



How YouTube helps Japan's National Cancer Center Hospital close the information gap in six cancers online

Of Japan's national medical centers, the [National Cancer Center](#) (NCC) is the country's leading institution and go-to source for cancer information. Its medical teams care for about 3K outpatients daily in its National Cancer Center Hospital in Tokyo and National Cancer Center Hospital East in Chiba, and its research teams spearhead the development of cancer diagnoses, treatments, technology, and control programs to provide the best possible care for communities in Japan.

NCC's public relations (PR) team recognizes that YouTube is a crucial tool in communicating credible health information online. Through their research, they found a scarcity of accurate content for some cancers, so they pledged to educate the public and increase awareness of these diseases in Japan.

First, NCC's PR team made YouTube an organization-wide priority, ensuring all internal teams were aligned on a strategy that scaled across multiple departments. Next, they conducted research to look into healthcare content available on YouTube. They dedicated a video series around six cancers and adapted the in-demand topics to reach a broader audience. Then, they integrated their content into NCC Central and East hospitals.

After creating six cancer content series in 2022, NCC's YouTube channel **reached 1.54M views and 86K watch hours in 2023. That's 70% more views and 28% more watch hours than the previous year.** See how they grew their channel and brand below.

 **1.56M**

Views

+70% increase over the previous year*

 **86K**

Watch hours

+28% increase over the previous year*

Prioritize YouTube throughout the organization

NCC's PR team saw YouTube as a powerful tool for sharing credible health information to patients and their families, and driving NCC's mission. So, they worked together to streamline their workflow to efficiently achieve these goals.



YouTube is the second most popular search engine in the world and many Japanese people are using it. We believe it is one of the most appropriate means to provide information to the public fairly.



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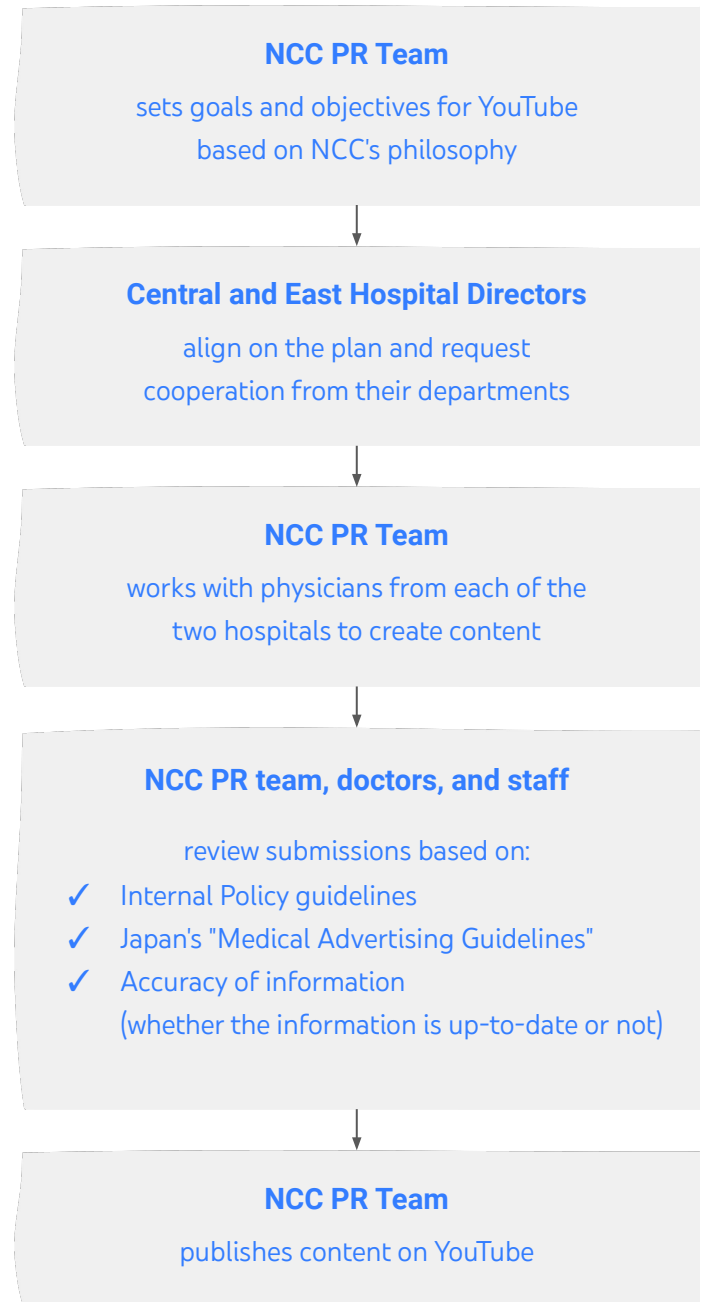
Because NCC is such a large institution, collaboration at every level in the hospital is essential. The directors of both NCC hospitals requested hospital staff including physicians participate in helping create and review YouTube content.

