

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

**Organisation Name**

SUB.0002.0026.0011

N/A

**Name**

Anonymous

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

Mental illness for many men around the ages of 35 to 50 is caused by family law. Tell Andrews to have the guts to fight for that to change.

**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?**

You are pushing men to commit suicide. Family violence and family laws are driving men to commit suicide. The government is causing the mental health issues.

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

Your policies are causing men to commit suicide. You who have been tasked with protecting your citizens... not just woman... but all citizens have the blood on all these men on your hands.

**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.**

"Look, instead of trying to apply a band-aid and fix the symptoms... find the causes. All your questions are about how you get help for mental health... but the suicide of many men can simply be prevented if you just change your family and family violence laws."

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

"Mental health is severely affected when you put a man on the streets based on bogus family violence laws, then take his child away from him premised upon allegations that do not need to be proven. When the system forces him to pay mortgage for a house ... his house that he cannot live in, pay child support for a child that he is restricted from seeing, spousal support for a woman who doesn't want to be his spouse, then have the police harass and criminally charge him for one text message that he sent that is not within the terms of the intervention order how can you not expect him to commit suicide? On top of all of this, he has to keep working to pay child support and go to family court which will essentially turn him into a pauper with little chance that he will get his child. Do you understand what I am saying? Family law and Family violence laws is killing men. Family violence laws in Victoria which is based on the Duluth Model is premised upon fake data. Please stop it. You're murdering innocent boys."

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

The question should be.. how are family members affected by the suicide of men who are

experiencing challenges in the family court.

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

Find the causes first... Why are people committing suicide or suffering mental health issues. How are you as the government contributing to this. Get a proper management consultant in who knows to apply systems thinking.

**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?**

mental health as a result of family violence and family law gives men very little outlet. You may as well put a gun to their head.

**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?**

Men's suicide. It is a disgusting statistic that you are contributing to.

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

N/A

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

"We have a generation of boys who are going to suffer even more than us. These young boys will simply not know how to behave and operate in this feminized world. Mental health, especially among young boys is going to get much much worse. Please help them by putting them in the forefront of your minds. Don't make them expendable."

Senior Constable [REDACTED] (not his real name) \*1 pointed his finger at me and then to my house. Looking at me without emotion, he told me that I had to leave my house immediately. I will have to attend court in four days and will stand in front of a magistrate who will decide if I can go back into my own house. If I came back to my house before then, or attempt to communicate with my son or his mother, he will criminally charge me and have me jailed. Can they do that I asked him? This is my house too. I hadn't done anything wrong. [REDACTED] waved me off but did have some good news. Or so I thought. He said that because there was no evidence of violence, the magistrate will surely let me go back home. That calmed me down. I believed him and why wouldn't I? The police are to be trusted are they not? Why else would they be tasked with maintaining law and order if they were prone to lying?

The distressed look on my four year old sons face while the police led me away is something that I will take to my grave. He held on to my legs and wouldn't let go. I pleaded with the police to give me a minute. [REDACTED] grudgingly obliged but told me to hurry up. I knelt down, kissed my son and told him that daddy had to go out for a bit. It would be weeks before I would see him again. I was lucky. For many men, this day is the start of parental alienation \*2. Many go for years without seeing their children. From that day, many will be forced to pay child support for a child they cannot see, mortgage for a house they cannot live in and in some cases, spousal support for a spouse who doesn't want to be their spouse. All this while facing the stigma of being a violent man. This was also the last day I lived in my house.

After sleeping in my car for the first night and then motels for the next three, I went for the mention hearing at the [REDACTED] Magistrates court. I was emotionally and physically exhausted but was still working those four days. I was fully expecting to be permitted back home that day. A hundred percent because the police don't lie. Or so I thought. I was shattered when the police said that I couldn't for the next twelve months. Legal aid refused to represent me when I wanted to contest the order and when I did anyways, the magistrate simply upheld the order till the next hearing. That was five weeks away, which effectively meant that I was homeless from that moment. I called [REDACTED] in desperation. His partner answered and played dumb. "Just speak to the magistrate mate", he said. They were the one who pushed for twelve months, they knew the moment I was being led away from my house that I wouldn't go back home for the next twelve months. At this point, a quote by G.K. [REDACTED] comes to mind. "The true soldier fights not because he hates what is in front of him, but because he loves what is behind him.". Men (and boys) can go through a tremendous amount of adversity. They will fight wars, work in mines, and fishing trawlers not because they love it but because they love what is behind them. They love what they're working for. Their mothers, wives and children. They will endure pain in that moment because one day soon, they will go back to their homes and sleep in their warm beds. My home, my family and my son... taken away from me just like that. What do I do? Where do I go? The police gave me a number to call if I needed help and sent me on my way. Was that all I was worth? After the magistrate made his judgment, I stoically walked into the mens room, shut the door of the cubicle, squatted against the cubicle wall and cried with my entire body trembling vigorously. I held my palm against my mouth, so that the men outside don't hear me crying and think that there is a cry baby in there. Boys don't cry. We just commit suicide. I would later find out that on average, seven men commit suicide each day. As I write this, I am not sure how I didn't become one of them. I am still not sure if I should be disappointed with myself to have contemplated suicide or proud that I didn't follow through on such thoughts.

I had to beg to see my son, and please bear in mind that too much begging also meant a criminal record. It would all make sense when I found out later that her boyfriend was already living in my house, sleeping in my marital bed and playing daddy to my son. Another dad in my situation referred to the family violence protection act as the Adulteress support act. Apparently, it is a common misuse

of this law intended to protect women. I felt a tinge of sadness for the women who really needed protection. The women abusing these laws were putting them at risk. Depression and anxiety became a shackle that took me months to get rid off. I could not comprehend what was happening. How can they stop me from going back into my own home? How can the law force me to prove that I was never violent. It would be months before I realized that they would never have let me back home because they had redefined violence. The police were no longer just protecting women, they were protecting how women felt about things. It was not a battle that I could win. Her feeling threatened was enough for the police to come knock on my door, interview and intimidate me.