

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

## Organisation Name

N/A

## Name

Mrs Gemma Beasley

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

There's an increasing number of youths who are deaf or hard of hearing experiencing mental health. There's stigma and discrimination involved for these people who do not have appropriate accessible services. We need educational resources to support deaf youths that is accessible. For example Auslan videos.

## 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?

Nothing is working well for deaf youths.

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

Nothing is working well.

## 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.

Parents of deaf children are known to neglect and limited communication or minimal access to the deaf youth communities. Resources are very very limited for deaf youths.

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

"Lack of Deaf awareness. We need to educate medical professionals, teachers, many more about Deaf youths and we need to look at opportunities for deaf youths for example identifying a deaf youth who are at risk of isolation and organise action plan to look for ways to support this person."

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

More intervention for families and better resources that links to Deaf youths. More information to guide them to the right place where to seek support.

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

Educate about Deaf youths and ways to support them.

## 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?

"Better housing specifically for Deaf Youths who are homeless and at risk. Deaf Centre or Deaf

Youth Community centre where deaf youths can drop in to seek support and guidance for example - assist with reading letters, bank statements, financial advice, teach how to save shopping, nutrition, social skills, computer skills, art therapy, much more. A place where deaf youths can feel safe and have someone to talk to at any time."

**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?**

"Identify deaf youths and contact the right services to ensure support is received for them i.e. interpreters, psychologist/counsellor with experience working deaf clients, more educational resources for deaf youths that is accessible i.e. Auslan video, social stories, captioned videos."

**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?**

"Myself as a teacher, I am seeing a huge increase of Deaf youths aged from 4 to 25 experiencing mental health due to many factors from home, communication, environment, education and limited social opportunities. We would like to allow deaf youths have the opportunity to have a say with the Royal Commission about their experiences."