

Contract No: CN329824

Period ended : 31/07/2021

Outcome Report

***How many clients, if applicable, have been supported with the additional funding?
Please explain and if possible provide further details of how the funding was used.***

The pandemic hurled us into an unknown and uncharted territory, we saw an increase in calls for various services. The growth in our existing services had to be better resourced and at the same time we had to introduce new services to complement our existing services and also find new ways to keep in touch with our seniors.

The fund helped us in procurement of laptop, and associated software applications, provided mobile connectivity to our staff as well as helped us to subscribe to Google cloud services and Zoom to support our online activities. The staff were able to connect with the seniors safely from their homes as well as provide phone support to the seniors. We would not have been able to run our online activities efficiently but for this fund. The online activities helped us to keep in touch with our seniors during the various Alert levels. We used the digital medium of Zoom and Google meet to have chat shows. These chat shows covered various topics including health talks by Medical professionals.

The zoom chat shows are attended by more than 50 seniors regularly during the COVID alert levels and by about 15 clients at Alert Lvl1. Our online competitions were a great success and more than 100 seniors participated in the competition with many many more viewing the same over the net. All this again would not have been possible without the laptop and connectivity over the internet.

The funding helped us to place advertisements and recruit a digital media coordinator. This is a very critical role as we have realised that there are a substantial number of seniors who are not comfortable traveling in public transport and would prefer to attend our online programmes. The Digital Coordinator helped us in creating programmes and also helped in improving our website, releasing Newsletters and increasing our Facebook posts. This helped us in reaching out to more seniors about our services and support that they could receive from various organisations including ours with regard to COVID support.

The laptops and the resultant digital push has helped us to spread COVID related information to our seniors. This fund also helped us in mobilising and coordinating with more than 200 seniors and getting them vaccinated

During the COVID pandemic more than **1000*** seniors and their families have used our services. Our Positive ageing programme saw an increase in new customer registrations. We introduced **Digital Services, Caring Caller service and Annapoorna - Indian Vegetarian Meals On Wheels** during COVID which have been used by more than **475*** seniors.

What difference and/or opportunities did this funding provide for whānau and/or your service? An example would be "This funding allowed us to provide alternative triage methods for the assessment of COVID-19 symptoms during Alert Levels 4 and 3" Without this funding we would not have been able to support whānau in need without breaking the lockdown rules regarding "bubbles" that applied during these Alert Levels").

The introduction of our digital services has further helped us in increasing our reach and creating a platform to build trust with our seniors and help in identifying and responding to issues of neglect and overcoming Isolation. Regular chat shows, games and competitions helped bridge the gap and overcome their loneliness. They were able to discuss issues and our staff were able to record the same into a central database hosted in the cloud.

The various rounds of fundings from MSD helped us in overcoming the challenge of increased workloads of the staff. As a result of the COVID pandemic during the lockdown, we initiated new services namely Digital Services, Caring Caller & Annapoorna - Indian Vegetarian Meals on Wheels service. All the three services were to address the needs of the seniors resulting from the Pandemic.

The funds helped us to go digital and run our digital programme parallelly with the physical day to day meetings.

Digital Service: The seniors were used to a face to face meeting and interaction, however this was restricted during the Alert levels 3 & 4. The seniors being one of the most vulnerable were reluctant to move out even during Alert level 2. Through our digital services we created groups, video talk shows, games and entertainment activities. This helped our seniors overcome isolation and provided us a platform to disseminate information through the digital media.

Caring Caller: During COVID alert levels 3 & 4 where our seniors could not move out comfortably, we initiated our Digital engagement service. However we realised that not all our seniors were comfortable with the internet and hence we came up with the **Caring Caller** service. Volunteers were identified, trained and were then allocated a certain group of seniors to interact. The volunteer would reach out over the phone once a week to check on the seniors. Feedback from the volunteers are collected by a staff and passed on to the social support staff to resolve. By this we were able to reach out to those seniors who were homebound and not internet friendly, engage with them and disseminate information to them.