

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

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Name

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

The more that we talk about mental illness in the media will help our community's understanding of mental illness and reduce the stigma. More information at secondary schools would help to reduce stigma and discrimination. A huge difference in mental health treatment was the introduction of Medicare - this enabled access to mental health treatment and allowed people to seek treatment as they would a physical health condition. This normalised going to see a mental health practitioner - psychologist just as it would seeing a GP

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?

"Better access Medicare sessions have enabled people to seek treatment. However, the system is inadequate with regards to the number of sessions available."

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

Advertising on how to help people at risk of suicide Educating high school students regarding identifying risks both their own risks and risk factors for their friends and then what to do. Teaching mental health first aid

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.

There are two major factors that I have observed - trauma and poverty

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

"Financial stress - help families and individuals who are in financial distress Preventing childhood trauma Trauma treatment for children, adolescence and adults"

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

Education and a central hub to help navigate the mental health system

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

Financial assistance

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?

Education

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?

"The one area of reform that I would like to see is more mental health workers in Secondary Schools. I am currently working with several adolescence who do not have a psychologist in their schools. I also think that it would be great if there were youth workers within schools. A welfare hub at each secondary school that would be made up of psychologists, social workers, welfare teachers and youth workers - to make with a collaboration with teachers in the school. Also within schools to promote healthy mental health."

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

Ongoing funding for the current mental health programs such as Medicare

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

N/A