

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

SUB.0002.0011.0004

Name

[REDACTED]

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?

"Although underfunded, the outreach systems work much better than the hospitals, which contain cliques of doctors out of touch with reality and absolutely convinced of their godlike infallibility - even when completely contradicted by other doctors around the world and in Australia. Australian doctors suffer from extreme professional hubris, as it is so hard to sue them, and they will only listen to other doctors that they know. The police are also doing their best to cope with a difficult situation in which they have been poorly trained until recently. Eventually it was the outreach system that rescued my stepdaughter from the clutches of [REDACTED]"

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

.Attempted suicide does

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.

"The regional system of hospitals, which gives no choice, is an appalling breach of individual rights."

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

"The current Victorian system in which small groups of doctors are able to maintain their faulty diagnosis beliefs and severely mistreat patients and their families over an extended period needs a radical overhaul. Individual choice of hospital is an absolute priority. The current regional system gives patients and their carers no recourse at all, either in law, through In particular the ability of Victorian hospitals to throw patients homeless into the street, which is not allowed in New South Wales and is actually a criminal offence in Western Australia, needs to be changed immediately. "

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

"Groups of doctors that completely ignore the evidence provided by carers and other hospitals need to be stopped and dismantled, or at least bypassed. The Mental Health Commissioner seems to be completely helpless when faced with this situation. The watchdog needs to be given more teeth against doctors - or alternatively the legal profession needs to be given a big wake up call so legal action can be taken against non-complying doctors who refuse point blank to act in

the interest of the patient because of preconceived beliefs and poor diagnosis."

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

"Mental health workers need to stop being such sissies and running to the police and insurance compensation as soon as they experience negative behaviour, which is part of the job description. They are only happy when patients are utterly drugged and compliant. I do not believe there are a shortage of people willing to work in the sector. Their conditions are far better than they were in the past, though they are also under much more scrutiny."

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?

"The outreach organisations are quite good in this regard. They know nothing much about housing or accommodation, which receives so little government support, but they do make an effort when it comes to employment. "

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?

Immediately - dismantle the regional intake system so acutely ill patients can go to the hospital of their or their guardians' choice. - stop hospitals throwing patients homeless into the streets - stop staff routinely taking legal action against patients for minor infractions. This can severely damage the life chances of patients and their families.

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?

"I wish to make a submission to the Commission concerning the case of my stepdaughter [REDACTED] and her misdiagnosis and mistreatment for a year or more by the staff of [REDACTED], and our inability to transfer her to other hospitals where she had been correctly diagnosed, thereby putting her in extreme danger and slowing her recovery for years - and the ongoing damage this did to other family members. The ombudsman, lawyers and private health funds seemed to be completely unable to cope and were no use at all. This has all been quite extensively documented. I have already made a submission on this matter to the Productivity Commission. I also wish to speak before the Commission on this subject. [REDACTED] will probably wish to accompany me."