**PURPOSE:**

Unfortunately, Solaris doesn’t have a marketing budget like many of our peers or other not-for-profit organisations. We rely heavily on word-of-mouth and our May We Thrive campaign for generous financial support from the community.

One of the ways we reach the community is through reaching out directly to people we know and sharing the Solaris story. It is a low cost for Solaris and we have seen that it gets results.

The Solaris Family is large and spreads across all corners of Western Australia. We have 350 volunteers and an even bigger patient base. And each year, we ask our Solaris Family to help support our campaigns.

This May, we are hoping to raise funds and awareness during our May We Thrive campaign.

Our objective is to raise much needed funds to provide person-centred care with equitable access. Solaris continues to support some of the community’s most vulnerable and immune-suppressed members, particularly cancer patients, carers, families and cancer survivors.

The more people who spread the word to their friends and family, the bigger our reach.

So please help us to spread the message by sending an email, letter or picking up the phone and telling someone that you think might be in a position to help Solaris. And thank you again for your kind support.

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**Solaris Cancer Care Priorities**

* Adapt our service delivery strategies for Western Australians in response to new evidence.
* Ensure Western Australians have access to evidence supported complementary services as they live with cancer.
* Help Western Australians with cancer and their families live well.
* Contribute to building new data and research supporting complementary support to people living with cancer.
* Contribute to Western Australia’s robust, contemporary and sustainable cancer care system by supporting people living with cancer to have a better quality of life.

**KEY MESSAGES – SITUATION (reviewed by DS)**

* Since levels of medical check-ups have reduced during the COVID period, Solaris estimates that a greater number of cancer diagnoses will occur in 2021 with more advanced stages of cancer.
* As the healthcare industry operates in post-COVID, Solaris Cancer Care aims to provide greater access to West Australians impacted by cancer now more than ever before.
* We continue to support vulnerable parts of our community who are immune-compromised and fighting for their lives in both the metropolitan and regional areas.
* COVID-19 paralysed the world in 2020, but as we emerged on the other side in 2021 one fact has remained: cancer is a leading cause of death in Australia.
* Solaris’ goal is unwavering through any global crisis: to support those with cancer going through the toughest journey of their lives.
* Solaris Cancer Care improves the lives of all adult cancer patients, their families and carers, all year round, and with support will be able to extend access to newly diagnosed patients, carers and families, as well as the general public in 2021.
* Solaris Cancer Care is determined to extend support to the West Australian community who may not be able to access its services through a hybrid operational model and a greater online services footprint.
* Over 2020 Solaris Cancer Care extended its services to the Pilbara region to reduce the disadvantage in access to quality health care faced by regional cancer patients. Solaris wants to eventually provide support to cancer patients in every corner of the State.
* Solaris Cancer Care targets the feeling of isolation and the mental health issues that accompany it faced by many cancer patients, especially in regional areas.
* WA-based, regional-based organisation drawing on labour-inspired community spirit

**KEY MESSAGES – GENERAL**

* Solaris Cancer Care provides supportive services to individuals in all stages of their adult cancer journey – diagnosis, treatment, recovery, survivorship and palliative care.
* Solaris Cancer Care’s support goes beyond curing the disease. It focuses on healing, which occurs long after cancer has been eradicated from the body
* Solaris Cancer Care develops and offers evidence-based therapies that are integrated with mainstream medical treatment. The organisation also extends support and information to all people in WA affected by cancer, including carers and family members.
* All of Solaris Cancer Care’s supportive services are informed by meticulous research and data, consistently improving outcomes through safe, sustainable and evidence-based care.
* Solaris Cancer Care currently provides most of its services to cancer patients and their carers free of charge, allowing access to all individuals and families affected by cancer, no matter their financial situation.

**SUPPORTING FACTS & FIGURES (DS updated)**

* Solaris delivers more than $1.2M worth of health care in complementary therapies to cancer patients, carers & families per year
* Despite COVID, Solaris Cancer Care provided more than 16,000 treatments to cancer patients, carers and families in Western Australia in 2020. Our usual annual treatment levels are 28,000 but the lockdown and travel restrictions, combined with health uncertainties, affected these numbers.
* Over 13,300 people diagnosed in WA each year and 3 out of 10 deaths directly caused by cancer in WA.
* Today, almost 7 in 10 Australians will survive for at least five years after a cancer diagnosis and in some cancers, the survival is as high as 90%.
* 1 in 2 Australian men and women will be diagnosed with cancer by the age of 85.
* In Australia in 2020, it was estimated there were just under 150,000 new cases of cancer diagnosed and just under 50,000 deaths from cancer.
* Cancer is a leading cause of death in Australia – almost 50,000 deaths from cancer were estimated for 2020.
* 2025 prediction – more than 17,000 cancer diagnoses in WA
* 2025 prediction – more than 5,000 cancer deaths in WA per year

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| **Tool** | **Information** | **How and where do I use it?** |
| My Cause page | [www.solaristhrive.com.au](http://www.solaristhrive.com.au)  | Link to MyCause – one idea is to write it on a piece of paper or cardboard and show it in your video  |
| Solaris website | [www.solariscancercare.org.au](http://www.solariscancercare.org.au) | Subscribe for news and updates |

**Example letter**

Dear XXXX,

As you may or may not know, I currently volunteer/work/am a patient of a charity called Solaris Cancer Care; supporting cancer patients <like me> and their families get through one of the worst experiences any of us could face.

Cancer is so prevalent in our society now I’m sure you have a loved one, friend or colleague who has been touched by this insidious disease, or maybe you have experienced it yourself, and you know how frightening it can be during ‘normal’ times.

We are not living in normal times.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the Australian Medical Association estimated there were up to 7000 cancer cases that went undiagnosed or were diagnosed at later stages. Solaris believes that over 2021 there will be more cancer diagnoses at later stages, and we need to be able to meet the increased need for its services.

Solaris Cancer Care offers free evidence-based therapies, education, wellness activities, support groups and counselling, that are integrated with mainstream medical treatment, support and information to all people in Western Australia affected by cancer, including carers and family members.

Solaris was the first organisation in Western Australia to provide these types of vital services and therapies to the many adults affected by **any type of cancer**, mostly entirely free of charge no matter people’s financial situation.

In addition, its services are offered at all stages of the cancer journey – diagnosis, treatment, recovery, survivorship and palliative care.

Earlier this year, after the Albany Health Campus received increased funding for staff, Solaris was told the campus no longer had room for its services. While we welcome all funding for cancer patients, unfortunately it means that our Great Southern clinic is now homeless.

This May, Solaris is launching its major fundraising push **May We Thrive** to raise funds to keep supporting cancer patients who are more vulnerable than most and will continue to need support long after COVID-19 is no longer part of our daily dialogue.

Solaris Cancer Care has started a fundraising page on the [www.solaristhrive.com.au](http://www.solaristhrive.com.au) to ensure we can keep helping people. Donations are tax-deductible, and as mentioned, every bit counts no matter how big or small.

I know times are tough for everyone and we’ve all had to tighten our belts but if you can donate the equivalent of a night out with your friends, a week’s worth of takeaway coffees or a month of Pilates classes it would truly make a world of difference.

Thank you,

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