

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

Organisation Name

N/A

Name

Mrs Debbie Mole

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

We need more coverage in all areas of the public domain where people are watching and looking. Education in schools to start earlier and a more inclusive approach to the person suffering and the family that is caring.

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 was part of a pilot project to identify and treat anxiety and depression in schools. More of this is needed. As a Mental Health Nurse our role needs to be expanded so we are easily accessible in schools, GP Clinics and private practice. The Mental Health Nurse Incentive program was excellent, it allowed access, the new Step Care Model is not working"

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

"More education in schools, looking for warning signs and where to get help. More training that is free to organisations and individuals. More platforms for people to ask for help. Registered Clinicians whom would be able to safely work with high risk clients and whom could see them quickly/ Immediate support from the new teams that are being set up in Emergency Departments to support clients that have made an attempt, these clients need an urgent response and follow up. "

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.

"Time, money, stress, pressure of life, access to support that is either free or affordable. Navigating through a public Mental Health Service is hard for clinicians whom experience so many barriers and rules. These prevent people getting help. We need to go back to services years, Primary Health Care where professionals are based and are more readily available to support people. Again I really feel Mental Health Nurses whom are suitably qualified are being overlooked and could be a huge gap filler if we were allowed to have the same bulk billing rights as Social Workers and Psychologists. "

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

"Access, education, stigma, cost and availability, travel More access to e health, utilising telephone and internet based support will help"

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

"They need to be heard, kept in the loop, included and taken seriously as a major part of the persons recovery. "

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

"Better pay, good conditions, excellent supervision and work loads capped to prevent burnout - the need to have defined roles is also important so they can do the work they are employed to do"

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?

"Some agencies have great ideas where the community leads the change, we need more of this, esp in lower sociology economic areas. Funding is needed for this and a support network to support the community. The idea of a breakfast club, after school club, school holiday club. Support for Dads to access help, esp around DV issues, to identify there are issues and be ok with asking for help. "

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?

"Improved Triage for clients, with a positive, welcoming and inclusive attitude. Lee fighting with services to get someone help. Improves relationships with Primary Health Networks and the agencies working with them Improved access to Public Services for non government agencies, there are so many Public Health areas I as a Clinician cannot access as the client needs to be in the public sector. "

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

"Utilise Mental Health Nurses more, we lost out role with the axing of MHNIP and the replaces Model of Stepped Care. Access is now poorer, controlled but PHN whom are not Clinical. This was the worst, most detrimental decision has made, privatising Mental Health. This should have stayed with Heath. "

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

"We need a better service for clients with a Dual Diagnosis. They fall between Services, Mental Health, now NDIS or DHHS or Drug and Alcohol. All of these issues influence each other and its so wrong and dangerous for one service to say no as they present more of the issues in another diagnosis. We need more cross team work, where teams do their part for that issue and allow other teams to do their part. We are not seeing people holistically. For example we expect someone whom is an alcoholic to stop drinking before they can get help, they cannot stop as the issues in their life, mind cause the drinking. We need more collaborative working."