

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

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

"A warning appears on Schedule 8 permits issued for patients who have previously accessed opioid replacement programs, which apparently remains for life. Individuals who have current or past history of abusing classes of drugs other than opiates are unlikely to be captured by this system; the warning relating to past prescriptions for replacement therapy only applies to a small sub-group of drug-dependent individuals, the majority for whom opioid replacement therapy is not clinically indicated or sought out. The introduction of programs such as SafeScript in Victoria and the Prescription Shopping Information Service nationally provides better awareness and real-time monitoring of potential prescription drug abuse than a passive warning on a prescribing permit. The medical need for a persistent warning is questionable in circumstances where the patient has been free from drug abuse for a long period and is considered stable. Although such a warning is justified in cases where the patient has a history of current or recent drug abuse, for the warning to remain for life without regard to the patient's current health is unnecessarily stigmatising to such patients who require treatment with S8 therapeutics. Health professionals have an obligation to ensure that medicines with abuse potential are being used correctly. However, this needs to be balanced with the patient's right to access all treatment options with dignity and respect."

### **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?**

N/A

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

N/A

### **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.**

N/A

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

N/A

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

N/A

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

**including peer support workers?**

N/A

**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?**

N/A

**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?**

N/A