



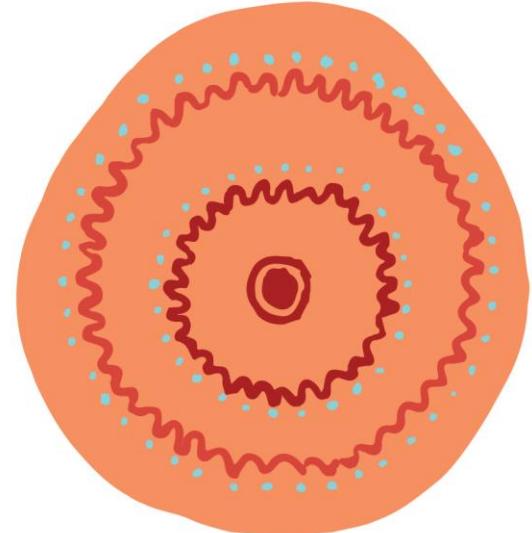
Australian Government

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

