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

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

There are vast avenues and options available here. There is very inadequate information available with regards to mental illness in the Victorian community. In the Victorian community there is much discrimination relating to mental illness particularly with the ATTITUDES of employers who point blank REFUSE to employ anyone who has even had the SLIGHEST contact with the mental health system. This could involve even one or two visits to a Psychiatrist or even a short stay in a Psych ward. Clearly attitudes needs to radically change and mental illness needs to be demystified. While there are some hard core cohort of patients who pose a danger to themselves and others and need to be securely confined. Such is not the case for the MAJORITY of people who may experience a mental ilness episode in their lives. It al begins at HIGH SCHOOL. Secondary school students need one or two modules to study about issues relating to mental health. And a range of PUBLIC SPEAKERS MUST BE SENT to high schools all over Victoria to talk about mental health issues.

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?

Is anything working well? Well not really. far too many YOUNG PEOPLE ARE BEING CONFINED IN PSYCHIATRIC INSTITUTIONS and for VERY LONG PERIODS AT THAT. Psychiatric confinement should only be for SHORT PERIODS ONLY IN MOST CASES. NO MORE THAN SIX MONTHS MAXIMUM unless there is a risk to the publics safety. My guess is that this would only be required in a very small number of cases. Psychiatric confinment does no good to any one. It is a stop gap measure and should only be used as such. ECT electric Shock therapy is far too readily used in Victorrias mental health system. As a matter of urgency the Number of ECT adminstrations MUST BE TOTALL REDUCED. The other important point ios that the VICTORIAN MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM lacks any FORM of PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY for its actions. Psychiatric staff have far too much power that is discretionary and at their whim. The Victorian mental health system works behind CLOSED DOORS. The public does not know what is happening. Another point is that RELATIVES OF PATIENTS are hardly consulted about the progress or otherwise of their loved ones. Most times when relatives of Patients come to the PSYCH WARDS they are always told MEDICAL STAFF are at a meeting. Medical staff must more readily engage and be willing to engage with the relatives or parents of patients.

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

"prevention of suicide we talk about it a lot. I wonder if constantly talking about it might encourage some people to take their own life. May be we should talk less about suicide and not more . This might help stopping the high rates of suicide we have in Australia. The suicide rate in Australia is far too high . It is almost an epidemic. It is said it is the best country in the world . If it is then why are so many people suiciding in Australia. Clearly there is something GRAVELY WRONG WITH

AUSTYRALIAN SOCIETY that is being hidden under the carpet. We don't walk to talk about inequalities in Australian society. We in AUSTRALIA like to hide things under the CARPET. The main responsibility for preventing suicide in Australia lies with the FEDERAL GOVERNMENT as it requires AN ALL GOVERNMENT APPROACH to the whole issue. The states are more likely to utilize PUNITIVE MEASURES or effecting strong constraints sanctions. Most State legislation is of that nature rather than engaging positively with those who need help. The States always wield THE BIG STICK in dealing with social issues. Rather than a more conciliatory approach of LOVE AND UNDERSTANDING. Yes SOFT SOFT WORKS. In the federal sphere things are a little better. We have CENTELINK and some meagre form of social security avilable to us, Not so in the State Sphere. In the State sphere rhere is almost nothing available."

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.

JOBS JOBS JOBS and more JOBS as CLIVE Palmer said recently. Social isolation and nobody caring about you being totally INDIFFEERENT towards others is a key Problem. In modern societies like Australia there is a HIGH INDIFFERENCE towards the welfare of others. This indifference is of a very high magnitude in Australia. How do you reduce such INDIFFEERENCE towards other fellow Citizens in the state of Victoria? Education here is the key .The RESPECT PROGRAM is a good one at the moment . RESPECT and love each other should be the message.TELEVISION ADS CONCERTS by prominent artists can help in this regard.

