

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

SUB. 0002.0019.0032

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

**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?**

"I became an active alcoholic in my mid-30's - full time professional, 2nd marriage, domestic violence. It took 15 years of alcoholically drinking and trying to stop drinking to finally get and stay sober. This could be anyone's story. In year 15 I was fortunate enough via private health insurance to be admitted as an inpatient to a residential treatment and recovery program. I would not be alive and gratefully sober today without it. We need publicly funded access to these longer term services. Even as a person who for many years knew and admitted an alcohol problem, is reasonably intelligent and worked in the human services field throughout, there are many things about alcohol, addiction and life that I didn't learn until I reached hospital. These were not secret things only of interest to an alcoholic in crisis but things we should all know. Tell the true and full story about alcohol via the media beyond the ongoing drink driving and public violence campaigns - even if it's unpopular - talk about the many hidden alcoholics who still go to work and get the kids to school but use alcohol to get through their day, their road to addiction and the unexpected deaths of many. Many people still think an alcoholic drinks from a brown paper bag who will eventually die of liver cirrhosis. Tell the full truth and keep telling it. "

**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