

My experience regarding City Mental Health

I support a fulsome understanding of the issues involved in mental health. I don't believe in surrounding mental health with shame.

Education and funding need to be urgently applied to the issue of mental health and specifically I suggest a regular forum at CMH inviting feedback and constructive suggestion from consumers. I see that these would gradually offer CMH workers a realistic idea of what clients actually experience from the service, and in what ways improvements may be made. It seems to me that City Health workers simply don't hear reasonable feedback without such a place and time.

As workers, they do not seem to have even a basic understanding of what it is like 'to be on the other end' – a basic tool in defining and refining reasonable courses of action. They deny and dismiss realistic perceptions from another person. Workers expect total submission to their will without spending any time explaining the issues from their perspective. Expecting total obedience without educating clients as to their perception.

Almost no credit or recognition is given for good qualities and strengths in a client.

Workers respond defensively to any feedback given through letters, emails or verbal complaint. Granted, sometimes we are not well when we respond as clients. But a line must be drawn a little more cautiously. Often when we are well and we receive the same response. Absolute dismissal, and no time granted to hear a view for mutual improvement.

People suicide with alarming regularity. This is a fact. It must land with the politicians to ensure that sufficient funding is supplied. At what price human life?

It seems to me that a mentality is held that change requires further sacrifice. To me, more than enough sacrifice has been had to take further positive action and swiftly so.

It remains an obvious point to me that funding must be applied where problems continue unabated. To cease this alarming trend, one must see that mental health is approached in a cautious, caring and constructive fashion. Room must be made to receive feedback and therefore diffuse tensions before further disaster occurs. Changes need to be constructive and non-self-indulgent on both sides.

Some further comments

It must be said that the service from CMH is available on Medicare and one can at least obtain medication – although not yet therapy.

Please act on this letter.

Yours sincerely