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

"Migration to anew country and there are plenty arriving in Australia everyday. Of course can lead to poor mental health as they make their way in a new country. But there tends to be a lot of social isolation as migrants tend to congregate ONLY into their own little groups. I want AN OPEN AUSTRALIA FOR ALL not groups of seggregated individuals living ONLY within their own groups. You ask "" SOME COMMUNITIES"" In my way of thinkimg THERE IS ONLY ONE COMMUNITY IN AUSTRALIA and that's THE AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY."

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

lots lots lots heaps and URGENT ATTENTION MUST BE GIVEN TO THESE ISSUES. Family members and carers CAN and SHOULD Play a VERY IMPORTANT PART in a patients rehabilitation. FAMILIES AND CARERS need KNOWLEDGE about Mental Ilness. Curently when carers are confronted with Mental healh issues they have ABSOLUTELY NO IDEA what mental health issues entails. They need EDUCATION. Free courses should be OFFERED TO ALL carers and family members of the Mentally ill so that they CAN IDENTIFY SOME OF THE IMPORTANT ISSUES that pertain to those that are MENTALLY ILL. They need to know and be AU FAIT with SOME OF THE MAJOR ISSUES OF MENTALL ILNESS. I am suggsesting a COMBINATION Of TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE with Love tenderness and caring. The soft parts coupled with technical knowledge.

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

More peer support workers need to be employed. To enter the mental health force now requires

several degrees and long periods of study. I wonder whether such is all that necessary. I think people with lesser Qualifications can and should be employed. I am suggesting a classification in the nature of a NURSING AIDE. Nursing Aides do not exist much in victoria although a DIPLOMA OF NURSING is offered which requires less study than a Bachelors degree. I suggest however that people of the street with LIFE ECPERIENCE COMMITMENT and COMPASSION should be given more opportunities to enter the MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSION AT certificate level. Also greater UTILIZATION OF INSERVICE Or on the JOB training would be a good idea.

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?

THERE ARE NO OPPORTUNITIES IN THE VICTORIAN COMMUNITY FOR PEOPLE WITH MENTAL ILLNESS to GAIN EMPLOYMENT in any area. AT ALL. ALL OR ALMOST ALL EMPLOYERS WILL NOT EMPLOY ANY ONE who has experienced an EPISODE OF MENTAL ILLNES. The worst offenders are STATE AND FEDERAL PUBLIC SERVICES. That is IT IS GOVERNMENT itself who is the MOST DISCRIMINATORY in this regard. Also TRADE UNIONS or UNIONS are extremely discriminatory aginst those with mental illness. For example even though I was a member of the ATMOEA the AUSTRALIAN TRAMWAYS AND OMNIBUS EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION FOR OVER 9 years and 4 MONTHS. That union now known as the TRAMWAYS UNION and its then SECRETARY Fefused to RENDER ME ANY ASSISTANCE RELATING TO AN INCIDENT ON THE TRAMS MY WORK PLACE on the basis that THE UNION CONSIDERED ME TO BE MENTALLY ILL. You would have thought the UNION would help me in such an instance.

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? "may be a LESS BUREAUCRATIC SYSTEM where one size fits all to a more indivudialized system of care tailored more to the specific circumstances of the individual. The System must also engae MUCH MORE with the COMMUNITY of VICTORIA. Become much more transparent and open in approach. Curently the system operates behind closed DOORS. It is totally SEALED from the outside world. Mental health professionals also need to be MUCH MORE INVOLVED AS EDUCATIONALISTS. That is cast themselves as EDUCATORS and engaging much more often in public engagments and speaking Roles. Strenuous efforts must be made to engage relatives and loved ones in the CARE PLANS of PATIENTS. Outsiders of the system need to be more engaged in having an input into the system. A name change also nees to be instituted from mental health system. To One I suggest TITLED department of "" SOCIAL CARE"" in this way a COLLECTIVE APPROACH to mental health care can be instituted."

