

**Craig Wallace****Your contribution**

**Should you wish to make a formal submission, please consider the questions below, noting that you do not have to respond to all of the questions, instead you may choose to respond to only some of them.**

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

and promote

- utilise explanatory frameworks which are not othering, e.g. Power Threat Meaning framework which applies to everyone's experiences and perceptions, i.e. stop creating a binary of "mentally ill" and "not mentally ill", encourage understanding of a continuum of experiences

2. 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?

- Involvement in the mental health system of people who have lived/living experience of mental illness, for example in paid consumer/lived experience roles, on advisory groups where participation is meaningful and in co-design and co-production opportunities

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

- Increased and improved services in rural and regional areas
- Interventions/actions to prevent bullying and gaslighting in schools and workplaces
- Address social isolation in ways additional to on-line interventions

4. 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.

- People need: to feel loved and important!
- support to access physical exercise and sustain it
- support to have a healthy diet
- mental health services which are humanistic, empathic, compassionate, ethical, professional, responsive and humble

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

- lack of timely access to appropriate services, including services which understand and celebrate diversity in all its forms, for example cultural diversity, diversity in sexuality and gender identity & diversity in worldviews
- lack of timely access to domestic/male family violence support services

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

- provide respite options
- provide 1:1 support/counselling and support groups
- provide Tandem and Carers Vic with more funding
- provide opportunities for carers, support people and family to co-design and co-produce the services/programs they need

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

- pay them more
- provide free or low cost professional development opportunities
- provide opportunities for formal and informal networking
- listen to them and ask them what they need and then give it to them

8. 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?

- scaffold participation in lots of different settings
- ensure the people around them have good understanding of what it means to try to participate when experiencing mental ill health & recovery

9. 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?

- Innovation in service provision
  - Open Dialogue trials
  - Try implementing Power Threat Meaning framework
- Anything that stops people being treated like a bunch of symptoms

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

- Introduce some new ideas which challenge the current system / ideology. Introduce such ideas for discussion, rather than immediate implementation.
- Challenge psychiatry's arrogance

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

- People experiencing mental illness need to feel useful, important and valued. The current system does the opposite.
- Provide continuous, <sup>meaningful</sup> opportunities for service users to provide feedback about the services they use.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment 😊

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acknowledgement

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Yes  No