

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

Organisation Name

N/A

Name

Ms Caitlin Reynolds

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

"The schooling system needs to bring in regulations that protect minors in the system who face mental health. As a high schooler, my personal mental health issues weren't kept private, teachers were often told about my relapses, even without my permission. I felt as if my personal problems played a part in how I was taught and how my schooling was treated. I was often outcasted "for my best interest" leading me to miss key parts of school. "

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?

"School systems should introduce mental health classes. They should aim to inform and protect. The support in schools needs to be evaluated. As a recent graduate, I know that having one support in a high school of 1000 students is not only unconventional to the support health worker, but also the students who will be forced to wait. "

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

"The campaigns surrounding suicide are good, but sometimes can be triggering. We should treat mental health the same way we treat Aboriginals and Islanders. If a program or radio event is deemed triggering, they have a warning before hand. I believe this should be the same for programs that mention/discuss mental health, especially suicide. Even a classification warning, similar to drug and alcohol use. Having "Mental Health Themes" is something simple yet effective. "

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.

"Places such as headspace are excellent, but not when waiting times can be up to 10 weeks. Not everyone is fortunate enough to access private health care in the mean time, and this is a real issue, especially when it comes to people who may be suicidal. Having a system in place where there is a secondary option to headspace would be effective. Having a service similar too AA for mental health could improve the overall health of citizens. This of course would be for your low risk patients only. "

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

"Homelessness in regional areas, especially the youth."

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

Better understanding. Perhaps a meeting for carers where they can chat and talk about their experiences.

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?

N/A

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