

CENTRE FOR MENTAL HEALTH

PHD Completion Seminar

The University of Melbourne



MELBOURNE SCHOOL OF
POPULATION
& GLOBAL
HEALTH

Mitigating the impact of the news media on stigmatising attitudes towards people with severe mental illness

Presenter: Anna Ross

**Supervisors: Prof Nicola Reavley,
Prof Tony Jorm, Dr Amy Morgan and
Dr Alex Wake**



**Wednesday 2 June 2021
2.00pm-3.00pm
Via Zoom**

[https://unimelb.zoom.us/j/82414308519?
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Stigma towards people with severe mental illness adversely impacts life satisfaction, self-esteem, help-seeking, treatment adherence, and overall recovery. The media is known to be a key source of information about mental illness. News portrayals linking severe mental illness to violence are overrepresented, and influence public beliefs about dangerousness and unpredictability.

The overall aim of this PhD is to reduce stigma and discrimination towards people with severe mental illness through improving news reporting of people with mental illness in the context of violence and crime. This aim has been addressed through four studies. This involved exploring the impact of stigmatising content in news reports about people with severe mental illness, and collaboratively developing guidelines for best practice media reporting of mental illness, violence and crime. A brief training intervention based on the guidelines was developed and piloted to evaluate its effects on journalistic behaviours, reporting intentions, knowledge of best practice, and stigmatising attitudes.

Anna is a PhD candidate, research assistant, and teaching associate in the Centre for Mental Health. She has a Master of Psychology (Clinical) and a Bachelor of Applied Science (Psych. Hons.).

Her research has focused on reducing stigma towards severe mental illness through improved media reporting. She has also conducted research on stigma and discrimination towards mental illness, development of Mental Health First Aid guidelines, and evaluation of suicide prevention campaigns.

These seminars are free. Visitors are welcome to attend.

For more information contact the Centre for Mental Health +61 3 8344 0908 or the Centre for Health Policy +61 3 8344 9111