

Your information	
Title	Mrs
First name	██████████
Surname	██████████
Email Address	██
Preferred Contact Number	██████████
Postcode	██████
Preferred method of contact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Email <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Telephone
Gender	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Self-described: <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
Age	<input type="checkbox"/> Under 15 <input type="checkbox"/> 15 – 17 <input type="checkbox"/> 18 – 24 <input type="checkbox"/> 25 – 44 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 45 – 64 <input type="checkbox"/> 65 – 84 <input type="checkbox"/> 85+ <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
Do you identify as a member of any of the following groups? Please select all that apply	<input type="checkbox"/> People of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origins <input type="checkbox"/> People of non-English speaking (culturally and linguistically diverse) backgrounds <input type="checkbox"/> People from the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Asexual and Queer community <input type="checkbox"/> People who are experiencing or have experienced family violence or homelessness <input type="checkbox"/> People with disability <input type="checkbox"/> People living in rural or regional communities <input type="checkbox"/> People who are engaged in preventing, responding to and treating mental illness <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
Type of submission	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Individual <input type="checkbox"/> Organisation Please state which organisation: Please state your position at the organisation: Please state whether you have authority from that organisation to make this submission on its behalf: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Group How many people does your submission represent?

www.dutyofcare.biz  
 email: info@dutyofcare.biz  
 Fax: 01582 706 550  
 PO Box 1162  
 Luton, LU1 5WT  
 DUTY OF CARE (UK) LTD



Personal information about others	Does your submission include information which would allow another individual who has experienced mental illness to be identified? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	If yes, are you authorised to provide that information on their behalf, on the basis set out in the document <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	Prior to publication, does the submission require redaction to deidentify individuals, apart from the author, to which the submission refers <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Please indicate which of the following best represents you or the organisation/body you represent. Please select all that apply	<input type="checkbox"/> Person living with mental illness <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engagement with mental health services in the past five years <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carer / family member / friend of someone living with mental illness <input type="checkbox"/> Support worker <input type="checkbox"/> Individual service provider <input type="checkbox"/> Individual advocate <input type="checkbox"/> Service provider organisation; Please specify type of provider: _____ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Peak body or advocacy group <input type="checkbox"/> Researcher, academic, commentator <input type="checkbox"/> Government agency <input type="checkbox"/> Interested member of the public <input type="checkbox"/> Other; Please specify:
Please select the main Terms of Reference topics that are covered in your brief comments. Please select all that apply	<input type="checkbox"/> Access to Victoria's mental health services <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Navigation of Victoria's mental health services <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Best practice treatment and care models that are safe and person-centred <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Family and carer support needs <input type="checkbox"/> Suicide prevention <input type="checkbox"/> Mental illness prevention <input type="checkbox"/> Mental health workforce <input type="checkbox"/> Pathways and interfaces between Victoria's mental health services and other services <input type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure, governance, accountability, funding, commissioning and information-sharing arrangements <input type="checkbox"/> Data collection and research strategies to advance and monitor reforms <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal and Torres Islander communities <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> People living with mental illness and other co-occurring illnesses, disabilities, multiple or dual disabilities
	<input type="checkbox"/> Rural and regional communities <input type="checkbox"/> People in contact, or at greater risk of contact, with the forensic mental health system and the justice system <input type="checkbox"/> People living with both mental illness and problematic drug and alcohol use

**For individuals only**

Please identify whether this submission is to be treated as public, anonymous or restricted

While you can request anonymity or confidentiality below, we strongly encourage your formal submission to be public - this will help to ensure the Commission's work is transparent and the community is fully informed

Please tick one box	
Public	My submission may be published or referred to in any public document prepared by the Royal Commission. There is no need to anonymise this submission.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Anonymous	My submission may only be published or referred to in any public document prepared by the Royal Commission if it is anonymised (i.e. all information identifying or which could reasonably be expected to identify the author is redacted). <i>USE FIRST NAME ONLY - PROVIDE PH NUMBER ONLY.</i> If you do not specify the information which you would like to be removed, reasonable efforts will be made to remove all personal information (such as your name, address and other contact details) and other information which could reasonably be expected to identify you.
Restricted	My submission is confidential. My submission and its contents must not be published or referred to in any public document prepared by the Royal Commission. Please include a short explanation as to why you would like your submission restricted.

