SYSTEM REFORM: WHERE TO INVEST?

CONNIE DIGOLIS

CEO AT THE MENTAL HEALTH COUNCIL OF TASMANIA
THE FAILURE IN OUR MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE IS IN NOT DOING MORE SOONER. WHERE ARE WE GOING WRONG?

“If you offer early treatment, the person’s life can be preserved, their trajectory, their social world and their prospects can be safeguarded. If you wait for five or ten years [...] a critical period of life has passed them by.”

- Professor Patrick McGorry
WE MUST CHANGE THE WAY WE DELIVER MENTAL HEALTH CARE.
THE ALTERNATIVE IS A SYSTEM WHICH WILL:

• Focus on integration, prevention and community-based intervention
• Steer people away rather than towards our hospitals and ED’s
• Encourage early recognition, access and referral
• Deliver co-designed and co-delivered services, with the needs of consumers and carers taking priority
WHERE IS THE SUPPORT TO SEE THIS HAPPEN?

The vision is for a mental health system that:

- Enables recovery
- Prevents and detects mental illness early
- Ensures that all Australians with a mental illness can access effective and appropriate treatment and community support to enable them to participate fully in the community

(5th National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan)
"A PERSON’S ACCESS TO TREATMENT SHOULD NOT DEPEND UPON THE RESOURCES THEY HAVE ACCESS TO."

- MENTAL HEALTH CONSUMER
WHAT COULD SYSTEM REFORM LOOK LIKE?

- Primary focus on prevention and early intervention
- Community based support models
- 24/7 access to a range of support options away from hospitals
- An integrated stepped model of care – one system, one service
- Access to clear, current information to support service navigation and referral pathways
“WHEN IT COMES TO HEALTH FUNDING, THE SMART MONEY IS ON PREVENTING HOSPITAL ADMISSIONS IN THE FIRST PLACE, IF WE FEEL THE SOLUTION IS JUST TO HAVE A RENOVATION OF A BUILDING, THEN CLEARLY SOMETHING HASN’T BEEN UNDERSTOOD.”

- DR BASTIAN SEIDEL, RACGP