

**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?

Early intervention and education about mental health in schools. We need to be having the conversations early to prevent crises later on.

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?

The current system prioritises the voices and opinions of the mental health consumers' families and carers, and assumes they have the consumers' best interests at heart. This is often not the case, especially when there is ~~family~~ domestic violence involved.

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

We need more early intervention treatments and better awareness<sup>of</sup> and conversation around mental illness. Easier access to counselling services and more affordable options. Longer consultations with GPs covered by Medicare.

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.

Services aren't easily accessible or available - to access them you need to push to receive them and have to be of sound mind and good mental health to manage the stress and frustration of dealing with the process. It's too easy to give up.

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

Economical and financial disadvantage, fewer job prospects, fewer mental health services and community outreach.

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

~~The~~ family members and carers should be assigned support people and encouraged to go to counselling.

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

Better education and awareness, more allowances of time to engage and listen to consumers.

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?

Everyone is their own individual and they can't be forced into things they don't want to do, including job service providers.

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?

CAT Teams ~~an~~ and Triage don't listen and don't ask questions. Consumers need to incessantly pursue treatment to receive it. No privacy in psychiatric units and very little peer worker engagement. Only one phone for use by patients on wards.  
\* Please refer to blank page.

\* Question 9. Continued:

- Psych wards are
- Hostile, sterile environments with hospital-style beds
  - One TV between 35 patients
  - Lack of stimulation and things to do.
  - Left to own devices
  - Often wait hours, days to speak to staff.
  - Exposed to others' verbal and physical outbursts in lock-down areas.
  - Staff turnover: no consistent staffing, leading to a lack of communication and care.
  - Force fed medication without explanation
  - Not enough blankets in wards.
  - Personal belongings were stolen from my room

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

Medicare reforms, easier access to support services and treatments, more awareness and education for peer support workers and mental health professionals.

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