

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

## Organisation Name

N/A

## Name

Ms Michelle Rochow

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

"To start with not thrown in the back of a dibby van upon hospitalisation as I have been treated three times in this deplorable way. Psychoeducation given from the very start of treatment I have been in the system for nine years and still do not get this education. I have never had medications or after care of my diagnosis and thus I have vomitted with severe nausea daily from the complete lack of respect to my intelligence and behavioural attachments concerning myself. Less restrictive action needed when one is placed on a community treatment order. I am not only sickened by this CTO I am horrified that I am treated like a five year old. Mental health records are often not correct as it is with me I have a meeting set to ammend my credibility concerning my mental health records next week. How for nine years this was allowed and why now after nine years of vomitng from the absurd, demoralising lies in my mental health record has this all come about. The food in these places is horendous dierty plans need to be made. The treatment while in the care of the system with regards to hospitalisation is horrendous. A set day and time with treating psychiatrist needs to be made I often go weeks with out any formal meetings. The duration of stay is horrific with workk, family, friends and university all taking its toll while I am in hospital."

### **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?**

"The stigma attached to mental illness is horrific in both my last emploment and now I would get the sack if they ever found out I have a misconstured diagnosis. The only thing working depends on individual assessment. every nurse, Dr, case manager ect. has different ways of treating a patient I can honestly tell you the system from the moment your picked up in the back of a dibby van to being relesead from hospital and the after care in the community vary's I have had no good experiences in fact it completly nauseates me at how 19th century the system is."

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

"Suicide watch. thats about it. If someone wants to end their life they will find away. However it is also about depression, anxiety and the education that is required through social and community outlet that should be driving home the message that suicide is not a option."

### **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.**

I have currently incurred nine years in the system and if I was not a driven person to educate myself and suceed I would simply not get out of bed. I suppose this is why so many people just slip through. Education needs to start in early childhood years right through to adult living. I am currently at such a loss to explain how confused I am daily about how I have been treated from so

called DR and nurses. What services linked in? I had nothing suggested to me ever.

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

"Professionally designed education occurring from secondary and then university level. I'm saddened to add here I've yet to meet a nurse, Dr, case manager that has assisted me any good mental health strategies I do it for myself. Ideally there is such a mass of information yet it does not help many people out there in society I have yet to meet any drivers behind community assistance into mental health. I've no idea how you best wish to assist me and another. I think the government is completing deluding it self on this particular question."

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

"The animosity I have with my family in the last nine years and the way they put me into the system is vital, makes me throw up daily. Any person choosing the avenue of anything to do with the services that are currently on offer will never mend or heal the resentment I have with the nightmare mental health has created in my life. I am completely disillusioned by the government punishing individuals with the assistance of the Victorian police. I am not a criminal until you are able to assist an individual via a gentler means which I have no answers too I am telling you this situation of being treated like a criminal is so up-setting and horrific I can not even imagine what one would do if an ambulance turned up at my house instead."

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

Education will never remove the stigma attached to mental health. The workforce behind mental health is not only currently designed to best meet patient care however if it was to attract greater achievement in this area I would suggest education from a university level best equipped to meet the obligations and responsibilities concerning the lack of professionalism and treatment of patients.

**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?**

I have no way of answering this as I have never been unemployed nor have I had social economic problems. Education and at least discussions on the topic to all parties concerned.

**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?**

Remove CTO effective immediately horrific. Greater analysis of employment education prior to getting the job in mental health.

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

Removal of CTO and lessens the horrific nature of tribunals. The tribunal sure but with a community education program designed to meet weekly attendance where by the diagnosis is discussed in a platform such as those designed around patient psycho education and eliminate and weed out

unprofessionalism in all areas of mental health.

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

"I have never in my 47 years been so violated as I have with this current system. There is no dignity, no trust, no respect in anything I have learned in the last nine years. The nature of my treatment it creates daily with me is so demoralising to articulate. If something is not done to best advantage an individual of these options their abilities to retain a normal living arrangement and the complete lack of after care yet alone being treated like a guinea pig with medication has got to stop. The anger, the waiting around for DR to see you the complete waste of my precious time has been interminable to comprehend. The pathetic attempts of untrained unprofessional staff to assist me and complete lack of general care concerning my career in publishing and university life has been so shut down by my treating staff and has gone nine years too long."