

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

## Organisation Name

N/A

## Name

Mrs Christine Alderton

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

N/A

## 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?

"When a carer or family member makes contact with Mental Health Services to get treatment for the mentally unwell person they need to be listened to and a realistic pathway sought. The clinicians (usually a psych nurse or social worker) shouldn't be the ones to deny that person access to a Medical Assessment by a Psychiatrist when the family is clearly saying that they are unwell and are a danger to themselves, their family and possibly the community. Perhaps the training of staff needs to be upgraded as well as the suitability to their profession."

## 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.

It is hard to know the roles of the different Mental Health services here in [REDACTED].... CAT team... [REDACTED] Centre....Triage....Adult Acute Unit....Mental health worker working with the Police on afternoon shifts only..... Police..000....Private Psychiatrists Being discharged out of care when the person is clearly unwell.....given ridiculous pathways such as a train ticket to Melbourne to get them out of the area... or a night in a Motel which doesn't even have a safe environment Being told the mentally unwell person (with at least five diagnosis from Psychiatrists and Neurologists) is not unwell it is all behavioural Keeping the family at arms length when the whereabouts of the mentally unwell person is not known

## 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?

To be listened to and to be believed. To realise we are supposed to be on the same page seeking support for our [REDACTED]...we are not the enemy.

## 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?**

NDIS has helped.

**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?**

Easy pathway for help in a crisis. Proper assessments given by qualified people. Longer time frame for observation of unwell person. Unwell people given more privacy in public health system.

**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?**

I am very happy to share with you the harrowing pathway we have had with our mentally unwell [REDACTED] I have copies of complaints I made twice by letter once in 2009 to [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and a second time to the Ombudsman Mental Health in 2017..... Both times I received no satisfaction. The first time what [REDACTED] said was untrue and the second time the Office of the Ombudsman told me they had to receive permission from my mentally unwell [REDACTED] to proceed with the investigation... [REDACTED] was unwell and said no.