

TARGET MY HIVES: A DIGITAL COMMUNITY BRINGING PATIENTS TOGETHER

Health network for individuals affected by chronic urticaria

SITUATION

Chronic urticaria (commonly referred to as hives) is characterized by the sudden occurrence of red, itchy rashes or angioedema with rapid swelling in the deeper layers of the skin. The condition can be triggered by external factors, including sunlight and water, but can also occur spontaneously, without any identifiable causes.

Patients with chronic urticaria are often left to deal with the condition alone, leading many to stop seeking help, with some even giving up visiting their doctor.

Many patients needed a forum where they could discuss concerns, get support through painful flare-ups, and to share their story of hives' triggers, treatments and symptoms away from traditional social media communities. Against this background, ERT sought to develop a digital network that would support and empower chronic urticaria patients to take control of their condition.

"Patients with chronic urticaria often suffer from an enormous sense of isolation" says Tim Davis, VP Digital Patient, ERT. "We wanted to develop a forum that would reduce this feeling and deliver improved patient outcomes, by connecting those living with, and affected by, the condition."

SUMMARY

- Many patients stop seeking medical help when left to cope with the condition alone
- Patients required a forum to discuss concerns, get support, and share their stories
- Forum to share experiences and reduce the sense of isolation

IMPACT

- Connected patients, physicians and PAGs (Patient Advisory Groups) to help individuals actively take control of their condition
- Helped patients find their nearest urticaria specialist
- Downloaded over 70,000 times with 3,500 active users
- 150+ clinics linked to the community



"Patients with chronic urticaria often suffer from an enormous sense of isolation"

—Tim Davis, VP Digital Patient, ERT

SOLUTION

By providing a dedicated community for those affected by chronic urticaria, TARGET My Hives gives patients a platform where they can discuss concerns, get support and share their own stories. Additional functionalities also help patients actively manage their condition. For example, progress tracking enables patients to track their condition through the Urticaria Control Test, a clinically recognized assessment which is provided when users first sign up to the community. Patients can also connect with local specialists via the doc-finder, which allows specialist physicians and clinics to register within the community, enabling patients to search for nearby clinics.

IMPACT

By allowing individuals with chronic urticaria to monitor their own condition and follow others with similar symptoms, TARGET My Hives helps patients to actively take control of their disease. Launched in May 2016 and currently available in eight languages, the TARGET My Hives app has been downloaded over 70,000 times and has 3,500 active users. Interactions are not limited to patients and those with loved ones suffering from the condition; many urticaria specialists have registered as doctors, with over 150 clinics now linked to the community.

"TARGET My Hives is proving its value in opening up the much needed conversation between people affected and the wider healthcare community," says Tim Davis. "Patients have already been reporting how much it helps them manage their condition, and empowers them to share their own knowledge that may help others."

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