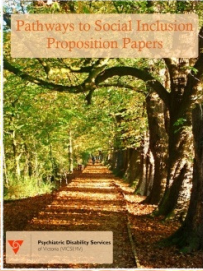


Social Inclusion as a Driver for Mental Health Reform

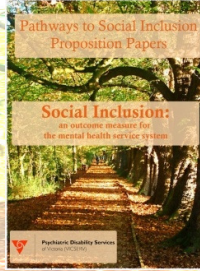


Wendy Smith

**Policy and Research
Manager**

VICSERV

The Papers



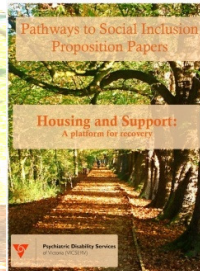
Key Concept and Driver is:

**Social Inclusion:
An Outcome Measure for
the Mental Health Service
System**

Because...

- The evidence says our current approach is not working
- 25 years of deinstitutionalisation, three national mental health plans, and a national inquiry into the human rights of people with mental illness We have...

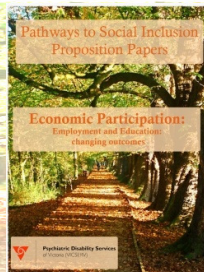
The outcomes: housing and support



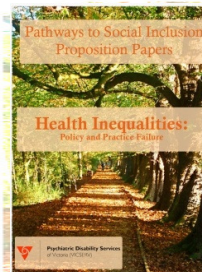
- Homelessness
- 'At risk'
- Low home ownership
- 'Housed' in prisons

employment and education

- Increasing unemployment
- Workforce non-participation
- Poor disability employment services outcomes



health inequalities



- Poor overall health status
- Death rate and life expectancy
- Mortality rate and schizophrenia
- Heart disease has not declined
- Cancer mortality rates are high
- Conditions not being picked up till it is too late

... more health outcomes



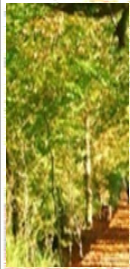
- **Morbidity and comorbidity**
- **Poor oral health**
- **Risk factors/behaviours**

Yet we know...

- **Association between housing and clinical improvement**
- **Physical illness can be prevented or managed**



And...



- **Benefits of employment are significant**
- **Costs of unemployment are high**
- **Increased participation in meaningful activities saves \$ millions**
- **Education improves employment rates**

We also know...

- **Belonging to community improves wellbeing**
- **Social exclusion is linked to unhappiness, illness and reduced life expectancy**
- **Positive supportive relationships protect against risky health behaviours**
- **There is better recovery after disease when opportunities for social interactions are in place**

It is us (not them)

- **We work in silos, we have isolated the 'mental health agenda'**
- **We (over-)emphasise clinical intervention and risk at the expense of addressing social risks**
- **We don't share ownership of and commitment to a social inclusion agenda – health, housing, education, employment and community**



It's time to rebalance and integrate 'the systems'



- **The systems that matter are not simply clinical mental health and community managed services**
- **Systems integration is a means - the outcome we are seeking is integrated communities... and**
- **For the person not the illness to be at the centre**

VICSERV Propositions

To this end VICSERV has developed a set of papers and propositions:
Pathways to Social Inclusion

Our Intention

- provide evidence and ask questions - stimulate debate
- influence a shift in the reform agenda
- participate in change
- work in partnership with government and key stakeholders

VICSERV Propositions – Social Inclusion

- Benchmarking framework
- Comparison of agreed outcome measures (health, housing, employment and education)



VICSERV Propositions – Health Inequalities

- Prioritised (ill-) health and mental illness research agenda
- Sector self-review for 'whole of person health approaches'
- Workforce awareness and development
- Targeted health promotion and secondary/tertiary prevention strategies

VICSERV Propositions – Economic Participation

- Targeted policy
- A new model of support
- Peer workforce development



- Leveraged partnerships and better integrated response
- Professional education and capacity building
- Extending the evidence base for practice

VICSERV Propositions – Housing and Support

- Housing policy and options with an explicit focus
- Scalable, flexible models of housing-linked support
- Economic modelling of costs/benefits
- Ageing carers



Thankyou
www.vicserv.org.au

