

Dear Commissioners,

I write as a concerned citizen and taxpayer about the very clear issues in mental health and what appear to be a complete lack of results so far despite the many millions of dollars seemingly spent in the area that were supposed to improve the condition of our citizens but have not.

The reported numbers of people suffering from mental health issues continue to climb despite this incredible financial support of mental health groups such as Beyond Blue and the huge (and apparently increasing) drugging of our population – which people and groups in the mental health field are now wanting to widen to include our youngest and most vulnerable members of society.

I have experienced first-hand (in direct family and friends) the negative effects of psychiatric and “mental health” drugs. I have never seen anyone get “better” as a result of these supposed “treatments” but have in every case observed them either get no improvement or in many cases get worse. Looking at the statistics of such Australia-wide, they support my personal observations with more and more people taking drugs and yet more and more people are mentally ill. This makes absolutely no sense. If thousands of people were ill with a bacterial-infection and despite taking drugs they were not getting better or even worse declining, it would be considered to not work and other methods of treatment would be quickly (and rightly so) looked at. A real solution/treatment would get results in most if not all cases.

It is also no secret that in addition to not working, these drugs carry many and considerable negative side effects. These include the risk of hallucinations, increased blood pressure, agitation, akathisia (inability to remain motionless), aggression, life threatening heart problems, addiction – and many more, including the most scary, suicidal ideation and possible death. These are verified by various bodies around the world and in several countries are by law CLEARLY-LABELLED on the boxes of these medications. Nonetheless these are seemingly considered acceptable to provide to people and even more crazily considered a “treatment”. How can the mental health of our citizens improve when they are receiving treatments and drugs which have no definitive workability and are proven to be incredibly dangerous as detailed above?

In any other area of life, when money is provided to a person or group, it is expected they deliver what was promised. They are expected to get work done and get results with what they are doing. In the areas of mental health most of the groups and people who have received so much money over past years have not worked and not produced results – the statistics of increasing mental health issues, increased amounts of people on these dangerous drugs and more – proving this. Yet they are continually being funded and continually requesting to expand their efforts. How can this be supported when it’s clearly not working?

Specifically in regards to the expansion of early life mental screening... there is absolutely no evidence at all that the people that would do such “screening” have any ability to locate or diagnose anything. With medical disease one can clearly screen and diagnose what is wrong with the person – from a puncture in a lung to a bacterial illness. With mental health there are no valid tests or proof whatsoever to make a psychiatric or psychological diagnosis as what is wrong with a person let alone the above-mentioned point of psychiatric treatment or drugs doing anything to rectify such apparent “illnesses”.

Additionally, it concerns me deeply that so much of what may be considered “mental illness” in our young people would actually fall well within a normal spectrum for child behaviour and would without any psychiatric or pharmaceutical intervention, be improved or non-existent over time with other no-risk help and methods. I have seen this so many times through my life. Kids who are very active, unique in what may be considered “weird” ways, depressed for a period and much more turn out to be perfectly happy, developed and successful adults. For the ones who run into difficulties they cannot overcome we should be there to support and help them and I welcome efforts to do this through various means that have been shown to be effective. Psychiatric and psychological treatments that harm or drug clearly have no place in such a discussion with the constantly-increasing proof that they do not work or worse.

I welcome the Productivity Commission’s Inquiry and investigation into how productive mental health programs have been and whether such should be continued. Looking at statistics alone, the answer to this is clear. Examination of how this spending is justified considering the complete lack of results and worse, damage being done to our society as a result, is long overdue.