

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

Organisation Name

N/A

Name

Ms Merit Tabak

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

"to remove stigmas, I think ads on TV could be a good thing. Ads with information on how to get access to help."

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?

"Easier access to therapists and psychiatrists. Not just ten therapy sessions, but more if someone needs it. Easy access to billing psychiatrists because most people with mental illness are poor. Skype access to therapists and psychiatrists for patients with multiple disabilities who are (mostly) housebound. I do not think much is working well at the moment, from what I have experienced and heard from other people "

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

Unfortunately I do not think much is working well currently.

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.

"It is hard to get access, especially for the poor and remote living people as well as people with multiple disabilities. You first have to go a GP, if you can not find a bulk billing one if you are poor, that can already prevent a person from seeking help. We need more bulk billing GPs, psychiatrists, and more free therapy sessions. "

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

"What I explained above, poor people are already stuck when they can not find a bulk billing GP. That is the first hurdle, if they get past that, finding a bulkbilling psychiatrist is near impossible and 10 therapy sessions is not enough to help someone who is suicidal. People who are mentally ill, already find it hard to seek help, and often do not even try because they are too ill to try, take the hurdles away and more people will try and get better."

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

"This is a hard one, it depends on each person I think. Some people might want support groups, some people need respite care."

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

"I am sorry, I do not have enough knowledge to answer this question "

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?

Options for part time work that will not hurt their DSP or Newstart. Options to have someone check in with them about how they are doing. Options to work from home.

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?

"Access, like I have described before, I think that is the first step to improvement."

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

Probably the same what I mentioned before.

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

No this was all I wanted to mention.