

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

## Organisation Name

N/A

## Name

Mrs Imbi Pyman

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

"That mental illness comes and goes. That PTSD is almost contagious for the families caring for the suffering individual. That people can present as ok, but need support without judgement or scorn and exasperation when they are courageous enough to reach out"

### **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?**

"Headspace works well for those at the beginning of mental health issues, although the wait lists are horrendous. The missing middle has nothing. If you aren't nearly dead presenting at emergency, but need serious help and or respite then? The mental health plans are not enough. There is nearly always a gap to pay and some people simply cannot afford to be out of pocket at all."

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

"The conversations are robust and honest. That is positive. Too many organisations all fighting for funding, and no one taking charge. The consumers need direction and management. Almost like I select fire health insurance. People need help navigating the services, continuity of care."

### **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.**

"Because finding help is too difficult, complex and confusing. Accessing support when you are unwell is overwhelming."

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

"Education, and money. Online services can only help if people can get online. Mobile units to poorer communities with support and then ongoing engagement. The follow up is critical"

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

To be listened to. To be consulted with in conjunction with the patient. To have opportunities to access time out and time away.....badly needed respite

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

"Peer support workers need to be accountable and very well trained. The ratios need to

mandated and higher, because of the stress and burnout"

**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?**

Supportive and funded businesses that care and support mental illness to be given the opportunity to hire those that suffer.

**Thinking about what Victoria's mental health system should ideally look like, tell us what areas and reform ideas you would like the Royal Commission to prioritise for change?**

"Specific adolescent trauma units across Melbourne. In the east, we have nothing. Safe havens like the Ronald McDonald houses for cancer patients, we should have family units where everyone can get help and support. Case managers that reach out to suffering individuals that continue to provide long term support, with a step down process."

**What can be done now to prepare for changes to Victoria's mental health system and support improvements to last?**

"Money. Hospitals need to be built, specific for mental health. Age based programs, a peak body like Lifeline or Roses in the Ocean, informing practice and directing the services"

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

"Thank you. For listening. It is terrifying when life throws an unexpected curve ball your way, and your family is plunged into a failing system. When you give up and stop accessing any service because your experience is at best futile and at worst damaging. It is very sad. We are a family suffering and have been described as the face of the failed mental health system in Victoria. We do not wear that badge proudly. There are thousands of families like us."