

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

SUB: 0002.0027.0066

Name

[REDACTED]

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

I have no suggestions.

**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?**

I have no suggestions.

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

"To provide some context to my submission, my brother in law committed suicide in 2016, and my mother in law also took her own life, only three weeks ago. My brother in law was troubled for years, then later turned to alcohol and drugs as a coping mechanism. He had been arrested several times, and also admitted to hospital for a couple of suicide attempts. Each and every time, the mental health staff at the hospitals had no power to do anything because he never admitted he had any problems. He would tell them it was a silly drunken mistake, and would be discharged on his own recognizance. Due to the family being able to force him to get treatment, he made the decision to end his life and drove his car into a wall. He died a horrible fiery death. Fast forward three years, his mother then took her own life as she couldn't deal with the pain anymore. She has also had police and hospital intervention previously, again, she told them it was a silly mistake, and she was let back out into the world with no mandated treatment. We are now a family that has lived through not one suicide, but two in three years. "

**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.**

"The government bringing pokies into Victoria all those years ago.... I wonder if there are any statistics on how many people have killed themselves due to gambling issues since Pokies were introduced here? Interesting fact - my mother in law was a problem gambler. We have been able to establish that she has blown over \$400,000.00 at the pokies in the last 3 years. She liquidated her superannuation and didn't tell anyone. Last week we found her paperwork to say that her super was all gone. No she's gone, leaving an estate totalling a whopping \$690.00. Her funeral alone has cost \$16,000.00, she leaves us with nothing.... Do you know how many times her family tried to force her to get help over the last 30 years? and again, in Victoria, you can't force anyone to get help. "

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

N/A

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

"Implement a system where family members can force people to get help. Also, provide counselling services to people that are living with sick people. Mental health plans now consist of ten visits with a mental health professional - what happens after that?"

**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?**

N/A

**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?**

Take it seriously for once.

**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?**

We are a family that has lived through two suicides in three years. Would love for someone to sit down with us and have a conversation about what we're going through at the moment.