

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

Organisation Name

N/A

Name

Mrs Serena Martin

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

"The mental health system is systematically broken there needs to be far more funding, training, staff and general education for there to be any real change. Most Victorians have had a family member or friend with a mental illness, some are caregivers to people with mental illness. There needs to be far more support for these people."

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?

"Nothing is working well!!! To prevent mental illness there needs to be huge amounts of funding for pre hospital care eg psychologists or psychiatrists access, new/larger hospital's for mental illness admissions. Better training for current staff in emergency departments to understand and accommodate mental health patients."

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

More funding and better access to mental health services. Better education for children to recognize mental illness and ask for help earlier. We need more services and easier access.

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.

"Again more funding, training and education for all Victorians. Better pre hospital care and better follow up care after discharge from hospital "

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

"Stress levels are at an all time high, Family violence is also an issue, the cost of living is almost impossible for some in our community and government spending on mental health services is at an all time low comparative to population growth "

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

"The majority of caregivers need better access to counseling, respite and education. Funding needs to be put in place so caregivers can access these"

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

"Better pay, better education and more focus on worker burnout rates"

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?

"Very little unfortunately regarding options for the community, again there needs to be more funding and easier access to mental health services "

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?

"More beds in mental health hospitals, more funding for hospitals and staff "

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

We need to accommodate for our growing population more hospitals more beds easier access to mental health services

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

"I have several family members who are in the field of psychology, I have also been in need of counseling and hospital for a mental/medical illness. I was intimidated and threatened by other patients and told by a member of the nursing staff that I was dramatizing the seriousness of an assault during my time in hospital, the staff conveniently forgot to file a report after the assault even though the perpetrator was arrested in the hospital. The system is broken and the government is failing it's constituents "