

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

SUB.0002.0028.0506

Name

Anonymous 633

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

"Television Ad campaigns. Talking about all different disorders. Education in schools, there should be a whole subject on mental health and all the different disorders so that kids can actually understand the disorders and not have opinions like "Bipolar just means you have daily mood swings." Subsidies for businesses hiring people with mental illness. Strong legal ramifications for workplace discrimination because of mental illness. "

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?

Not much is working well. The public system is a total mess.

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

Destigmatising treatment for conditions such as depression. We need to remove the perception that medication is somehow bad. It literally saves lives yet when it comes to antidepressants and the like people don't want to take them for some reason yet they will happily take medication for say heart disease.

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.

"Drugs and alcohol. People need to be constantly reminded there is a way out of their depression, they need to be incentivised to see specialists and the like. When you're stuck in depression you stop believing that its possible to become happy again so you give up. Having ad campaigns that reinforce that it is actually possible to escape the pain by seeking treatment would really help."

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

"The public system is fucked. If I wasn't from a privileged background and didn't have private health insurance i would have probably already committed suicide. Treatments that aren't accessible in the public system such as ECT are what saved me. There needs to be a focus on actually getting people well in the public system, rather than just getting them to the point where they wont commit suicide or hurt others. Every time I was in public I left still suffering, we need to really invest in treatment that will give people their lives back. I had to go to a private hospital for that, unfortunately a lot of people cant afford that. If it wasn't for the private hospital I guarantee you I would be dead."

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

They need to be educated on the nature of illnesses their relatives are suffering from. They need to know about the disorders inside out.

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

Pay them more.

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?

"The only thing you need to do is to get us WELL. Just releasing us when we aren't suicidal or a threat to others isn't enough. You need to make the goal to address all our needs, our goals and aspirations, you need to help us to be content with our lives again."

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?

"There needs to be more scrutiny over the behaviour of staff. I've been treated like shit in the public system so many times. All treatments should be on the table, ECT, TMS etc etc.. not just drugs"

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

"Ad Campaigns, Social media campaigns etc"

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

-