

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

Organisation Name

Move Your Mind by Nick Bracks

Name

Mr Nicholas Bracks

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

"With 1 in 5 Australians suffering from a mental illness, and suicide being the biggest killer of young Australians, it is clear that more preventative services are required. Organisations in Australia are losing an incredible \$10.88 Billion per year due to productivity loss from mental health. This is made up from \$4.67 Billion in absenteeism and \$6.07 Billion in presentism. It is estimated that for \$1 spent on mental health, organisations can expect roughly \$2.30 return. I have been working in mental health awareness and preventative services for the last 10 years. I initially started out as an advocate, speaking at organisations, schools, events and in the media, as a result of suffering from depression in my formative years. Through various mechanisms, I have overcome my depression, and have applied my knowledge to others. I have now personally run over 1,000 seminars around Australia and overseas, in organisations such as Ernst & Young, Orora Group, Qantas, Virgin, Deloitte, Bupa, Beyond Blue, Movember, and many other organisations. I combine my lived experience with my training as a facilitator and contract psychologists to help develop my content. You can view more on this through my website: www.nickbracks.com Through my experience and awareness in mental health, I am currently working on two exciting new products, which I believe will aid the prevention and the mitigation of mental health issues for all Australian's. I am seeking assistance from the Government to help fund and/or promote both of these products, as I believe the impact in the prevention of mental health could be significant. I outline below, a brief summary of my two product initiatives: 1. Digital educational program: Mental Health Masterclass series This is a 10 part series of 10 minute educational and online learning which is broadly catered for all audiences, included employees of organisations, kids schools, universities and individuals. This program comes comprehensive workbooks and is aimed to educate and provide preventative solutions. It is for both people suffering and not suffering as the main goal is to provide simple and practical tools that anyone can use to improve their mental wellbeing. 2. Move Your Mind: A preventative fitness solution This is a program designed specially with physical exercises which are scientifically backed to mitigate and reduce the impact of mental illness. There are many products on the market which promote the use of exercise for the purpose of weight loss and other physical benefits. After undertaking extensive research in the global market, I believe there is no effective product which is targeted specially at the connection between exercise and mental wellbeing. I am in the process of developing an app which will be tailored to the use of simple, effective and practical exercise that cater to all level of fitness and can be used anytime / anywhere. The basis of each exercise will be tied to medical and scientific research which specially has been proven to have a positive impact in relation to an individuals state of mind. Exercise has been seen to work as well as anti depressants on some people. I want Move Your Mind to be simple and accessible for anyone. It encourages participants to form habits with exercise to improve mental wellbeing. "

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?

"There is already a huge amount of awareness around mental health. While more can be done, it is great that this is moving in the right direction. I do not believe there are enough effective resources available to provide practical tools in creating preventative habits. In order to prevent mental health problems long term, we must do more work in providing tools that are accessible to everyone, are simple to use and do not require you to be in a specific location or come at a large cost. I am creating the Mental Health series and Move Your Mind based on my hands on experience and frustrations at what I see lacking in the market. I regularly get asked by clients for practical and relatable tools that are simple to use. While these do exist, many are either un-relatable, too expensive or too complicated. I truly believe what I am creating will make a difference as the products have stemmed from necessity. "

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

"Again, there is more and more awareness in this area. To my points above, and for similar reasons, I believe there needs to be more preventive resources."

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.

"It can be difficult for individuals to experience good mental health due to the many barriers to getting help. While psychologist's and psychiatrists are essential, they can be very expensive, there can be huge waiting lists, the government support does not provide enough subsidies, and they only solve part of the problem. People need more practical and accessible tools that they can use daily to form healthy habits in preventing and dealing with mental health issues. "

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

"Communities often do not often have as much access to mental health resources and further, there is often increased stigma in small communities and rural areas. For this reason, and as stated in the above answers, I believe it is critical there are more accessible and affordable tools available to create habits and prevent future problems. By providing funding and support to my organisation, I believe I will be able to help contribute and assist the government to prevent the impact of mental health on the health system and economy. "

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

As above

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

"Providing them with the necessary tools, such as the two I have previously described. "

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?

As above

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?

I would like a bigger focus on preventative solution rather than just reactive measures.

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

As above

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

I am happy with everything I have already stated