

Ashley Corrigan

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?

- Re: [REDACTED]
- Pidgeon-holed as per mental illness "label".
- Although unable to afford being assessed and treated in the private system - was forced to do so for accurate diagnosis and treatment.
- [REDACTED]: dismissive ~~attitude~~ attitude, judgemental, one cap fits all, not proactive,
- The public system needs to be supportive, transparent and fluid. People accessing the service clearly need assistance.

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?

- I refuse to access the public health system due to countless terrible experiences.
- I needed the support of consistent and stable services.
- Support includes: Service providers in the public health system need to be seamless, welcoming, non judgemental, informative and proactive in diagnosis, treatment and recovery.
- A person who has broken down and literally been inactive for three years has suicidal tendencies, needs strong support. It takes a lot of effort to climb from a black hole.

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

- My recovery owes much thanks to my social worker.
- I had to fight hard to find someone to provide a high level of support, care and empathy to assist in recovery.
- No one in the mental health care system (public) seemed to take my situation and circumstances seriously. It would have been too easy to give up. I can understand why people get stuck in ~~there~~ their situation, when "professionals" aren't providing adequate services.

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.

- [REDACTED] left hand doesn't communicate with its right hand.
- To experience "good mental health" I had to fight through the system, until I found appropriate services, diagnosis and care.
- The public system was making my situation worse.
- It took everything I had not to give up... Which is appalling.
- I had to seek private care for adequate diagnosis and treatment.

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

- Family violence, bullying, harassment.
- "Safe schools anti-bullying" is garbage. The schools are powerless to enforce their "anti-bullying" policies. The victim continues to be over looked and victimized.
- When authorities don't enforce the "anti bullying" policies, the situation snow balls.
- Family violence is still prevalent. Both verbal and physical.

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

- Family members need avenues to explore to help understand and learn about what their loved one is experiencing.
- As some mental health issues can lead to destruction, family members need support and care in dealing with these circumstances.

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

N/A

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?

- There may be relevant services, but their advertising and promotion might be lacking. I am unaware of such services.

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?

- ~~Consistent~~ Consistent care and services.
- Solid support for consumers when they are lacking the drive to continue on their path.
- Service providers being proactive in including referred services and additional bodies.
- Service providers being accountable for their actions and not making consumers with mental health issues feel "crazy". The moment you become a consumer is the moment you become judged and pigeon-holed.

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

- Reduce the number of hurdles and road blocks for consumers to promptly access ~~services~~ transparent supportive care, in order to begin treatment and recovery.
- Service providers being audited to identify policies that are providing positive outcomes and those providing negative outcomes.
- Hearing what consumers have to say and address common needs.

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

- Consumers with mental health ~~issues~~ concerns need to be taken serious. Our ~~concerns~~ concerns need to be addressed, even if it requires a career or service provider's assistance.
- The right for consumers to be proactive in their treatment.
- Transparency and promotion of valuable service providers to assist with treatment and recovery. Including social groups or activities to assist with consumers integrating in the community.
- More research into mental health ~~prevention~~ prevention and treatment.
- Legislation against bullying that needs to be enforced.
- Take consumer conditions seriously.

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acknowledgement

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☒ Yes ☐ No