

Mental Health Inquiry
Productivity Commission
Level 12, 530 Collins St.
Melb. VIC 3000

21st Jan 2020

Re: Prevention and early intervention for mental illness in pre school age children & suicide prevention

Dear Commissioners,

Respectfully request your genuine and earnest consideration for the health and wellbeing for our future generations to be given priority and not allow the corporations and other interests that circle these issues continuously to be considered ahead of real love and care for our children.

As a father of 2 young children and a member of a large family that has seen firsthand the horrors of suicide and “mental illness” in our midst it has become abundantly clear that the current regimes of antipsychotic medications prescribed to our youths have not resulted in any major reduction of suicide rates but arguably have contributed to a potential increase in these statistics.

Five years ago a strong young man (26) my nephew who was physically healthy and had his whole life ahead of him was lost to suicide in our family and it was a combination of stress, medication and alcohol that pushed him over the edge to cruelly take his own life.

After this harrowing experience I researched the matter thoroughly and was appalled to find that the very medications given to those with suicidal tendencies includes “suicidal ideation” as one of it’s known side affects. How is this an acceptable treatment for one who is on the verge of taking their own life ?

Can you as the commissioners who have been given the power to protect our children proceed with the current proposals and guarantee you are not delivering further such treatments to our youth potentially increasing the risks even further for those most vulnerable young ?

We also have grave concerns that the proposed increased screening of our preschool (0-3 year old) children has not considered suitably the ramifications of using this type of screening and the resultant direction of children towards prescription of antipsychotics and other heavy medications at an age when they are still developing in a complex and unique way.

How can you assure the parents of our fine country that these measures will safely and effectively protect our children rather than expose them further to heavy medication that is the current popular treatment of choice for mental illness in our society ?

Would you be happy for your toddler to be given tests and screening which could result in them being prescribed highly addictive and sometimes dangerous antipsychotics ?

We request that you seriously consider the ramifications of your decisions and take an earnest look at what the results of this could be.

Sincerely,

Grant M Jefford
Father