

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

## Organisation Name

N/A

## Name

mr Yi zhen

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

"Educate the public and neighbourhood about mental health issue. Not everyone is like criminal mind. we feel crazy, but we are not "dangerous"."

### **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 believes I'm the expert in my life helps us to forgive us when the result didn't go right. instead of being treated as a guinea pig the health professional, this mistake quote was given to ourselves. professionals can make mistakes on the assessment at health condition or make the wrong recommendations .so why don't I allowing ourselves to make mistakes, because either way things want to be go right straight away. we are trying not to be too harsh on ourselves, although it is hard, even when dont get that result good straight away."

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

"1. dont keep the things at hands. the urge can come suddenly without being aware of it. IF things are at hands, there is higher change for self-harm. 2. some find it helpful trying to lie down and dont get up till feel better, or the urge goes away. 3. helping people regaining control in their life. can be small things that one cares. Really hear that needs."

### **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.**

".Not being able to get help at the beginning of physical /mental injury, leave some of us condition to get worse. And when physical/mental health condition got worse and we stuck in constant conflicts with others and couldn't get out of there. the declines of physical health can worsen mental health condition, the the worsen of mental health condition can further lead to decline of physical health, and got us in the vicious cycle. one person contacted local council for acute injury as she has difficulties to even get food, and she is very poor to afford take aways. AND this condition was going on for a while, she is getting desperate for staving. but she is declined as she doesn't have a disability pension, so she cannot get meals on wheels. her condition quickly worsen as to the desperation of needs, and she was having suicidal thoughts later on as friends and family started to turn back to her, and she couldn't get any support from the community, even just for basic needs of food."

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

"In chinese community, according to the Confucius culture, who is right or wrong is according to what position that person is in, not what he or she does or says. for example parents have a

higher hierarchy than their children, so what parents said are right. this parents and children relationship remains forever. even though the child has grew up to the 3040s, they are still required to be obedient and reverence towards their parents. If their parents are abusive, the community will not believe what did the children saying the abuse behaviour, but would rather believe what the parents criticiseabout their off-springs. according to the Confucius culture, who is right or wrong is according to what position that person is in, not what he or she does or says. for example parents have a higher hierarchy than their children, so what parents said are right. this parents and children relationship remains forever. even though the child has grew up to the 3040s, they are still required to be obedient and reverence towards their parents. If their parents are abusive, the community will not believe what did the children saying the abuse behaviour, but would rather believe what the parents criticiseabout their off-springs. 2. even for people stay in australia for a long time, if they came from a confuscus background, they still support this confuscus beliefs that parents are right. no matter how long they are Australia ,quite often they will tell the victims that they are sure their parents love them, it is just the way they did might not be right. but there is no doubt for the incentives. Because the way their parents be brought up, that they might not know how to treat their offsprings. sometimes this can covers up the fact that some parents don't really have a good incentive , and parents always have good incentives is not true. only the truth can help people to recover. This can be very frustrating for the victims who is trying to talk about their experience. counsellors will be repeating they are sure their parents love them, it is just the way they did might not be right. but there is no doubt for the incentives. Because the way their parents be brought up, that they might not know how to treat their offsprings. again and again, and refuse to go deeper into the conversation. they won't hear the victims are trying to say, they just start to urgent the victim trying to find a job, go to school, and do things that make victims feel better, while leaving the trauma aside. finding a job, going to school, and doing things that make victims feel better doesn't really solve the trauma. it doesn't really help people to recover. They won't help to discovery the truth. once victims want to start the process telling the stories, victims usually got stopped by the counsellor with the repeated two sentences above, and they dont have interest to listen and also don't have the ability to help the victims. Sometimes things can be worse that the counsellors encourage the victims to stay linked with their parents, instead of staying away from the abuser, or courage them to be obedient towards their parents. Instead of helping the victim to leave the abuser the victim got the courage to forgive their parents, and stay with them, act to please their parents or act according to their parents. One girl experienced that she got told by a taiwanese counsellor working in melbourne that fathers are like the law of the family, it is good for her to be obedient towards her parents at the age of 25. Whenever she was trying to talk about her experience, the counsellor appears to be absent minded. 3. But people come from Australian background seems have no idea why asian people feel so obligated to their parents, basically saying that You are over 18, why are you controlled by your parents? why do you allow yourself to be controlled? IT is really not allow oneself to be controlled, this usually upset the victims, and making victims feeling being blamed. in the way residents of thunderstruck in the situation they don't get the help they need it is very frustrating. as victims we dont want to be controlled, but there is enormous fear, and unexplainable fear for not being obedient. IT is just got controlled, and we cannot get rid of, and that is why we went to see counsellors. If we can just allow ourselves not being controlled, then we won't be controlled, then why do we need to see psychologist? It is unfair to say so. But australian grown psychologist just believe if you dont allow it happen, it won't happy. They just believe we can change our emotions simply by thinking what we want. if it is this easy, then no one will be upset in the world. CBT believer do think as long as changing thoughts, everything can be changed. 4. Because in the Confucius hierarchy is once children, the relation exist forever, they are obligated to their parents

