

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

SUB: 0002.0028.0649

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

"Mental Health and suicide prevention is a significant issue in Victoria and Australia. Right now there is a propagation of Medical Centres throughout the state. They are opening up in multiple locations and opening late into the night. The Medical system is underpinned by a relaxed Victorian Planning System that allows these to open without a permit. There seems no shortage of doctors and the Medicare and chemist system means that even late at night you can see a doctor without an appointment, free of charge and get your medication within a short timeframe. WHY CAN'T THE MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM WORK LIKE THIS. We have an immediate family member who at the age of 12 began to demonstrate suicidal thoughts and severe anxiety. He was diagnosed with clinical depression shortly after. To see a Psychologist is extremely difficult; see your doctor, get a mental health plan and then make an appointment where the wait time is more than a month to see a professional for a mental health issue. This is way too long - and this time some with severe mental issues will have committed suicide. WHAT IS THE FIX: 1. With so many Medical Centres - we need to have at least one Psychologist in each reasonably sized medical centre; 2. Why do you need a Mental Health Plan to see a psychologist? Why is this not covered by Medicare without a referral? Why make it harder to see a Psychologist? 3. My Daughter who has seen the devastation mental health conditions cause recently completed year 12 and achieved the results to get into [REDACTED] Psychology. She is now in

her 2nd year. The stats for producing psychologists are really shit.... 1,000 students enter the course (year1) by the fourth year only 200 students remain. Of the 200 students that remain only 20 places are offered for students who want a pathway into clinical psychology. Is it really possible that of all the students that achieve the marks to get into a Psychology degree at Monash University Clayton, that only 2% are accepted to become a Clinical Psychologist? This is really crap from one of the most prestigious Melbourne Universities. My daughter wants to become a clinical psychologist but the education system has made it almost impossible for her to make a difference in this field. 4. As a Community we need to make more places and training available to train Psychologists; 5. We need to have more Psychologists ""on the streets"" in Medical Centres; 6. We need to make it cheaper and easier for people to see a Psychologist when they need to. Not with a week, 2 weeks, a month. Just like a Doctor, pretty much straight away; 7. Mental Health should be covered under Medicare - straight away, No need to get a mental health plan. MAKE IT EASIER TO SEE A PSYCHOLOGIST. MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS TO BE TREATED JUST LIKE ANY MEDICAL CONDITION "

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?

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

The system is not working. Suicide numbers are out of control and getting worst. MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS TO BE TREATED JUST LIKE ANY MEDICAL CONDITION.

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.

1. Make more places available and training in place for more psychologists - ie. through more places at our Universities; 2. Make it easier and cheaper for someone to see a psychologist - through Medicare and more psychologists on the street in the propagation of Medical Centres; 3. Make it quicker to see a psychologist. MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS TO BE TREATED JUST LIKE ANY MEDICAL CONDITION

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

N/A

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

them?

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

N/A

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?

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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?

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

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

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