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

Change the name to DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL CARE. Not a system but a caring service. Divest it from the overarching victorian department of human services to a more SPECIALIZED BOUTIQUE department that focuses and has all its eyes in delivering SOCIAL CARE TO ALL THAT NEED IT.

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

"yes the current mental health system in VICTORIA is underpinned BY having at its base 'a VERY

HIGHLY PUNITIVE MODEL OF CARE"". It is in its very DNA .To be punitive. A LESS PUNITIVE MODEL OF CARE SHOULD IDEALLY BE THE AIM in any future model of MENTAL HEALTH CARE that is implemented IN VICTORIA."

Submission. and my email address is 1 . name is 2. The events I am about to describe relate to a Dr residing in the town of Victoria. 3. And they also relate to events that happened in the office at the then park psychiatric Hospital in Street 4. These events happened in the early 1980's. 5. Dr was then the of the Hospital in Melbourne at Street .In the State of Victoria. 6Therefore he was in the Direct employ of the State of Victoria. As that position came under the umbrella of the Victorian Public service. **THE Narrative.** 7. 8 How the Story Unfolded and How I came to meet with Dr. 9.In the early 1980's I had just left the Royal Australian Air Force and found myself unemployed. The Only Job I could find at the Time was as a tram Conductor a position I held from 10 january 1979 to April 11, 1989.

10. In the early 1980's I applied for a NURSING COURSE at what was then known as

the Institute Of which located in

To The royal commission on mental health State of Victoria. 17th june 2019.

11. That institution is now known as University.
12. My application for a place in the Nursing course at PIT the institute was refused.
13. I was not happy about this so I then wrote to the Mr
14. I had full confidence in Mr as a public official of the State of Victoria as his
whole working life had been spent in the employ of the State of Victoria. And I believe
before being appointed as He was the permanent head of the
then department for the state of Victoria.
15. I believe in between the time I contacted I made a second application to
PIT for a place in their nursing course.
16. In any case I stated to the PIT Preston of course authorities
that I had been employed for approximately 2 years or a little bit less at The
Hospital Street Victoria in the capacity of a WARD
ASSISTANT.
17. It was during this time that Dr was appointed as
Superintendent hospital. He succeeded in the position from the
legendary Dr
18. Unbeknown to me The Course Authorities at the Technology
upon being informed that I was employed as a ward assistant at the Royal park
Psychiatric hospital rang the hospital seeking a personal reference about me.
19. They were connected to a person by the name of Who classed herself
as the DIRECTOR OF NURSING SERVICES of the Hospital.
20. was employed under the Auspices of the Victorian Public Service.

21. It was my clear understanding that under VICTORIAN PUBLIC SERVICE rules
officials of the VICTOIAN PUBLIC SERVICE Victorian public service were forbidden
to give personal references about former or current employees of the Victorian Public
Service. Except as to the dates of service of their employees and confirming that they
actually were in the employ of the Victorian Public service.
22. In this case that entity being the Hospital.
23. Neverthless in her capacity as DIRECTOR OF NURSING SERVICES
HOSPITAL despite the Rules of the Victorian Public
Service proceeded to give an extended and comprehensive detailed personal reference
about me.
24. All of it was extremely adverse false and extremely malicious personal reference
about me and my time as a ward assistant at the Hospital in my
employ as a ward assistant.
25. For example she stated that I had a habit of writing on the walls of the
Hospital.
26. Totally untrue. Never never did I write on the walls of the
Hospital.
27 she stated that she believed I had personality problems and that I was not good or
interacted well with other staff at the hospital.
28 Actually as I learnt later this references she gave about me amounted to several
pages long.

