

19 November 2019

The Commissioners
Productivity Commission Inquiry into Mental
Health
Locked Bag 2 Collins Street East,
Melbourne VIC 8003

Via Email

Dear Commissioners,

On behalf of Mental Health Victoria (MHV), I would like to thank you for the opportunity to appear at the public hearing on Tuesday 19 November 2019 in Melbourne.

MHV is the peak body for organisations that work within or intersect with the mental health system in Victoria. Our aim is to ensure that people living with mental illness can access the care they need, when and where they need it. This means giving consumers a suite of services that they can choose from – be they delivered online, in the home, the community, or in the hospital.

As discussed during the hearing, MHV and its partners have prepared two key submissions for other inquiries which may be of assistance to you.

[Joint Submission to the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System, July 2019.](#)

In July 2019 MHV made a Joint Submission with the Victorian Healthcare Association to the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System. The submission was formulated in consultation with the Victorian Mental Health Policy Network (membership below) and other key stakeholders from across the state.

In all, more than 200 organisations provided advice and input on the following topics:

- A vision for Mental Health
- Key reform and investment areas
- Workforce
- Integration of Mental Health & Addiction services
- Mental Health Care in the Community
- Mental Health Care in Hospitals
- Suicide Prevention
- Physical Health Care
- Prevention
- Early Life Care
- Employment
- Families and Carers
- Mental Health System Governance

In this submission, we advocated for a focus on large scale investment at both ends of the mental health system – community-based and hospital-based care. We urged a shift towards prevention and primary care, a greater focus on early intervention particularly for young people, equity of access in growth corridors and rural and regional areas and to all

community groups, consistent and integrated whole-of-life services that provide care across the health and social systems, and overarching governance reform.

[Submission to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality & Safety, October 2019.](#)

As noted during the hearing on 19 November, those aged 65 years and over – an arbitrary bureaucratic dividing line between being an ‘adult’ and an ‘older person’ – face significant disadvantage in terms of their ability to access medical, allied health and other support services.

Noting this, MHV and its partners prepared a detailed submission for the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality & Safety, highlighting key issues and recommendations concerning the following areas:

- Access to mental health services for older Australians
- Design of older person mental health services
- Workforce support and development in the aged care sector.

As discussed, we have been concerned that the Royal Commission has not as yet dealt with mental health specifically and for this reason our submission has an overarching recommendation that there be a special hearing that focuses on mental health services in the aged care sector.

We hope that both of our Royal Commission submissions are of assistance to the Productivity Commission.

On behalf of MHV, I would like to again congratulate you on your extraordinary work to date. As discussed, MHV will provide you with feedback on your draft report by 23 January 2020.

Regards,

Angus Clelland
CEO

Attachments:

1. *Joint Submission to the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System, July 2019.*
2. *Submission to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality & Safety, October 2019.*

Victorian Mental Health Policy Network Members

Ambulance Employees Australia
Australian College of Emergency Medicine (ACEM)
Australian College of Mental Health Nurses
Australians for Mental Health
Australian Medical Association Victoria (AMA Vic)
Australian Nursing & Midwifery Federation (ANMF)
Australian Psychological Society (APS)
Australian Services Union (ASU)
Carers Victoria
Community Housing Industry Association (CHIA) Vic
Council to Homeless Persons (CHP)
Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria (ECCV)
Health and Community Services Union (HACSU)
Mental Health Foundation
Mental Health Legal Centre
Mental Health Victoria
Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP)
National Disability Services (NDS)
Orygen, the Centre of Excellence in Youth Mental Health
Rainbow Health Victoria
Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP)
Tandem Carers
The Police Association of Victoria (TPAV)
Victorian Alcohol and Drug Association (VAADA)
Victorian Healthcare Association (VHA)
Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Org (VACCHO)
Victorian Mental Illness Awareness Council (VMIAC)
Victorian Council of Social Service (VCOSS)
Victorian PHN Alliance