

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

SUB. 0002.0028.0589

Name

Anonymous

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

"Due to my personal experience, I propose an investigation into the handling of historic sexual abuse cases by the police, in particular the amount of time it takes for the process of investigating and laying charges. In my personal case, it took nearly two years from the time when I made my initial report to the time the perpetrator, who was known, to even be questioned by the police. In a completely separate case that a family member is currently going through, involving a much more serious offence, the perpetrator (again, known) still has not been questioned in almost a year. The attitude of the police is that it's already been ""X"" amount of years, so it can wait until they have time. This shows an absolute disregard for the effects of ""opening the box"" of repressed trauma, trying to do the right thing and hold people accountable, only to be left in limbo for years, with no closure, no accountability and very little validation. In my case, this has led to severe depression and suicide attempts."

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?

"Systems to link patients with Mental Health services seem to work quite well, although waiting times can be tricky to navigate during crisis situations. "

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

"After a crisis situation last year, my wife made contact with a triage service via Monash. They were incredible with their follow up support. What would have been better is if I'd never ended up in that situation in the first place. Protecting vulnerable people from assault is crucial, but so is the way we handle people who are prepared to front up to this trauma and try and deal with it. They need better support, particularly within accessing legal services."

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.

"People find it difficult to experience good mental health for a myriad of reasons. There's rarely one contributing factor. From my situation, it's mostly attributed to unresolved repressed trauma that passed down to me by my mother. This was then exacerbated by my own traumatic experience as a child, particularly with the way it was drawn out and handled by the police."

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?

N/A

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?

N/A

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?

N/A

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 haven't answered all of the questions as I really only wanted to speak about this one specific aspect of my experience. I'd be more than happy to discuss my situation further if there is any chance it will lead to positive change.