

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

SUB. 0002.0015.0006

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

N/A

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?

N/A

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

Access to free psychiatrist service for 18-30 year olds

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.

"No available psychiatry service. My son who was/is suicidal was able to access a free psychologist within 72 hrs. The psychologist then recommended my son attend a psychiatrist for medication support. He was given a list of psychiatrists ""to try and get into."" Three months later we are still on a waiting list to attend ANY psychiatrist. Every psychiatrist I have rung has a three months waiting list and will cost \$300 and above with Medicare rebate. How do you expect a 22 yr old with mental health issues to be 1. able to source a psychiatrist himself, ring around, make appointments etc 2. able to afford an upfront fee of \$700 + dollars and then rebate back of only \$400?? Leaving him out of pocket \$300. 3. Wait three + months and then not even assured that we can get in. Why would you not either resort to drugs/alcohol or suicide? It all seems hopeless and I am a professional who can advocate for myself and my son."

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?

"I need to hear empathy when I speak to mental health Triage. Access for a case manager for my son to support him to navigate the system, from the start."

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?

Free available psychiatry service.

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?

"When I initially rang Triage on behalf of my son who was suicidal, they asked ""was he suicidal now, did he have a plan in place."" he didn't right at the moment on the phone but the weeks or months prior he may have and tomorrow he may have but he obviously wasn't Triage as important enough. The responsibility has fallen back onto family to try and support and manage the system. I am an articulate and professional person. What about those families who aren't? Do they just give up? How do they pay for services? I ring around constantly to try and get him into a psychiatrist earlier and I will have to pay for him to attend. He can't afford it. I live day to day wondering if until then my son will be alive tomorrow or if he will become an alcoholic or drug user or homeless. What has our system come to."