

Unit 3, 87 Flinders Street
THORNBURY. 3071

25th April, 2005

Select Committee on Mental Health

Congratulations that this important matter is at last being investigated.

As the Mother of a daughter who was first diagnosed as suffering from depression and then deteriorated into Bi-Polar disorder I know only too well the devastating effect on her and her family and friends. She had obtained two University Degrees and when well was a dedicated and caring Social Worker.

There is a necessity to provide extra funds so that more Crisis Assessment Teams can be obtained and trained. It is of little use when they are not available evenings and weekends - often times of crisis.

Some members of the Police Force were excellent, but all recruits need training in the difficult area of helping those suffering psychiatric illness. There were times we did not dare call on Police for help because of the tragedies occurring at times when C.A.T. was not available.

The closing of Psychiatric Hospitals and sending these patients into the community without adequate assistance and supervision often has devastating consequences.

May the Committee address these and many other issues regarding mental illness with an open mind until others can accept that Psychiatric illnesses should be treated with the same dedication and resources as other physical disorders.