

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

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Name

Anonymous

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

Public awareness campaigns that people with mental illness should be referred to for treatment by mental health professionals or at mental health facilities across Victoria.

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?

I think it is good that the Victorian Fixated Threat Assessment Centre exists in cooperation with Victoria Police and mental health providers like Forensicare. I feel there should be an anonymous reporting hotline or something to ensure more people who display extreme or fixated political beliefs or fixated beliefs should be doxed into this hotline so that they can get the proper mental health treatment they've clearly been lacking or from falling through the cracks by no fault of their own as an individual.

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

I think more intervention from police officers responding to even minor incidents or trivial incidents.

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 think people need to not hold onto any particular dogmatic beliefs, they should just try to live their lives in a neutral way with positive emotional supports and positive role models around them, stable living conditions, stable financial conditions, and support from government agencies. "

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

"The lack of enough police-referred mental health facilities and mental health hospitals across Victoria need to be expanded or increased with more beds, more capacity, to keep up with demand. "

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

Carers should be provided more workplace support.

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

Attract people who may be long-term unemployed to consider a career in the industry or through work for the dole to volunteer their time supporting those who work in the industry.

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?

Joining positive sporting clubs and positive social clubs without dogmatic beliefs or expensive membership fees.

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?

"Increasing the number of mental health hospital beds or increasing the number of mental health facilities that police can refer fixated people to or those with suspected mental illness to, because supposedly from what I've read in news reports, there's not enough capacity at existing mental health hospitals or mental health facilities. I would also ask that Victoria police officers be given greater powers and greater training for all recruits and existing officers to be able to refer suspects to mental health facilities, whether voluntary or particularly involuntary. "

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

"Public awareness advertising authorised by the State Government, new training for Victoria Police officers, anonymous reporting hotlines for family or friends or strangers to be able to report people suspected of having mental illness or mental health struggles."

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

"I would like to see not just an increase in funding as a blanket solution, but actually giving Victoria Police a greater role when they come into contact with individuals who may have an underlying mental illness that have never had a mental health assessment, and to give police more powers to involuntarily refer these individuals to such health facilities and ensure they are followed-up on so they don't fall through the cracks in the system or anything or refuse to participate in being assessed and given treatment. I would like to see Courts given more resources or instruction to place a greater emphasis on having even minor criminals given mental health assessments rather than prison. I would also like to see Victoria Police's role in this area increase significantly and the role of members of the public reporting individuals who clearly have mental issues. And that new mental health only hospitals are built across the State, particularly those which can act as a long-term facility like a prison. "