

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

Organisation Name

N/A

Name

Miss Molly Thomson

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

"In 2016, at 33 years of age, I was diagnosed with ADHD. I was in denial for some time, until I realised that this diagnosis explained so much of my life experiences, my coping abilities, my little quirks, and my many struggles that I have faced, and still face in the workplace, in personal relationships, in the classroom, my financial struggles, my emotional struggles, the fact that I have plenty of information in my brain but that I fail to access this information at the appropriate time. The reason I was in denial for such a long time, was because of the stigma that is attached to this neurodevelopmental disorder, which affects at least 5% of the population. Because so many of the GPs, counsellors, psychiatrists and psychologists that have assessed and treated me for my various struggles between the years of 2003 up until 2016 in Parkville, Coburg, Wagga Wagga, and Shepparton - never once got the diagnosis of ADHD correct, and instead diagnosed me with psychosis, major depression, borderline-personality disorder, anxiety, bipolar disorder. My suggestions to improve the Victorian community's understanding of mental illness and reduce stigma and discrimination include: * recognition of the need and cost benefit awareness of governments and professions such as yours to Fund ADHD Awareness Programs, for the Community, for Industry, Employers, Unions, all levels of Government, and the media; because ADHD is neither new, nor confined to lower level education people, and affect politicians, nurses, firefighters, emergency workers, and barrister. In fact Albert Einstein had ADHD. * Funding for ADHD Education and Training for: Medical Students, General Practitioners, Psychiatrists-in-Training, Psychiatrists, Psychologists and other Mental Health Professionals; The National Disability Insurance Scheme; and for professionals likely to be in contact with those with the ADHD Syndrome - Teachers, Doctors, Psychologists, Lawyers, Magistrates and Judges, Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation Providers, Gambling, Financial Counselling and Family Violence Rehabilitation Service Providers * Improve Federal Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme restrictions on what medications can be prescribed under the PBS, to make it easier for people like me, that were diagnosed after the age of 18 years - not by any fault of my own, but by the lack of awareness, skills and training in psychiatrists and GPs, primary school teachers, ect. who failed to recognise this neurodevelopmental disorder in me - and so excludes me from being able to afford appropriate treatment - i.e. Vyvanse (Generic Name: lisdexamfetamine dimesylate)"

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?

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

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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.

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

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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?

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

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

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