

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

SUB.0002.0006.0129

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

"We live in Warragul (Gippsland). My daughter has a mental illness and has been admitted to hospital 3 times due to her suicidal thoughts or actions. Her psychiatrist has recommended a DBT program. This program is only provided in Officer (50 minutes drive away) and at a large cost - (minimum \$180 per week for 12 months minimum). The program requires attending twice a week, so driving that far twice a week would not work with school. We need more funding for DBT intensive mental health programs. We also need more services in regional areas. A young teenager died recently due to suicide last week and this is very sad for our community. "

## **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 Mental health care plan provides some access to psychology services. This is helpful, although only 10 sessions does not provide a full year of support. "

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

More programs in the regional areas and more funding towards these programs.

## **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.**

"Costs and distance. There are not enough psychologists in regional areas. We had to beg a psychologist to take on my daughter otherwise we would have had to travel to Berwick and this would have been every 3 weeks, meaning missing out on school and myself or my husband missing out on work. "

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

Access to service due to distance and services available. Need more services and more funding.

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

The intensive DBT program that was recommended involved family too.

## **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?**

Funding for Regional areas for intensive mental health programs eg. DBT

**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?**

N/A