

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

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

"Keep putting people out there in the media who are honest, real and have an understanding of the issues. Making people humanised and following up with services that are accessible to everyone."

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?

"Access to psychologists is reasonably easy however more appointments funded are needed. The gap is getting access to psychiatric care, in an on going capacity."

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

"There is a lot of good services for schools to use however the gap is kids that are already in state care who are able to refuse treatment. More funded appointments for psychologists are needed desperately, people who are showing signs of suicidal thoughts need weekly care at the least."

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's hard for people to experience good mental health if they have a pre-existing conditions along with other factors such as family violence, homelessness, substance issues. Accessible treatment is the key, more substance treatment programs, safe affordable housing and services that case manage people who are at risk but haven't yet been a part of the justice system."

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 connectedness combined with substance use and family violence etc. Parents need to be supported when children are in primary years to learn about how their parenting affects their children long term. New mums need to be supported and taught about the importance of secure attachment with their babies. Young people who have an affected attachment with their parents are going to struggle long term and are severely at risk throughout their lives, this is all preventable."

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

More funded appointments for services so as family members aren't paying for services privately because the system lets individuals down. Respite is also needed for sole carers with no other options.

What can be done to attract, retain and better support the mental health workforce,

including peer support workers?

"Making sure mental health worker's get professional supervision regularly with a psychologist qualified, not just a supervisor. "

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?

"Jobs, jobs, jobs. In the past the people with disabilities/mental health would be doing jobs like trolley pushing however these jobs are all outsourced to grown men. If you think back to 20-30 years ago thats the jobs our quirky people had, now that's not possible."

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?

"I believe an emergency department for mental illness should be build so as general hospitals don't have to try and manage children who are injured and sick with people who are mentally unwell. Ed departments don't manage mental health well anyway, they generally give valium and send patients home anyway, leaving patient's and carers feeling frustrated. "

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

"More accessible treatment options and case management of people as whole people. Look at the big picture of what people need and make that it's someone's job to make sure that it all happens, not I'll do my part,see you later."

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

"People want to do better, they want to work and fit in to society. We need to take care of people over profits, employ our own people and make allowances for their mental health over business profits."