29. How I came to know about this was through the Gross incompetence of the
. He informed about this reference given by
in a written letter he sent me.
30. While I have high regard for and believed him to be a person of
extremely high integrity . Neverthless he was not very competent in his role as
should not be reporting anecdotes to
complainants which have no bearing on the investigation of the complaint.
31. Besides my COMPLAINT TO the the was
NEVER about the hospital.It was
about the Technology located at plenty
road
32. Upon hearing of these references I was Quite upset and contacted to
arrange a Personal meeting so as to ask her why she had said such nasty untruths about
me . Even though Victorian Public service rules forbade her to give personal references
about former employees or current employees.
33. She agreed to meet me in her offices at the Hospital.
34. At that meeting in her offices at the hospital which lasted for
more than an HOUR. SHE DIVERTED THE SUBJECT of
which I had come to see her about . Which was in
reference what she had said about me to The institute

35. To instead talking to me ABOUT DR.
The
hospital.
36. During the over one hour that I was sitting in her office she kept talking to me about
him. Dr
37. she told me things like that the DR was VERY interested
in me . he was very keen to meet me as he wanted to help me.
38.When I pressed her as to why I HAD TO MEET WITH DR
39. She kept repeating that he was very concerned about me and had taken a very deep
interest in me in his capacity as a doctor.
40. I was reticent to see DR
While I was working as a ward assistant at the hospital I was under the clear
impression that I was working under the auspices of the of Nursing who
happened to be
42. While Dr had overall control in the running of the hospital. He was not
my direct supervisor.
43. I knew of DR obviously as I had seen him at the hospital but had had
little to do with him.

44. I personally found him to be a very intimidating and powerful figure whom I
probably would a little reticent to approach. Certainly to me he did not project an
image of a kind an compassionate Doctor. More an image of power and authority.
45. He was highly academically Qualified and held a Master Of Medicine in addition to
his basic medical degree. And other academic qualifications. His previous employ was
as an at the University of the before becoming
at the Hospital.
46. To put it in the vernacular he was not a person you would mess around with.
47. So why in the world was telling me HE WANTED TO SEE ME to help
me and was Interested in me . I really COULD NOT UDERSTAND.
48. Besides my purpose to meet with was to discuss the personal references
she gave about me. NOT TO DISCUSS DR
picture. I really was at Pain to understand.
49. In the event I DID AGREE TO MEET with Dr
meet him was to ask him for a job . As I was not happy in my job as a tram conductor.
50. I arranged to meet DR
Hospital . One evening at 6 PM at the Hospital.
51. When I arrived there I was DIRECTED TO THE
OFFICE at the Hospital.
52. When I entered the Psychiatrist superintendents office I noticed the presence of 2
other people there .Including Dr sitting in the middle. And the other 2
beside him.

53. I knew the other 2 as assistant as assistant at the hospital and
OF NURSING at the
HOSPITAL.
54. I immediately realised that I had been set up never mentioned that DR
wanted to see me in the presence of 2 other people.
55. She clearly stated to me that he wanted to see me on a one to one basis. $NOT\ IN$
THE PRESENCE OF 2 OTHER PEOPLE.
56. Immediately I noticed DR seemed to me to be IN \overline{AN}
EXTREMELY ANGRYAND HIGHLY AGITATED as
some one seeking to start a fight.
57. During the more than one hour I was sitting in his office he started threatening me
denigrating me . Told me he would eventually get me in the end. That I was a hopeless
individual and will see as to how he was going to harm me. Even as I left the room and
was facing my back to him he stated 'there is no studentships here'.
58. I was quite upset about this and returned home quite Irritated. My father noticed
this and asked me as to why I had come from meeting the Doctor in such an irritated
state. He asked as to what had happened at that meeting between him the DR and me.
59 , In fact YES I was quite angry and upset about this meeting with DR
60. I was told by that the purpose for wanting to meet me was because he
wanted to help me . NOT TO ABUSE ME. Obviously was lying.

