

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

Organisation Name

N/A

Name

mr Stefan Leske

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

"-mental health of men would have to be something that has a significant amount of discrimination around it. We are often referred to as weak by women, and automatically seen as dangerous. - There needs to be an understanding of what is causing men to not seek help which needs to be addressed. Some of the areas I have seen include -domestic violence can be started by women, they primarily use verbal and psychological methods to control their partners. When the man complains he is seen as the abuser, which means they are unlikely to seek help (middle age men as the largest group for suicide and has grown quickly over the last 5 years). There needs to be an approach that says women shouldn't abuse men and provide services for men to seek help from the abuse. - Family court, is difficult, confusing drawn out and legal services are used as tools of abuse by the abuser. If a man indicates mental health issues during family court he is automatically seen as a risk and his access to children is reduced. I am not surprised that so many men commit suicide during this process. - Child support, is a system that rewards reducing access to children and is not working. This needs to change, you only need to see the women's groups advocating ways to manipulate child support. This means men are not seeing their children which impacts their purpose. -Stop saying that it is macho culture killing men"

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?

"-for men the system is difficult, hard to find and hard to access. If you look it up the first things that come up are services for women followed by behaviour management services for men -set up locations that a man can go to without their partner ever finding out. The greatest risk to a man is their partner, this could be via work -make it more visible for men, "

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

"The current system needs to change its focus from supporting only women to men - the government needs to stop the ""ill men"" lies. This applies pressure to a segment of the community that are dying in large numbers. Women have never been safer - have services with men in it. When you have been abused by a woman the last person you want to confide in is a woman. It is difficult to find a male "

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.

"-controlling relationships. It is often seen as funny for a man that is called ""under the thumb"", or no one will assist a man that is being yelled at by a woman as ""he deserved it"" -work pressures - family pressures. -family court. This has to be the most awful location on earth. It still takes me

days to open letters from them or i see a phone number from Dandenong"

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

education family support

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

"-education, and that they dont need to say anything, just listen"

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

pay

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?

remove stigma

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?

'- mens health needs to be seen as important as womens. currently it is not even close. Men need to be able to take time out of work to get assessed

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

'-Advertising men as victims of domestic violence and provide contact services for them

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

N/A