

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

Organisation Name

N/A

Name

Mr Elliot Barry

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

"To reduce stigma and discrimination faced by the mentally ill change first must come from medical professionals. This starts by educating health specialists on how to effectively communicate with the mentally ill and holding professionals to the standards they are qualified in. Triage Nurses, General Practitioner, Psychologists, Psychiatrists, Nurses, Counsellors, Police, Legal system, Department of human services. While there has been progress this last decade in reducing stigma and discrimination faced by mentally ill specialists still remain problematic and damages the chance of people seeking help in the future. It only takes one bad experience for a person to give up on ever reaching out for help. This is why it's important to reform this area of the mental health system so these chances are squandered on poor experiences. Educating cultural and religious groups who hold outdated views of sexuality and mental illness. Upholding current journalism standards of reporting about mental illness without reinforcing old stereotypes. "

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?

Headspace has been an excellent service and needs funding to guarantee its future rollout to regional areas. Education must start in primary school with children learning the importance of looking after their own mental health. It's also important children have access to a counsellor at school.

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

"Nothing has worked for suicide prevention it's been an ongoing disaster for decades with the rate only dropping because of economic growth. I do think in the coming year's suicide numbers will increase are a number of societal changes. The recent economic downturn, population growth leading to fewer services, domestic violence men being removed from their homes nowhere to seek refuge and end up homeless. Staying in contact with mentally ill individuals that have come into contact with the mental health service? Maintaining communication will make sure people don't fall through the cracks of the system. Being mentally ill reduces a person's ability to look after themselves and that includes reaching out for help. "

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.

Effective communication between health service is a must for delivering adequate support. By reducing the amount an individual whose unwell needs will help with the pressure of dealing with illness itself. Increasing mental health system in regional areas specialists qualified in a wide range of therapies that can cater to regional Victorians.

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

"Low socioeconomic areas and cultural barriers that stop people seeking help. New health services, investment into transport, education, increasing access to services. "

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

Offering support and help to family members and carers who may be struggling to support someone mentally ill. Making it easier for carers to access services and advocate for the mentally ill. Access to education material and services that can help cares.

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

Educating these people on the importance of looking after their own mental health before supporting other peoples. Access to services like therapy and education.

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?

It's hard to get back into work after suffering a mental illness it's also a daunting task to disclose a mental illness to an employer without the fear of being discriminated against. Services helping people back to independence and educating employers. A solution for people on Centrelink payments to start working without the fear of having their Centrelink payments being affected.

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?

An ideal system would be effective at catering to the needs of mentally ill people to give them a life worth living.

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

A long term goal that isn't restricted by a political party term or budget cuts.

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

N/A