61. Things did not stop there however. Subsequent to the above meeting a few weeks later.
62.I RECEIVED A LETTER TO MY HOME ADRESS
addressed to me Mr.
63.The Letter was on official letter head of the
HOSPITAL and signed BY DR
In his capacity as
OF THE
HOSPITAL
in the State of Victoria , AUSTRALIA.
64. I believe a copy of that Letter would be held in the Victorian Public Records office
in NORTH MELBOURNE.
65. In that letter DR
66. That I NEEDED URGENT PSYCHIATRIC TREATMENT. Well if I did I was
there right in front of him in his offices at the hospital. Well yes
he could have helped me if he believed that I was I need of Psychiatric treatment.
67. Instead at that meeting he chose to denigrate abuse and threaten me.

68.In that letter he also told that I HAD BEEN THREATENING HIS
STAFF.AN OUTRAGEOUS CLAIM TO MAKE. Where
the HELL WAS THE EVIDENCE. I ONLY
APPROACHED TO DISCUSS THE ISSUE
OF THE REFERENCES.

69. I DID NOT APPROACH ANY OF HIS STAFF Or attempt to approach his staff. And what EVIDENCE IS THERE THAT I THREATENED HIS STAFF.

70 In between the time of meeting him and receipt of his letter .The abuse I received in his rooms had started to affect my mental and physical health.

71. BUT WAIT THERE IS WORSE .For in the same letter he told me that IT WAS HIS CLEAR INTENTION TO PUT ME IN TROUBLE WITH THE POLICE . IN fact he made several mention of the word POLICE in that letter. And told me that he would endeavour to do everything in HIS POWER TO HAVE ME IN TROUBLE WITH THE POLICE.

72. where the hell is the compassion in this doctor. A DOCTOR WHO CLEARLY TELLS YOU THAT HE WANTS YOU OR IT IS HIS DESIRE THAT I'd BE IN TROUBLE WITH THE POLICE.

73. But wait there is more. The maliciousness of this DOCTOR never stops. Subsequent to that letter and shortly thereafter he sent Police to my adresss and had me locked up at HOSPITAL in

74. He sure kept his promise of wanting me to be in trouble with the police.

75. I was locked up at ON A FRIDAY. Which meant that I was PSYCHIATRICALLY CONFINED FOR AT LEAST THE WHOLE WEEK END.

76. Fortunately I was released on the FOLLOWING MONDAY. Had I been confined

for a longer period I ALSO RISKED LOSING MY JOB AS
A TRAM CONDUCTOR WHICH IS WHERE I
WAS WORKING AS A TRAM CONDUCTOR:

77.DR design d's maliciousness would have caused me to lose my job

loss of income loss of dignity of having a JOB. And social isolation due to LOSS OF JOB . And who knows mental health detoriaration.

78.BUT WAIT THERE IS MORE. THIS
VINDICTIVE'S DOCTORS ACTIONS AGAINST
ME KEEPS ON KEEPING ON.

79. For while I was released on the MONDAY MORNING at 9 AM on the MONDAY MORNING. That is I WAS OFFICIALLY AND LEGALLY

DISCHARGED FROM HOSPITAL

UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE VICTORIAN

MENTAL HEALTH ACT.

80 I started making my way home by TAXI from HOSPITAL accompanied by my parents. At great expense as the TAXI COSTS to my home were quite expensive.

81. When I arrived home I went to sleep.

82. HOWEVER AT AROUND 6 PM IN THE EVENING I
NOTICED 2 POLICE CARS PARKED OUTSIDE MY
HOME ADRESS.

83. I WAS CLEARLY TOLD THAT I HAD BEEN
OFFICIALLY DISCHARGED FROM MONT PARK
HOSPITAL AT 9am ON MONDAY MORNING.

84.THE POLICEMEN REQUESTED THAT I
ACCOMPANY THEM BACK TO

where the police attempted to verify with the STAFF as to whether I had been officially and legally discharged. Of which I had been.

