

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

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## Name

Anonymous

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

"In my experience, the idea that mental illness - specifically depression - is genetically passed on from parents to their offspring, is a dangerous concept that is unfounded in scientific evidence. The beneficiary of this practice are the medical professionals, ie doctors and psychiatrists, who are rewarded for determining diagnoses, whether there is evidence to support a diagnosis or not. Another beneficiary of this practice, is the pharmaceutical companies, who benefit from doctors making diagnoses that recommend medical treatment. A third beneficiary are those who work in the mental health industry more widely, such as psychiatric nurses, social workers and law enforcement. As the more people who receive diagnosis, get put on medication that are often very addictive, and in turn receive additional diagnosis and medications, then the greater demand there is in the employment market for people with their qualifications and experience."

### **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 problem, in my experience, is that it's too easy for individuals to receive a diagnosis for a mental illness, especially if someone in their family has received a diagnosis in the past. If you're in the business of generating diagnoses, then I expect a lot of good things are occurring. If you're not in the mental health industry, and have sought medical advice because that's what family have recommended, then it's likely you will get further drawn into the mental health system. From the perspective of beneficiaries of the system, I expect this is a good thing. Unfortunately I am not one of those people."

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

"Very little is working to prevent suicide, according to the statistics. If those in the mental health industry genuinely seek to prevent suicide, then they should stop prescribing medications that make people's lives more difficult and stop coercing individuals into the mental health system. "

### **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.**

"Stresses about finances and family demands usually lead to mental health problems. One of the problems is it's too easy for families to bully individuals using the MH system and law enforcement. I still don't understand where in the Mental Health Act 2014, that allows for this. "

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

"Drivers: - Doctors and psychiatrists generating unnecessary diagnoses. - Doctors and psychiatrists prescribing addictive and dangerous medications, which lead to further diagnoses."

What can be done: - Educate people about ways they can improve their mental health without medication and convincing them there is something genetically wrong with their mind. "

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

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

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**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?**

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**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?**

"Make it easier to hold mental health professionals and law enforcement accountable for their actions, as the current avenues are inadequate. "

**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?**

"The beneficiaries are those within the industry - ie doctors, pharma companies and MH employees. The individuals who receive treatment are the losers. More needs to be done to educate people about why they experience mental health issues, and how they can manage them without being sucked down the path of medical treatment. "