for all their life. they are expected to meet demands of their parents, and are expected to be responsible for their parents needs. Children are expected to be responsible for Parents needs. For example if parents are feeling sad/ upset because their offsprings didn't do what they parents tell them to do, is the children's fault because is their children's responsibility for this under the Confucius culture. Not only offspring will get these pressure from their parents for be responsible for Parents' needs, but also will get the pressure from their relatives, acceptances, people from the community, even the same ethnic background people in the community in Australia. Every one from the community feels that they have the right to have a say for other people's life. Especially the older, they think telling the youngsters, whom the older usually dont know much, to be obedient to their parents is helping the young, and is what the elders should do. "

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

"chinese family need to respect boundaries of young people. NOt treating young people as part of parents' belongs. We are individuals, not born to be a slave of parents."

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

"Hearing support workers saying, if they want to change from full time jobs to partime, let them do it. They need to take care of themselves as well, not being explitative towards support workers. Requiring them to be highly skilled and attentative, but dont give them time/space off when they request it. It is hard for clients to have support worker leave for a while, or not working full time, but we dont want them to burn out as well. We want our dovoted suppor worker to stay, but we need emergency contact if that happens. or a less frequent check up. "

### **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?**

"more accommodating and understanding towards individual's needs, and the impact that might have in work force. "

### **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?**

"1. It might be more beneficial for the public, if some of the funding putting into educating the counsellors with for CBT training, goes to trauma training for the counsellors or mental health support workers . because for most of us who have suicidal thoughts, and dont quite want to keep going, there were lots of undiscovered trauma behind. and CBT is crap to most of us, it is like a bandage, only covers up what is going on. The beliefs of CBT is that feelings is the result of our thoughts, this is not true often. sometimes we dont feel well but there is no negative thought. and also body has his own memory as well, it is not cognitive. And CBT denies our instinct for danger. Because the analytical thought can be different to our feelings/instincts. "

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

"quite a lot of us who had the case managers / support workers reported/stated that they feel being pushed. most of the time they choose not to say anything ,because t this will jeopardise the relation between themselves and the case managers . and once the relation got jeopardised tthey

either suffer from repossession, or don't get the help they need. and there is a small group of people who will withdraw from the service entirely and suffer in silence, because they feel being pushed by their support workers. some of us feel scared to speak up when not happy with mental health service. as long as one speaks up, she/he starts to get these kinds of impressions that speaking up is interpreted by the management that mental health is good, issues are invalidated, because one can explain themselves. All the suffering, all the requests, and all the needs will be viewed as moral problems. In quite a number of support workers/psychologists' understanding as long as one is trying to identify something or explain something and one is trying to correct them for something that means one doesn't have a mental health problem. or at least not bad. "

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

"1. the pushing culture really needs to be changed because when people seek for support we are already motivated to seeking for a change, these shouldn't be interpreted as people are not motivated enough if they refuse to be pushed around. 2. Also The power/benefit of not being pushed should be recognised/acknowledged. quite often people with anxiety problems have to withdraw from support, or from other people in order to calm down. in this period of time, no one pushes them around they simply allow them self to rest that off. the anxiety triggered by other people during this stage getting settled/ recovered. This is actually a stepping backwards, and the Health benefit all the power of recovery should be recognised and acknowledged. Not being pushed around or triggered simply allowing people to step back, can really assist their recovery by giving people space to calm down. "