

## **CAPABILITY SUMMARY: Regarding the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System**

### **Expertise in mental health and related fields at the University of Melbourne**

The University of Melbourne has a number of academic researchers, networks and centres conducting research in mental health and related fields. Academic units with relevant expertise include:

#### **Centre for Mental Health, Melbourne School of Population and Global Health**

The Centre for Mental Health aims to improve mental health and mitigate the impact of mental illness at a population level. It does this through high quality, collaborative, interdisciplinary research, academic teaching, professional and community education, and mental health system development. The Centre contributes to evidence-informed mental health policy and practice in Australia and internationally through the work of its four units: Global and Cultural Mental Health; Mental Health Policy and Practice; Population Mental Health; Recovery and Social Justice.

#### **Centre for Psychiatric Nursing**

The Centre for Psychiatric Nursing is a Victorian Government supported academic centre within the School of Health Sciences, funded to enhance practice and lead research in the mental health nursing workforce, the largest mental health specialist discipline group in Victoria. Nursing and Consumer Academics in the Centre collaborate across Faculty to undertake a program of competitive and contract research, incorporating the supervision of PhD students. The key priorities of the Centre's research and educational agenda are: the mental health nursing practices priorities most critical to the wellbeing of consumer and nurses; research translation of knowledge gained, transferred into policy and clinical applications; and co-production of practices and outcomes.

#### **Centre for Youth Mental Health**

Led by Professor Patrick McGorry, the Centre's work focuses on understanding the biological, psychological and social factors that influence onset, remission and relapse of mental illnesses in young people. The Centre's research informs the development of better interventions, treatments and service systems for young people at different stages of mental ill-health. Professor McGorry also leads Orygen, the National Centre of Excellence in Youth Mental Health, the world's leading research and knowledge translation organisation focusing on mental ill-health in young people.

#### **Department of General Practice**

The Department of General Practice (DGP) focuses on the evaluation of clinical and health services and the training of medical and health care practitioners. Headed by Professor Lena Sanci, the Department uses clinical data analytics to explore patient pathways and describe the epidemiology of health and disease in primary care. The focus on primary care innovation provides opportunities to develop, test and implement simple and complex interventions including digital technologies that have an emphasis on co-design and patient centred care. The Department conducts research across children and young people's health; mental health; abuse and violence, diabetes and cardio-metabolic conditions and the prevention of cancer and has direct relationships with over 600 Victorian general practices for teaching and research.



## **Department of Psychiatry**

The Department of Psychiatry is involved extensively in direct clinical care delivery, development of service delivery, medical student and psychiatric trainee education and psychiatric research. The research interests of the Department include neuropsychiatry, neuroimaging, neuropsychology, psychosocial research, service delivery in mental health and a variety of psychiatric conditions including but not limited to early psychosis and youth mental health, mood disorders, anxiety disorders, personality disorders, addiction disorders, eating disorders, childhood psychiatric disorders, women's mental health, dementia and psychiatry of old age. The Department has major clinical and teaching units throughout Melbourne, comprising a number of valuable clinical partners, including Melbourne Health; geographically situated at the heart of the Melbourne Biomedical Precinct.

## **Florey Department of Neuroscience and Mental Health**

The Florey Department of Neuroscience and Mental Health is home to Australia's largest cohort of researchers investigating more than 20 diseases and disorders of the brain. Professor Steven Petrou is the Head of Department and Director of The Florey Institute of Neuroscience and Mental Health. Research facilities are located at the Florey's three campuses – in Parkville, at Austin Health and the Royal Melbourne Hospital.

## **Melbourne Biomedical Precinct**

The Melbourne Biomedical Precinct is recognised as Australia's, and one of the world's, leading biomedical precincts. Through its 30 Precinct Partners, it delivers outstanding clinical care, education, and produces world-class biomedical research. It excels particularly in child and adolescent health, cancer, mental health and neurosciences, infectious diseases, and healthy ageing. Both individually and collectively these organisations are globally recognised for their innovation and outstanding patient outcomes.

## **Melbourne Institute**

The Melbourne Institute is Australia's pre-eminent economic and social policy research institution. It undertakes high quality, independent and impartial applied research, and contributes to the development of public policy in Australia. The Melbourne Institute is a research-only, academic department in the Faculty of Business and Economics at the University of Melbourne with more than 50 years' experience in conducting economic and social policy research. Its key areas of research and engagement are in the areas of socio-economic disadvantage, public sector performance, and fostering health and well-being.

## **Melbourne Research Alliance to End Violence against Women and their Children (MAEVe)**

MAEVe strives to make a difference to the lives of women, families and communities by addressing and preventing the problem of violence against women through interdisciplinary and intra-institutional collaboration. The research network is co-directed by Professor Kelsey Hegarty and Professor Cathy Humphreys, with co-ordination through Dr Rhian Parker. The interdisciplinary network is inclusive of researchers from across the University of Melbourne and is well supported by the WEAVERS, who are a group of women with lived experience of family violence who provide input into the research agenda for MAEVe. Researchers in the network have undertaken projects which focus on the mental health and well-being of women and children living with and escaping domestic violence. The connections between mental health and family violence are a constant focus, as are the complexities of collaboration at the intersection of these issues in the service system.



### **Melbourne School of Psychological Sciences**

The Melbourne School of Psychological Sciences brings together leading researchers from the clinical and social sciences, epidemiology and public health, preventative and primary care medicine, and from basic and applied sciences. The MSPS is at the forefront of mental health research and is training the future generation of mental health practitioners. The MSPS is currently ranked 18<sup>th</sup> in the world and 1<sup>st</sup> in Australia and attracts some of the best students to its broad range of undergraduate, graduate, and professional training programs.

### **Melbourne Social Equity Institute**

The Melbourne Social Equity Institute supports interdisciplinary research on social equity issues across social life, including health, law, education, housing, culture, work and transport. It also supports researchers working with government and community organisations and assists with the dissemination and translation of research for public benefit. The Melbourne Social Equity Institute has long supported research on mental health, with a focus on human rights, access to justice and the law. The Institute is preparing to launch a new program of research, Mental Health and Society, led by Associate Professor Bridget Hamilton and Associate Professor Helen Stokes.

### **School of Health Sciences**

The School of Health Sciences, in the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences is comprised of five Departments: Audiology and Speech Pathology, Nursing, Optometry, Physiotherapy and Social Work. It offers both graduate qualifications for health professionals in these disciplines, which, for nursing and social work offer core mental health curricula and clinical placements. Areas of mental health research specialisation with industry partners include consumer participation, psychiatric disability, suicide prevention, trauma-informed care and intersections with health, disability and family violence experiences.