

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

## Organisation Name

N/A

## Name

Mr Mark Baker

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

"Mental health education as part of high school curriculum, with less of a focus on acute mental health and more of a focus on prevention and maintenance of good mental health."

### **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?**

"Awareness of acute services in the community is working well. More needs to be done in relation to funded services for sub acute and mild to moderate mental illness care, such as step up residential rehabilitation centres."

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

Already working well is awareness of suicide risk in the community. What needs more work is available emergency appointments to see counsellors or psychologists if suicidal.

### **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.**

"There is a lack of services for those who are at risk of becoming acutely unwell, i.e. those who have an ongoing mild to moderate mental health disorder (e.g. depression, anxiety, PTSD) and are experiencing an increase in symptoms that are not severe enough to be appropriate for acute mental health services (e.g. psychiatric ward inpatient stay). What can help with this is more funding for community mental health services, counselling services in the community, and residential programs for people to stay with support workers on site to help with symptoms before hospitalisation is required."

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

Lower levels of education and higher levels of unemployment.

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

Family members need to have their own mental health supported and this could be done better by providing more counselling services for family members of people with mental health issues.

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

"More funding for services, so that there is an adequate amount of staff to do an effective job, not

just an adequate job."

**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?**

N/A

**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?**

Prevention and support at the mild to moderate level of mental illness.

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

Ask consumers and users of the system for their feedback on individual services.

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

N/A