

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

Organisation Name

N/A

Name

Mr Feng wong

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

"more information to the public of mental health, simple but sufficient info, like 1-2 pages, easy to read and understand for each mental health issue. e.g. 1-2 pages only for info about anxiety symptoms, another 1-2 pages about treatment. 1-2 pages about an example.etc."

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?

"when one was told This program is all about us, and don't need to worry about the organisation goals that are listed on the brochure. and the support worker did really only cares about our goals and never pushed us to the area that we don't want to pursue "

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

"Some pushy people or aggressive ones will easily trigger us, or make us feel life out of control. we try to avoid them, or keep distance, instead of trying fix it. Sometimes it is impossible to change the situation but get ourselves abused. And we can't really change how we feel, or try not to be triggered. The best way is just to stay away, although it is frustrating. Try not to stay in an abusive situation, try to move out of it as soon as possible. suicide might not happen right away, but can come later on. the longer stayed in an abusive situation, the stronger the wave might be later on. "

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.

"I The current approach of encourage people according to the recovery focused approach is to push people. this approach saying that people need to be pushed, otherwise they stuck forever. This aspect of recovery focused approach is actually making us feel worse. When we got pushed, or even push ourselves to do something, we feel quite anxious, and some of us anxiety can soar from 12/10 within 10 seconds. not just that we will suffer from anxiety, it follows by a period of depression as well. the more anxious we feel before the more depressed/ upset feeling we get afterwards. eventually we are at the same original spot repeatedly, didn't make much progress, and don't feel better. become less confidence, and more frustrated and doubt oneself. we have to go through all this. we would rather be given the space that we will go make a slowly little steps ourselves, and without worrying to be pushed forward and getting anxious. If when talking about trauma, some counsellors try to be patient to listen for the first 1-2 sessions. after that they will lose the patience, and ask the victim ' what can you do it or change it' or urge victim to act according to the general recovery frame, like finding a job, like going to school, like going out more etc. which is like a bandage counselling, things were never properly looked at and analysed. "

What are the drivers behind some communities in Victoria experiencing poorer mental

health outcomes and what needs to be done to address this?

"I in some Asian culture, like Confucius, people at a high hierarchy have control over the lower one. Within the family is that parents have absolute control over children, and a male has more control over females. These controlling in modern Chinese society become so fierce that offsprings sometimes say that they have no space to breathe because of the demand from their parents. This culture helps the parents to live through their children, and be proud of it while putting the mental health condition of their children at risk. II Also in the Chinese culture there is a proverb saying family shame should not be made to the outside? (家丑不外扬). Saying bad things happened in the family is considered humiliating oneself and their family, so if there was abuse or sexual assault happened in the family, people choose to be silent, or told to do so. Even if they choose to speak up, if the abuser is on the higher hierarchy than them, they can be told that "" we don't believe you"" by other people. Also this person who speaks up will be considered as bad behaviour. (不懂事). The blame will be on the people who speak up, instead of the abuser. Also this belief that parents are always acting for the best of offspring in Confucius culture makes people confuse if they don't feel they been treated well. All the voice saying parents act at the best of for them come from grandparents, aunts, uncles, other relatives, neighbours from the community in Australia if these people come from Confucius background. This makes people doubt their own feelings, not sure how to speak up, and don't know where to start. They don't even know how to trust other people because they been told so many times how they should feel about about their parents. III Also for some culture or harsh education is highly praised by parents. Some even tell the teacher to be harsh to their children, because they believe this is for their children. The mental distress coming from the harsh education or burnout was totally ignored. Teachers sometimes use students to gain payment and status. Because in China the teachers' income is related to academic performance of their students. Teachers who have more top academic performance get paid more and promoted as well. Academically bad ones can be treated like criminals in the classroom, whatever goes wrong, they got blamed by teacher. It doesn't matter they made such mistakes or not. In some form teacher's classroom, academically bad students don't have much dignity. Teachers can be explored towards students by giving them excessive homeworks, corporal punishment to gain higher academic performance, but always saying this is for the goodness of student. IT might have some elements for students, but a big amount for teacher themselves as well. In Yantai, Shandong province, some junior high school hours start from 6 am to 7 pm 6 days a week. After homework, student usually finishes at 11 pm. In senior high, some school can start from 5:30 am to 11 pm, half day off every 3 weeks. 4. The sense of looking after oneself is missing. Most people don't have the idea of looking after oneself, and don't even know how. Maybe encouraging looking after oneself, physically, emotionally, spiritually etc, "

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

time off from look after patients.

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

"I Supervisor or manager see mental health clients as a lower class, and could be easily managed or controlled, if a support worker is unable to control the client, this shows the support worker is incapable. Not every support worker is able to manage every client's mental health well, workplace should focus on how to support each clients, and help support worker to better help the

clients. Not going into a blaming game or see clients as animals that need to be controlled."

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?

"1. current counselling/psychologist services are like bandage therapy. Psychology and counsellors dealing with people who have complex trauma, are not willing to listen to what happened to the victims, they are more interested to give the clients homework and ask for the victims to act according to the current recovery frame, like at making friends, like employment, like go back socialising. This is not long-term beneficial to the clients it only delay the recovery treating the trauma. What the psychologist is giving is like a bandage. but one can find one's life got affected more in the more as growing older and. Because other parts of life can fall apart, without properly address the trauma. the patient have been seen counsellors, psychologists, or even clinical psychologist for years but fine oneself in the same spot after 10 years of counselling. Her life didn't get better, and she didn't feel better. she is getting more and more frustrated. 2. some aspect of recovery focused approach. this approach saying that people need to be pushed, otherwise they stuck forever. This aspect of recovery focused approach is actually making us feel worse. "

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

"1. we have never been told each recovery theory is not suitable to everyone. Everyone just assume it is suitable for us all, and asked to try again and again. 2. cognitive behavior therapy is not suitable for everyone, but non of us has been told of it. 3. there is hardly any information talking about the diadvange of CBT. 4. for all the information aobut cognitive behavior therapy even from govement website, there is no mentioning about the bad part or warnign part of CBT. 5. push clients when we are not ready, and under the name of ""encouragement"" "

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

"The limitations of approaches shouldn be more well informed to the general public and health workers. Just like other advertise, the limitaions and negative side of approaches need to be informed to customers. Academic/health advertise need to be regulated as well. How can the public never be informed the limitations, and health workers thought simply by changing people's thoughts, everything can be changed?"