



Mental Health Victoria

Collaboration • Knowledge • Leadership

International and local experts to focus on mental health across the lifespan

26 February 2020

Leading international mental health experts on suicide prevention and community care will headline Mental Health Victoria's timely conference – *Mental Health across the Lifespan* – to be staged in Melbourne on 17–18 March.

Professor Rory O'Connor, Director of the Suicidal Behaviour Research Laboratory at the University of Glasgow, is an internationally recognised expert on suicide prevention and has been at the forefront of suicide prevention research and public policy advocacy in the United Kingdom.

Dr Roberto Mezzina is known internationally for his contributions to community mental health system reform, particularly through the innovation and success of the 'Trieste Integrated Community Care Model' which is recognised as one of the most successful mental health programs in the world.

They will join a strong program of mental health experts in policy and practice from across Australia, which will open with a Lived Experience Panel and feature the voices and views of a wide range of mental health consumers on how the system needs to change in order to better serve people living with mental health issues.

Dedicated sessions will cover mental health issues for particular life stages: early years to youth, adulthood, and later life, while a fourth stream will explore issues in suicide prevention.

"Australian mental health reform is at a critical juncture, as we head towards final reports from the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System, the national Productivity Commission Inquiry into Mental Health, and from Christine Morgan, Australia's first National Suicide Prevention Advisor, as well as a focus from the COAG Health Council on suicide prevention and strengthening the child and youth mental health system," said Mental Health Victoria CEO Angus Clelland.

"We want to keep feeding into those deliberations, to ensure that people living with mental illness can access the treatment and care they need, particularly in the community," he said.

Speakers will include:

- Hon. Martin Foley MP, Victorian Minister for Mental Health
- Professor Alan Fels, Mental Health Victoria patron
- Lucy Brogden AM, Chair of the National Mental Health Commission
- Maggie Toko, Deputy Commissioner, Victorian Mental Health Complaints Commissioner and former CEO of the Victorian Mental Illness Awareness Council (VMIAC)
- Marie Piu, carer and CEO of Tandem.

See the conference website: www.mhvconferences.com. For more information or to arrange interviews, contact: Danielle McLeod 0438 998 043.