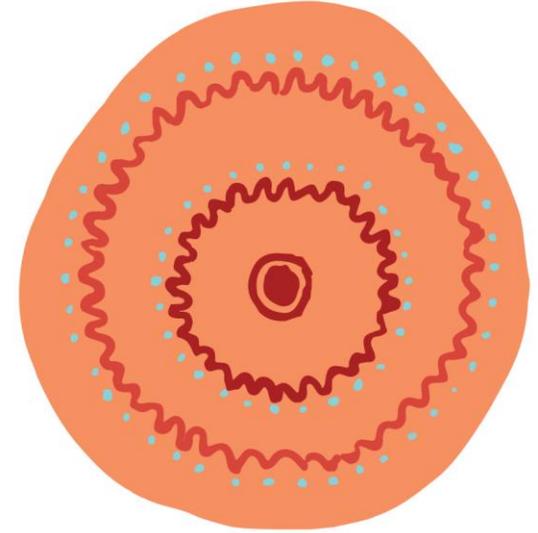




**Australian Government**

**National Mental Health Commission**

**Making  
Connections  
with your  
Mental Health  
and Wellbeing**



**Geraldton, WA**

**12 July 2019**

**49 Participants**

This snapshot identifies key points from the  
Town Hall Meeting

Content from all Town Hall Meetings is being  
collated by the Commission



# Help Seeking

Participants were asked what stops them or someone they know from seeking help.

Direct comments included:

- 'When ill, unable to communicate effectively, we are left alone to suffer'
- 'Emergency Departments are not equipped to handle mental health clients in the same way as someone presenting with a broken bone'
- 'I'm a bloke, talking is very hard, looking inwards is almost impossible'
- 'No psychiatrist in town, no private psychiatrists, not enough professionals; change of professionals means constantly having to bear the shame, anxiety and fear to expose your story again'
- 'Shame that you can't help yourself. The community tells you to just 'pull yourself up by your bootstraps''
- 'Family might find out. Employer might find out. Possible job loss'
- 'Unable to access efficient and appropriate therapeutic care for Aboriginal people'
- 'Wait lists for services are too long'
- 'Bullying disguised as jest in workplace culture'

# Big Ideas or Initiatives

Participants were asked for one big idea or initiative to improve mental health in their community.

Direct comments included:

- 'Walk-in appointments available at the hospital. Community access for walk-ins via a mobile clinic. After hours appointments needed'
- 'Supported accommodation that is accessible to all, particularly in crisis and when immediate accommodation is needed'
- 'Peer support. Pay people for supporting others who have lived experience, and reduce the stigma as well'
- 'Commonwealth funding for Mensheds – for a small amount per hour per man at a shed, it would cost pennies but help get men out of pubs and off the couch'
- 'Amendments to privacy legislation that allow for better coordination of services and sharing of information that improves the diagnosis, treatment and care for supporters of mental ill-health'
- 'Implement a compassionate communities approach in every LGA – delivered in collaboration across health, social and community'
- 'Business and industry have a role to play in managing work places and recognising and supporting mental health. We need to help them to do this'
- 'Unlimited mental health care plans and more subsidised components of sessions to make them affordable'

# The Developing Vision

Participants were asked for key aspects to be included in the vision of a new system. Responses included:

- The notion of Home needs to be included. If you have no safe place to lay your head, you don't feel secure and it compounds mental health pressures
- Education needs to be included, there is so much awareness and understanding that needs to be built around mental wellbeing
- Whole of government approaches to tackle fundamental issues like poverty, homelessness, drugs, etc, need to be highlighted

# Perceptions in 2030

Participants were asked for input on how they would like people to perceive mental health and suicide prevention in 2030.

Direct comments included:

- 'Having mental health treated as real as physical health'
- 'A cradle to the grave service model'
- 'A community that understands that those with mental health issues are not just weak minded, choosing to wallow in their past trauma and avoiding taking responsibility for themselves. To understand that it is a complex biological, psychological and social problem'
- 'For children to grow up knowing that to put your hand up and ask for help is to be courageous and smart, not weak and shameful'

# Thank You, Geraldton

The Commission thanks the community for their comments and suggestions on improving our mental health system

## Ways to stay connected:

- ✓ Attend a Town Hall meeting
- Read the snapshots from your community and other communities in Australia
- Take the survey online (coming soon)
- Follow us on Facebook (@NMHCAustralia) and Twitter (@NMHC)
- Join the conversation online using #ConnectingWithYou