NCC's Head of Office of PR Planning then implemented a seamless internal workflow, delegating six PR team members to organize and manage the content creation process. To start, the PR team established policy guidelines that were in line with NCC's mission and onboarded staff. Then, they strengthened their review process to prevent the spread of outdated or false information and ensure a cohesive online presence.

Digital healthcare training for hospital staff and production partners helped facilitate an efficient production process. Training included educational materials accessible on NCC's internal website, "Medical Advertising Guidelines" issued by the Japanese government, and a list of sensitive words to be aware of. Additionally, the PR team developed a standard video style for staff to follow so titles, descriptions, and thumbnails were consistent with the brand.

Next, the NCC team revised the new content submission form to easily review submissions for compliance with NCC's policy guidelines and the government's guidelines before publishing it on YouTube.

NCC's Internal Workstream



Find a niche and fill the gap in online health information

As part of the NCC's philosophy to work with society to provide cancer care and information to all citizens, the PR team conducted research to uncover what authoritative cancer content was available to people online, and what was missing.

They discovered that information about certain cancer diseases was difficult to find. In fact, because of the limited resources available on these types of cancer and treatments, NCC felt it was its responsibility to provide additional support to patients through authoritative information.

From January to September 2023, NCC created and shared a content series targeting six cancers in need of greater awareness and information in Japan.



The content series targeted testicular, oral, lymphoma, multiple myeloma, liver, and esophageal cancer.

Then, using YouTube channel analytics and physician feedback as their guide, they experimented with the best ways to package information and reach their audience.

NCC saw the benefits of breaking out each disease into four x four-minute videos, so they partnered with a third-party production company to help them manage their output efficiently. NCC has an overwhelming amount of knowledge about cancer diseases, so creating multiple short videos helped make the information easily digestible and kept viewers engaged. From listing symptoms to explaining basic treatments and prevention, each video series walked viewers through the stages of the patient journey. With so little information out there, this approach gave viewers a better understanding of these diseases.



NCC [explains Lymphoma](#) in 4 videos.

NCC also learned that compassionate, animated storytelling helps strike a balance between an educational and accessible tone. A consistent animation style lightened the material's mood and made it easily understandable to a broader audience. This stylistic approach helped their content to reach even more viewers.

While young people are less likely to be affected by cancers, raising awareness and increasing public knowledge among people, including younger generations, is a priority for NCC. So, the team made sure to repurpose each long-form video into a Short to engage a younger audience.

Because these six cancers are not as common as lung and colorectal cancers, NCC was less concerned with the number of views and more focused on audience engagement to measure success. To continue engaging with their audience, the PR team posted polls, quizzes, and announcements that re-introduced the content in the Community tab. Furthermore, medical institutions, pharmaceutical companies, other private companies, and patient advocacy groups who resonated with the purpose of the video series shared links and helped maximize the impact of their content.



Quizzes in the community tab are fun ways for NCC to engage their community.

Integrate YouTube throughout the patient journey

As Japan's leading cancer-specialized institution, NCC has an extensive database for cutting-edge research, information, and medical insights.

While these resources are comprehensive, they can be technical and difficult to understand. The cancer content series was designed to complement this wealth of information, ultimately making it more accessible and easier for the general public to grasp. The videos guided viewers seeking deeper knowledge to explore additional resources via [end screens](#), [info cards](#), and links in video descriptions. Additionally, videos were cross-promoted on NCC's [website](#), further encouraging people to engage with YouTube throughout their journey.



Info cards pointed viewers to more detailed information on NCC's website.

In addition, the NCC focused on improving patients and physicians' understanding of cancers by encouraging access to the videos and website throughout the hospital. Brochures containing QR codes that linked to the series were placed in waiting rooms, and encouraged people to engage with NCC's educational resources.



NCC featured QR codes linking to six types of cancer content in hospital waiting rooms.

By incorporating these videos within their hospital and on the site, NCC drove more awareness around cancers and empowered outpatients to feel more prepared and at ease. It also helped ease the burden on physicians, who have limited time during consultations as they were able to direct patients to additional, easy-to-understand educational resources.

How YouTube helps the NCC educate Japan and improve the lives of cancer patients

While NCC is already an authoritative voice on cancer in Japan, YouTube enabled the hospital to further contribute to society through education and awareness.

YouTube helped NCC fill the void of cancer information online. As a result, patients and their families could gain knowledge and make better-informed treatment decisions.

Through its channel growth, NCC has inspired other institutions to integrate YouTube into their digital healthcare communication strategies, proving how valuable a tool it can be when it's embraced throughout the whole organization.