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

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Name
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What are your suggestions to improve the Victorian community's understanding of mental illness and reduce stigma and discrimination?
Run tv/radio/ad campaign no shame we are all the same showing real people supporting one another at different stages in their recovery.

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?
"Once linked in with services there is lots of good support however for people isolated and unwell using private drs they often fall through the cracks and do not receive appropriate treatment and support for severe mental illness that results in a life that is really difficult, sad, unhealthy, lonely and frightening for the individual and their family members - there needs to be better support for gps linking mentally unwell/psychotic/paranoid individuals with public mental health services. As a nurse I have contacted a public hospital mental health psych triage services and informed them of a seriously unwell person who was in a terrible state living with their elderly frightened parents who didn't understand mental illness in an attempt to try and get a mental health nurse to go and assess them as they needed help quickly only to be told unless they are going to kill someone they need to see their gp - there was no care, other avenue offered or compassion for this person or their family because they were not already in the system."

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.
"Lack of knowledge, education, medications, to unwell to know they are unwell isolation - better services for outskirts of Melbourne suburbs more phone/online support or home visiting teams for people first engaging with treatment coming up with a treatment plan that there gps can then follow but regular check in with mental health team for both individual and there support person/family."

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?
After hours free app to - on call mental health care teams (similar to the my emergency dr app that is available to people in the ▮▮▮▮▮ suburbs of Melbourne). Plus during business hours a similar

service to people that offers help/advice at anytime free of costs and people can access from there homes for advice or to be linked in with other services similar to direct line for aod services but one for family memebers or carers that could offer counselling services at times of need/stress like a employee assistance program.

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

"All public hospital must have a separate/third party to investigate all allegations of the following from both staff and consumers in relation to workplace bullying, harassment, discrimination, unprofessional behaviour, physical and sexual abuse allegations etc etc. It is a complete disgrace that a victim of the above mentioned serious allegations has to report it to a company they work for that should of protected them and provided a safe workplace to be able to investigate the allegation when there is a clear conflict of interest and the health care network is only interested in disproving the claims to protect there company - it is wrong and needs to stop, health care networks have had long enough to do the right thing and they have proven time and time again to be incompetent at stamping out the culture of bullying and harassment in health care. Health care networks need to be put on notice that they are not above the law and should not have the option to determine the allegations (I believe in the uk third parties do these investigations) I have witnessed victims life's fall apart not because of the bullying but how they were treated once they raised the issue and how corrupt unethical and immoral the investigations are run by the health care networks example ████████ Health - if this is how staff are treated what chance do patients have if they make a complaint. Why would mental health care workers stay in the profession when there is no protection for workplace rights and a culture so bad that staff are afraid to speak up because they know they will become a target and be performance managed out by the bullying health care network if they are seen to speak up for what is right. The perpetrators continue to either remain in the worksite or get elevated to senior positions and the victims get moved to other worksites or resign from there positions due to feeling so violated by how they are treated by the health care network. An example of how wrong it is - it would be similar to a victim of assault raising the allegation of assault against the perpetrator and then having the perpetrators family run the investigation. It is wrong, unfair and needs to stop. A fair system would be to have all public hospital complaints by staff or consumers dealt with by a third partie ie Public Hospital Complaints Victoria' that is a seperate body with no conflict of interest to professionally and fairly investigate allegations and make recommendations similar to WorkSafe Vic . This would change the culture of health care and retain staff save lives and encourage people to do the right thing."

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?
"Client and staff complaints against public health care networks to all be done through an independent third party similar to WorkSafe so that public health care networks are accountable, transparent and this way the health care networks could focus on why they are there in the first place to provide safe care for clients, their family's and staff. "

What can be done now to prepare for changes to Victorias mental health system and support improvements to last?
"Change laws, establish an independent investigation complaints company, ask health care networks to do the right thing or lose funding."

Is there anything else you would like to share with the Royal Commission?
I hope that this royal commission stands up for what is right and implements a third party to investigate all public hospital complaints.