86. What had happened was that in between the TIME I HAD BEEN RELEASED AT

9 AM FROM PARK HOSPITAL DR

had rung HOSPITAL and ENQUIRED

ABOUT ME. UPON BEING TOLD THAT I HAD BEEN RELEASED HE HAD RUNG THE POLICE AND REQUESTED THEM TO REARREST ME AGAIN AND TAKE ME BACK TO THE HOSPITAL ***

87.THIS IS TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE. HE IS INTERFERING IN THE DUE PROCESSES OF THE LAW. I was legally discharged from ***
HOSPITAL ON THE MONDAY MORNING.

88. At the time He was a statutory office holder of the STATE VICTORIA expressly appointed to carry out the PROVISIONS OF THE THEN VICTORIAN MENTAL HEALTH ACT.

89. IT seems there was no mental health Act at the time in Victoria. But rather LAW. One of vindictiveness bullying and maliciousness against individuals he had some issues with.

90. It seems to me he was using the services of Police for his own personal convenience so as to carry out his own personal vendettas.

91. I ASK YOU HOW DOES BEING THREATENED
BULLIED INTIMIDATED BY A HEALTH

PROFESSIONAL MAKE YOU ENJOY BETTER
MENTAL HEALTH.

THE CAUSE OF WOMEN and act in the ROLE OF
CHIEF PROTECTOR OF WOMEN, MAY BE HE
SHOULD HAVE DONE SOMETHING about the

93. SEXUAL MOLESTATION I SAW being inflicted on a
NURSE I KNEW AS in a single room in

PINEL WARD. Where the nurse I have omitted his surname and
another nurse started molesting NURSE in the single room and
when she tried to leave they prevented her from leaving the room. Deprivation of liberty
and sexual assault I think here.

94.Obviously THE OF NURSING WAS THE
PRINCIPAL INSTIGATOR OF EVERTHING THAT HAPPENED TO ME AND DR
was TOTALLY UNDER HER INFLUENCE and acting on A
total impulse.

95. Surely someone with all his Academic

QUALIFICATIONS would make a cursory CHECK

before jumping to rash conclusions on the false confabulating reports of a SINGLE WOMAN. He should firstly have checked for some evidence.

96.At University you are told by your lecturers always be 'critical thinkers'
97. I don't think that DR was a would have even heard of that
expression.
98. Its ironical. Because prior to being appointed to the post of
he was an associate professor himself. He was in other words AN
ACADEMIC.
99. My personal experience of ACADEMICS is that they do not RUSH TO SUCH
QUICK CONCLUSIONS.
100. Either DR is a STUPID MAN more Than ME or A BAD
MAN. I would say Both. He lacks compassion and has little love in his heart for other
human beings which are less unfortunate than himself.
101. Life has offered him GOOD FORTUNE LUCK and strong ability to STUDY.
102. AND YET HE HAS GIVEN BACK LITTLE IN RETURN TO A SOCIETY THAT
HAS BEEN SO KIND AND LOVING TO HIM.
103. My Final question is WOULD YOU TRUST DR to operate on You.
104. Because I certainly wouldn't.
Thanking you .yours sincerely.

SOME FURTHER

ADDITIONAL POINTS.

While I do not expect human beings to be perfect. At the same time however I do not

expect human beings let alone health professionals to act so

INTENTIONALLY MALICIOUSLY
AGIANST ONE PERSON ON THE
HEARSAY OF ONE INDIVIDUAL WHO
TOLD DR ________ a whole pack of
lies so as to get him angry aggressive and
act so Irrationally without any evidence for
doing so. Of course that person is MRS
_______ of Nursing at
the _______ hospital

| Victoria Australia. In the final analysis my personal experience with the Victorian Mental health system shows it to be vindictive unjust lacking key public accountabilities of its key players. There is not much to recommend in the Victorian mental health system which would really benefit anyone experiencing stressful period in their lives and seeking assistance form Victoria's mental health system. Unless they want to get locked up even though most patients have committed no crime against others. They just need that extra

hand to help then in a period of crisis in their lives.