

SANE
AUSTRALIA

CASE STUDY

How SANE Australia Built the Country's Only 24/7 Peer-Support Community

Khoros 





We don't see our community just as a tool for user engagement. Rather, our community embodies our core service and offering: providing a space for people to connect. The SANE Forums are at the heart of what SANE Australia does.



Sophie Potter

Director, SANE Australia Support

Executive summary

SANE Australia is a national mental health charity making a real difference in the lives of people affected by complex mental health issues through support, research, and advocacy. They target adult Australians who face barriers in access to affordable, quality clinical and psychosocial support services — such as rural populations. SANE offers services including a help line and web-chat, but it was critical to them to also offer 24/7 peer-based support, with moderators stepping in as needed, so they partnered with Khoros to build a community in 2014.

SANE wanted to provide a place where people could engage with one another around the clock as a supplement to mental health care. At first, they considered building support on existing public social networks, but creating a space on one of these platforms would not have allowed SANE to abide by their duty-of-care guidelines, therapeutic framework, and legal obligations to prevent harm. With Khoros Communities, they were able to build their own safety features, control the environment, define community guidelines, and moderate effectively. Uniquely, SANE's community forums are syndicated to approximately 75 partner websites, enabling them to reach as many people who need supplemental mental health care as possible without setting up dozens of separate communities, fracturing their moderation resources, and significantly increasing costs.

With their community, SANE provides inclusion, connection, and belonging for people with complex mental health issues. Khoros Communities are scalable in performance, forum structure, and moderation tools; this means SANE can do more for their customers with limited resources. They handle an average of 3,000 posts per week, with 24/7 monitoring and a 60-minute response time goal. SANE aims to grow the number of Australians who visit, post, and join their community because every new member expands the pool of resources available to people in need of help. In 2020, with the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbating existing mental health problems while simultaneously limiting access to protective factors like inclusion, connection, and belonging, SANE's community allowed them to meet the needs of their members in a resilient and flexible way. During the pandemic, their service use (engagement) has increased 55% and their membership is up 400% compared to the same time year on year. SANE has also been part of the [Events in Khoros Communities](#) beta program. They've found a lot of success so far with Events and they are looking forward to continuing to use it to create deeper connections around specific mental health issues in specific groups. SANE is looking into integrating their online community of professional counsellors and lived experience contributors with counselling, peer options, and self-help content, to strengthen and grow their community guide program.

How they made it work

Built

an online forum with 24/7 monitoring and peer support.

Syndicated

content with approximately 75 partner websites to provide supplemental mental health care to communities in need.

Monitored

the proportion of community members from regional and rural areas, maintaining at least 38% representation.

Leveraged

privacy, security, and administrative features to meet required legal obligations and duty-of-care guidelines.

Results

SANE offers the only 24/7 community monitoring and peer-based support for Australians with complex mental health issues. They maintain a 60 minute response time around the clock. SANE handles approximately 4,000 posts in their community forum each week, with just one moderator at a time working within the community.

3k

posts per week

195

average new members each week

21%

of users return each week



We've developed strong relationships with Khoros team members and they really get our organisation and what we're trying to achieve. We appreciated their flexibility and responsiveness.

Sophie Potter

Director, SANE Australia Support

