

# 2019 Submission - Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System

SUB. 0002.0002.0087

Name

[REDACTED]

## **What are your suggestions to improve the Victorian community's understanding of mental illness and reduce stigma and discrimination?**

Education from people who have had lived experiences of mental health. Not just the people that are suffering the illness. Other people who could be part of this are carers and people who work directly with people with a mental illness.

## **What is already working well and what can be done better to prevent mental illness and to support people to get early treatment and support?**

The person I care for has been lucky in the fact because of where we live. We have access to all the services that the person I care for needs. We have also had great support. What needs to be done is to make this happen Victoria wide.

## **What is already working well and what can be done better to prevent suicide?**

N/A

## **What makes it hard for people to experience good mental health and what can be done to improve this? This may include how people find, access and experience mental health treatment and support and how services link with each other.**

Getting access to the care they need. At times there are waiting lists to get services that are needed urgently. If these services are offered on a timely matter the chances of a person's condition worsening is a lot less. Access to hospital is a big concern in the care of people with mental illness also. If they get the hospital care early it might help with a better treatment outcome.

## **What are the drivers behind some communities in Victoria experiencing poorer mental health outcomes and what needs to be done to address this?**

Access to services. Like if you need a hospital bed and you can't get it. The person I care for was knocked back for a bed twice and that is two times too many and put a huge amount of pressure on the whole family and the person's condition just got worse to the point once they did get to hospital their stay was a long longer than it might have been if care was given straight away. What needs to be done about this is more government funding so the services can be offered to more people. Once this is addressed it would go a long way towards better services and patient outcomes.

## **What are the needs of family members and carers and what can be done better to support them?**

Carer support and the medical team listening to carer to make us feel apart of the treatment plan. Also the privacy laws need to be looked to ensure that the people that are caring for a loved one. Know what is going on at all times to help provide the best care possible to prevent hospital stays.

**What can be done to attract, retain and better support the mental health workforce, including peer support workers?**

N/A

**What are the opportunities in the Victorian community for people living with mental illness to improve their social and economic participation, and what needs to be done to realise these opportunities?**

There not too many opportunities for people with mental illness to get out a and participate in social activities. All the places that were offering these services have been closed down and the ones that are still open are way over stretched due to demand of people needing them and if you lucky you get them straight away. Funding needs to be put back into these services since they are a vital part of the recovery process.

**Thinking about what Victorias mental health system should ideally look like, tell us what areas and reform ideas you would like the Royal Commission to prioritise for change?**

Funding of support services so everyone gets access to the services they need. Better funding and access to mental health units so when it's required all people get the care they need. On going support for carers to help keep the person they are caring for in the community. Independent living places for people with a mental illness. So they can be close to their families and living independently. No cap on medicare for the number of visits to a Psychologist. Mental illness doesn't get fixed after 10 visits to a Psychologists.

**What can be done now to prepare for changes to Victorias mental health system and support improvements to last?**

N/A

**Is there anything else you would like to share with the Royal Commission?**

I have been a carer for 32 years. Living in various places in that time. The care the person I have cared for has been dependent on where we have lived. In that time we have had everything from. Let's dope him up and not given a shit. I wouldn't have treated a dog that badly. To the great care when the mental health team have been an excellent support to the patient and us as carer. The above scenario shouldn't be happening. No matter where you go in Victoria. The care should be the same and all care should be of an excellent standard. No waiting for beds when you should be in hospital and excellent community care. Sadly there have been too many times that this has been seriously lacking.