

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

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Name

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

Community groups and churches should be more involved. Give people a sense of purpose and life meaning. Encourage the community to get involved with the community that needs support.

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?

What works well is the community-based groups where people connect. Encourage those that are suffering to reach out to their local community-based groups.

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

Education is the key and good communication needs to be established for better outcomes.

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.

"Continuity of care is a major problem currently, people find groups that help but then are shut down or de-commissioned and we then have to start the process again. Building relationships with key workers is so important to establish a supported level of care."

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

Loneliness is a major contributor to mental illness in society. We need to connect people to community and services.

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

NDIS supports need to be rolled out much much quicker and a greater quality of service is needed.

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

Greater mentorship is needed to pass on knowledge from older workers currently in the workforce. More support is needed for the upcoming generation of workers. Clear communication within the workforce as some of the younger workers are not inducted properly into the workplace. More effective use of workers' time. Time management needs improvement.

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?

We need to create work opportunities for those that are capable and wish to work and get out of the facility and find some level of independence.

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?

More education is needed and staff need to be made aware of new approaches to more effective treatment and support. A greater choice of social activities for the suffering mental ill-health in aged care facilities.

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

We need to spend more money around education for young people helping them to develop life skills and social connection. Encourage our youth to get involved and compliment them when they are doing good things.

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

Look into management in aged care and psycho-geriatric facilities.

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?

Different forms of education to community, staff and consumers. People to be lightly informed of others' challenges, this assists in partially accepting the behaviour of fellow consumers i.e. "A" Consumers not to be constantly branded. Encouraging communication amongst residents. Staff to understand that consumers do have moments of clarity. Staff had done nothing to stop me from being racially abused. Situations are swept under carpet.

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?

Communication with community, staff, interest partners to understand persons state of mind and challenges. Education is of utmost importance i.e. young people. Efficient support structures and organisations not moving consumers from pillar to post. When I became unwell I was in desperate need of support and understanding. I felt offended by being put on a JTO-NB/C&D I even went as far as writing out to PREMIER-E

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

My religious beliefs, background and friendly support has played a pivotal role in structuring my thought. I always looked on happening as challenges. I have accepted the fact that people do say things that are hurtful. I have been called - a thief, racist, pedophile, ice addict, murderer etc. I am concerned that the constant abuse, bullying might later become too much. My cure is found in prayer and understanding.

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.

I would like to be seen by as few services as possible for a lengthy period of time. Service providers that really positively assisted me were IMHA, MY LAWYER, MHLCC. My doctor was my support pillar. He asked me to address him on his first name and said he considered me as a friend. He tends to re-ignite my purpose.

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

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

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

Older staff to impart skills to younger staff members. Communication and education of utmost importance. People should be given the right to work in a safe environment. Management need to get their act in gear. Support staff and see to their occupational needs. All facilities should have some form of consumer representation.

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?

Communities and organisations should outsource menial tasks to all residents depending on their abilities. Psychiatrists and doctors should encourage consumer's to actively participate in work related activities. As soon as you tell people that you are mentally challenged, they tend to judge you. i.e. stigma

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?

There should be more interaction between staff and consumer's. Staff should be available at all times when not on their breaks. Management should stop telling "White lies" to get rid of residents. Staff should avoid arguments and confrontation with residents i.e. reverse psychology.

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

Emphasys on youth education regarding future mental chalanges. visits etc.
 Encouraging discussion and communication.
 Increased professional, community involvement
 Revisit privacy laws which tend to hamper personal interaction.

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

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