details while undertaking their roles in a home-based work setting," continues Anne.

Initiating an Effective and Simple Payment Solution... Fast

With no on-site technical resources, the charity needed a standalone solution that was fast, easy to set up and implement, and could be integrated alongside the charity's existing technology and communication platforms.

"When I connected with other charity fundraisers via a social media group, someone recommended talking to Semafone. The moment I reached out to Semafone their team sprang into action. Despite lockdown restrictions, they moved heaven and earth to get us up and running with a solution - and even spoke with our payment service provider to help move things along," continued Anne.



Semafone's Cardprotect Relay+ was quickly up and running, enabling Anne and her team to create and send out secure payment links within seconds of talking to their supporters.

"Semafone organized Zoom video training sessions for the team and provided clear instructions so that everyone was familiar and confident with the system, and knew how to monitor the progress and successful completion of donation transactions. All of which made our transition to this new way of taking donations a painless and straightforward experience."

The Solution

Providing everything that a dispersed team needed to instantly create and send secure payment links to donors, Cardprotect Relay+ enabled the charity to maintain its fund-raising activities in a PCI DSS compliant way.

"Semafone's solution means that when our supporters call up to donate, we're able to offer them the option of receiving a secure payment link via SMS or email. By clicking on this link, they can then enter their payment details – and we never see or hear their sensitive payment details."

Throughout the whole process, the charity's home-based workers are able to stay on the phone line and talk people through the process, answering any questions they may have along the way while viewing live updates from the solution on how the transaction is progressing.

"Given that some of our donors do not have access to the internet and so can't make donations on line, this facility has proved particularly valuable – it means we're able to provide people with all the encouragement and guidance they need as they navigate what may be their first experience of this new mode of payment." confirms Anne.

Eliminating any need to store, process or transmit cardholder data, Cardprotect Relay+ ensures the charity's remote working teams are able to continue to accept donations without compromising PCI DSS compliance.

The Benefits

Despite lockdown restrictions, Pancreatic Cancer UK has been able to continue its fundraising activities and preserve the personal connections that make it easier to serve supporters better.

"Having the ability to maintain a voice-based relationship with our donors is very important to us," says Anne. "Alongside developing a rapport with everyone that gets in contact, these conversations enable us to build a deeper

picture of what's motivating each individual to donate to the cause – which means we can send them information that keeps them updated on areas most relevant to their interests."

Despite all the challenges, Cardprotect Relay+ has made it possible for the charity to seamlessly continue its fundraising activities in a PCI DSS compliant way, even though the charity's team are working from home.

Ultra-flexible, with no set up fees, the standalone solution gives the charity a cost-effective way of extending how it takes donation payments.

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Anne Davies – Supporter Care Manager,
Pancreatic Cancer UK

"With no long-term contracts and a pay-as-you-go usage charging structure, Semafone's solution is ideal for charities like us that need to minimize the administration costs associated with handling donations. Plus, the solution is scalable enough to cope with any peaks in demand generated by the fundraising campaigns and events we run throughout the year," explains Anne.

Thanks to Semafone, the team will be able to continue operating its flexible new remote working model for the foreseeable future. Plus, the team is investigating ways to extend how it uses the solution and make it even simpler and easier for people to give in the future. One such option includes incorporating QR codes into direct mail letters that, when scanned, will take recipients direct to a personalised secure payment link.

"This year, our supporters have rallied and come together as never before – hosting online events, alongside virtual fundraising to increase awareness and raise vital funds – despite lockdowns and tier restrictions. The least that we could do was ensure we had everything in place to enable us to securely continue to accept donations – no matter where in the UK our teams found themselves having to work," concludes Anne.