## Please note:

- This cover sheet is required for all formal submissions, whether in writing or by audio or video file. Written submissions made online or by post, may be published on the Commission's website (at the discretion of the Commission) subject to your nominated preferences.
- Audio and video submissions will not be published on the Commission's website. However, they may be referred to in the Commission's reports subject to any preferences nominated.
- While the Commission will take into account your preference, the Commission may redact any part of any submission for privacy, legal or other reasons.

Personal information about others	Does your submission include information which would allow another individual who has experienced mental illness to be identified? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
	If yes, are you authorised to provide that information on their behalf, on the basis set out in the document <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	Prior to publication, does the submission require redaction to deidentify individuals, apart from the author, to which the submission refers <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Please indicate which of the following best represents you or the organisation/body you represent. Please select all that apply	<input type="checkbox"/> Person living with mental illness <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engagement with mental health services in the past five years <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carer / family member / friend of someone living with mental illness <input type="checkbox"/> Support worker <input type="checkbox"/> Individual service provider <input type="checkbox"/> Individual advocate <input type="checkbox"/> Service provider organisation; Please specify type of provider: _____ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Peak body or advocacy group <input type="checkbox"/> Researcher, academic, commentator <input type="checkbox"/> Government agency <input type="checkbox"/> Interested member of the public <input type="checkbox"/> Other; Please specify:
	<input type="checkbox"/> Access to Victoria's mental health services <input type="checkbox"/> Navigation of Victoria's mental health services <input type="checkbox"/> Best practice treatment and care models that are safe and person-centred <input type="checkbox"/> Family and carer support needs <input type="checkbox"/> Suicide prevention <input type="checkbox"/> Mental illness prevention

**Your contribution**

***Should you wish to make a formal submission, please consider the questions below, noting that you do not have to respond to all of the questions, instead you may choose to respond to only some of them.***

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

It is helpful to continue have well known people publicly talk about their battles with mental health issues and how,if at all they have overcome them.

The public need to be educated that there is a spectrum of anxiety and depression. The symptoms can wax and wane depending on what else is happening in that persons life.

That treatment may fix the problem or may it not. It may lessen the symptoms for a while but some days are better than others and many people with MH cannot predict completely how they are going to be tomorrow the next day or the next week.

2. 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?

Current media coverage and public awareness campaigns are good pretty good particularly around supporting youth with MH issues. There has been a lot of awareness raised at both my twins schools and both have access to counselling services within their school environment. Both my daughters have good awareness of MH issues in adolescents and MANY of their friends are being treated for anxiety and depression that they are aware of and they talk about it. I am not sure what happens after they leave school and this concerns me.

Awareness is pretty good but accessing early support and treatment is a pipedream really.

There are not enough Psychiatrists that specialise in adolescent MH issues particularly if the adoloscents have concurrent comorbidities such as ADHD ,Learning Disabilities, Autism etc

The cost of accessing good help is prohibitive. It currently costs around \$400 per visit to a private Psychiatrist with health funds paying out less and less each year. The individual will often need several appointments for the Psychiatrist to get a history ,and if in the case of a youth to talk to other members of the family the initial out of pocket costs can run into \$1500 or more plus time away from work etc . Cost of treatment –ADHD medications are expensive and patient is often trialled on several before the right one is found.

The one long round of appointments from the GP for a MH plan , Psychiatrist referral and back again adds to this cost and burden on the family

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

Not sure

4. 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.

There needs to be greater emphasis on prevention and particularly research based preventative strategies. At work place greater flexibility on work places and time. Greater emphasis on building small mentorship teams. Having a workplace culture that has a vested interest in not only profit but keeping their employees engaged and happy.

Provision of anonymous free counselling and advisory services at workplaces.

Encouraging employees to have not just work related goals.

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

I have addressed this partly in question 6 .

Lack of accessibility, System to complex ,costly and time consuming to navigate. No one to help! It

is and extremely isolating experience [REDACTED]

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

Where do I start ? I have had to access services for both my year 12 daughters in the past year but cant help thinking that if they had been able to access better services before year 12 it would not have been so bad.

