



Fabian Bolin, CEO, War on Cancer

After being diagnosed in 2015, at 28 years of age, Fabian began documenting his cancer battle on a blog, which made him realise the true power of storytelling and how sharing his story helped him cope with his 'cancer trauma'. Sharing his story helped him to process what he was going through, emotionally and psychologically, but also gave him a sense of purpose that he had never felt before. This, together with a strong urge to help others affected by cancer, became the foundation for the War On Cancer app.

1. Tell us about yourself?

I'm a cancer patient and the CEO & Co-founder of War On Cancer – a Stockholm-based company aiming to radically improve the mental health of everyone affected by cancer. Our product is the War On Cancer app – a social network app for people currently in treatment, after treatment and their loved ones. On the app our users can share their journeys, or follow others, connect and find people in similar situations as a way of coping with the mental trauma that often comes with cancer. What makes War On Cancer unique is the feature named 'Health Studies', which lets users participate in targeted surveys and provide invaluable insights for the life-science sector.

2. What has inspired you to want to influence change in the patient journey through the healthcare system?

My personal journey through cancer (acute lymphoblastic leukaemia) was initially what set me out on building War On Cancer. After being diagnosed in 2015, at 28 years of age, I began documenting my cancer battle on a blog, which made me realise the true power of storytelling and how sharing my story helped me cope with my 'cancer trauma'. Sharing my story helped me to process what I was going through, emotionally and psychologically, but also gave me a sense of purpose that I had never felt before through the act of helping others. This, together with a strong urge to help others affected by cancer, became the foundation for the War On Cancer app.

3. What is the biggest lesson you have learnt from your healthcare experiences to date?

There is a lack of focus and understanding in the area of mental health.

4. What is the most important pieces of advice you would offer a healthcare professional, policy maker or ICHOM regarding how to better work towards successful outcomes for patients in terms of improving the patient journey, healthcare outcomes and quality of life?

In order to achieve patient-centric care, each country/healthcare system will need to put much more emphasis on collecting self-reported data and insights from the patients

themselves. This, of course, requires the healthcare systems to be able to involve and educate the patients of the potential value from reporting their insights.

5. Are you aware of examples of the kinds of outcomes/quality of life improvements occurring that should be aspired to? Are there any case studies and real world examples that healthcare professionals could learn from?

Rather than looking for examples within the healthcare sector, which to a large extent is lagging behind when it comes to digital transformation, I would look at other sectors instead. Take for example the telecom sector. When I sign up to a mobile subscription, I am able to choose my amount of monthly data, the number of calls I can make and so on, as well as terms of my payment. What about if healthcare could work in the same way? When I get my cancer diagnosis, I get to choose how often I want to be contacted by my healthcare, how often I visit the hospital, whether I want to have a therapist and/or a nutritionist, as well as which treatment I want.

6. How can clinicians, policy makers and ICHOM work better with patients in order to better drive change?

I would strongly advise to look for patient-led initiatives and companies and find ways of collaborating with them.