



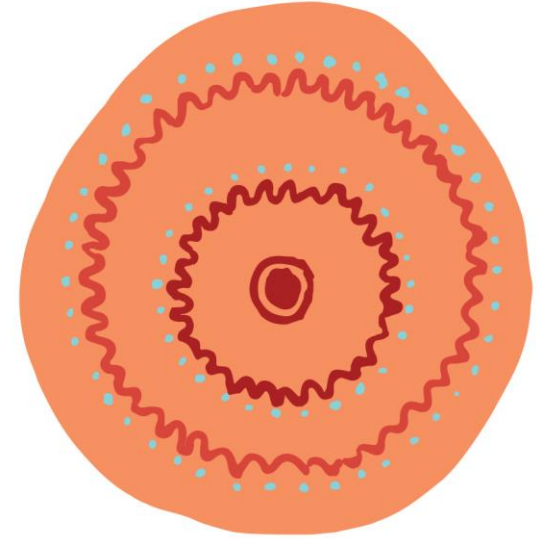
**Australian Government**

**National Mental Health Commission**

**Gold Coast, QLD**

**30 July 2019**

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



**24 Participants**

This snapshot identifies key points from the  
Town Hall Meeting

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

# Exploring Mental Health



Participants were asked to share 3 words that come to mind when thinking of mental health:

- Stigma came up as the most common response
- Frustration, isolated and lonely were mentioned frequently
- Other common responses included helplessness, struggle and dark

# Help Seeking

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


Direct comments included:

- 'Low self-esteem and shame, not wanting another person to know that there is something 'wrong''
- 'Stigma. It's still by far the biggest issue. Also inability to access appropriate services especially in regional and remote Australia'
- 'Societal differentiation between mental and physical illness'
- 'Making a scene in reacting to your suffering'
- 'Staff are too busy and trying to get onto the next one'
- 'Not seeing that suicidal thoughts are a life threatening situation – waiting in the waiting area while dying inside'
- 'Lack of appropriate, publically funded treatment programs for anything other than depression and anxiety'
- 'Public system mental health staff refusing to contact private mental health to get the full history'
- 'Culture, toxic masculinity, 'drink a cup of concrete!''

# Big Ideas or Initiatives

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

Direct comments included:

- 'Peer-led, peer-run, compassionate services (warm-lines, respites, support groups, etc), to facilitate communitarian, rather than medical, support'
- 'Crisis Cafés with a nationally recognised symbol  that indicates it is a safe place with people trained to support'
- 'Mental Health GP – someone who is there to listen to you and has the time to support you'
- 'Personalised follow-up care plan, not everyone has family or friends'
- 'Co-commissioning at the regional level'
- 'Get the politicians to stand behind mental illness and speak about unity and equality'
- 'Equip the community to help themselves, check on neighbours – more free training, mental health first aid should be as well known as first aid'
- 'Frequent Gold Coast 'positivity festivals' or 'days' down at the Broadwater with philosophical teachings of equality, positive mindset, motivational speaking ... focussing on raising the positive energy and creating a brotherhood and sisterhood connect'
- 'Put suicidal patients presenting in Emergency Department in the critical category and get them seen to by a group immediately'
- 'Public campaign for a social paradigm shift in giving respect, compassion and showing responsibility'

# The Developing Vision

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

Responses included:

- Compassionate (rather than 'wrap-around-me' which is a 'smothering' word)
- Holistic
- Empowering, self determined
- Comfort; listening and hearing
- Prioritising individual health and wellbeing
- Connections and understanding
- Advocacy and positivity
- Patience
- Political will
- Responding not reacting

# Thank You, Gold Coast

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
- Follow us on Facebook (@NMHCAustralia) and Twitter (@NMHC)
- Join the conversation online using #ConnectingWithYou