One had an eating disorder as well as Dyslexia and Aspergers and ADHD.

The other has ASD, Dyslexia and ADD. Both have been diagnosed with moderately severe anxiety this year.

My daughters have needed regular appointments with Psychologists, Psychiatrists ,Dietician ,GP and Paediatrician as well as Speech Pathologist for one daughter and tutors for both.

After my daughter was discharged from hospital last year I spent three months travelling into my daughters school to feed her 3x a day because they said that they could not supervise her even though they have a health centre,2 nurses and a counsellor on duty most days. This was so burdensome that I could barely look after anyone else in the family let alone myself.

I have had to give up work to support them through this year and not only has it has affected my own mental health at times it has put pressure on our finances as well as my relationships with my husband and friends which increased my overwhelming sense of social isolation.

Because of the cost and time spent going to and from appointments for my daughters I have not been able to get help myself.

I have no family in this country that can help.

I am a Nurse and speak English and know the system well but trying navigate AND juggle multiple health providers has been a full time job not least because I have had to be the "communicator" between all of them. There needs to be a better and more standardised communication system between the treating providers to reduce the need for already over burdened family members (usually the mother) to do this. On top of this I have needed documentation for my work to get Carers leave as well as trying to claim for appointments where health providers do not have the ability to claim on my behalf at times it has all been too much.

A far more streamlined . integrated and less complex approach is needed for families so that they can focus on caring for their sick family member and self care. Access to health care providers

who often are not able to provide a service (particularly in the private system) because they are trying to service too many patients or working part time hours! Capped or reduced costs! It is ridiculous that it costs \$400 to access a private Psychiatrist – and then that person does not communicate with the other health care providers...its their job! The private health care system is not the place to do this!! My experience with the public system was much better,,more team approach and integrated but based 25 kms away. Access to Skype consults or emergency Skype call check ins would be good particularly for my daughter who often needed support between appointments that were 3 or 4 weeks apart.

Having better access to healthcare providers under one roof!!! Depression and anxiety often come with other comorbidities and having a healthcare hub or teams physically located in one building would be really good.. To improve communication and negate the need for driving miles every week.

Too much documentation required . I have also had to deal with documentation to both Girls schools to prove that they could not sit their exams, this has to come from a doctor for each exam subject each time... adding up to a lot of expense

I am supposed to maintain my own CPD points plus work hours to maintain my Nursing registration in order that I can work into the future but wonder how I am supposed to do this with the burden of looking after my daughters? I have now been off part time work for 10 months and have just decided to go back to casual employments so that I can have the flexibility to work or not

→ I propose a system of Healthcare Hubs that provide all the services together under one roof - as I mentioned <sup>pro</sup> should be team approach + ~~CASE~~ Greater accountability for Psychiatrists NOT managed! doing a good job. There are not enough

Checks & balances to weed out the DUD ones! particularly in private practices.

A Review System by their patients & staff  
→ Independent reviewer that suspends practise unless they comply with standards

- ~~So~~ easily accessible MINIMUM standards of care that have to be met - these to be visible for all → <sup>patient?</sup> <sup>Charter?</sup> to see - so everyone knows what to expect.



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

I am unsure about this.

Perhaps train them and pay them well

Better career structure and support from their superiors

Mental healthcare teams where they are valued more for their contribution.

8. 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?

UNSURE

9. Thinking about what Victoria's mental health system should ideally look like, tell us what areas and reform ideas you would like the Royal Commission to prioritise for change?

The role that Health providers have to play in respect to communication between them

Better systems to cope with this. Greater accountability for those working in the private sector

Capped costs, maximum numbers of patients per Psychiatrists , provision of care and monitoring of appointment lead times as a means of determining whether care is being provided in a timely fashion. More urgent appointment availabilities for patients with comorbidities and just out of hospital. Telephone support by care providers.

10. What can be done now to prepare for changes to Victoria's mental health system and support improvements to last?

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

Privacy acknowledgement

I understand that the Royal Commission works with the assistance of its advisers and service providers. I agree that personal information about me and provided by me will be handled as described on the Privacy Page.

Yes  No

