

[Leadership](#)[Workplace](#)[Illness](#)

# Lawyers, public servants the least healthy executives

Health Rankings

**Patrick Durkin** *BOSS Deputy Editor*



Updated Jul 8, 2019 — 11.34am,  
first published at Jul 7, 2019 — 8.20pm



## KEY STATISTICS

**1st (mental health)** Accounting

**11th (from 7th)** Banking

**16th (from 11th)** Legal

**17th (from 6th)** Public servants

**18th (still lowest)** Small business

The mental health of bankers, lawyers and federal public servants [has dived](#) in the wake of the [Hayne royal commission](#) and the federal election, rankings of our most unhealthy executives reveals.

The latest data from more than 10,000 executive health assessments in 200 companies across 18 sectors, shows lawyers have suffered the biggest fall, dropping from first place to seventh overall for health in the last financial year.

Lawyers fell in most areas of health but were the worst in mental health, where they dropped from 12th place to 16th.



Executive health checks have uncovered some major problems. **Andrew Quilty**

Bankers (mostly made up of investment bankers) still managed to capture first place overall, despite dropping five places in mental health to 11th because of the dramatic decline by lawyers.

Federal public servants also fell dramatically in the mental health ranks, from sixth to 17th in the last financial year, while consultants and accountants fared well after staying constant in the Executive Health Index.

---

Executive Health Solutions chief executive John Hall pointed to the Hayne royal commission and the recent federal election as key factors.

Half of the legal sector was working more than 60 hours a week. King & Wood Mallesons was [hit with an investigation by WorkSafe Victoria in response to a complaint about employee fatigue](#) and a [complaint was made](#) to SafeWork NSW about Gilbert + Tobin.

"The legal fraternity is well known for struggling in this area and the big legal firms have done a lot of work to try to address it, but it is the nature of the business that it has a significant impact," Mr Hall said.

"The sector has been driven down by a worsening psychological health profile and given the pressures over that period, the legal industry is struggling a little bit," he said. "It is a very competitive market and the billable hours put a lot of pressure on individuals and that has had an impact."

## Tumultuous year for public servants

Mr Hall was also not surprised to see federal public servants suffer in the wake of a "tumultuous" time around the federal election.

"There has been a fair degree of uncertainty and public servants are constantly under scrutiny and facing budget constraints," he said.

Small business owners again fared worst on the mental health rankings, with Mr Hall warning they have no safety net.

---



Bankers, lawyers and public servants are among the worse sufferers of mental health. **Gabriele Charotte**

Blue collar industries also continued to rank worse than white collar workers overall, with the main exception transport executives who jumped from 19th place to ninth, while mining workers fared best in eighth position.

The agriculture, forestry and fishing group remained the lowest ranking of all industries.

# Executives asked to pass health checks

Medibank chief customer officer David Koczkar said they are working with more companies than ever to perform executive health checks such as at Toyota and Visy.

"One of the more eye-opening stats for Corporate Australia is a recent study which found around 59 per cent of workers claim to be suffering a mental health issue, so this is very real," Mr Koczkar said.

"Serious injuries this century are down around 20 per cent but mental health issues are up by 5 per cent," he said.

Mr Hall also said executive health checks have become more common to lift retention and productivity but also to ensure the multimillion-dollar executive pay packages are protected.

---

---

"We have found a large number of life-threatening illnesses for really senior people so early detection is crucial," he said. "Companies work their executives hard with the pressures of travel and different time zones and so they want to look after them."

Medibank's recent YouGov Galaxy polling suggests 70 per cent of workers say health and wellbeing is not adequately addressed in their workplace and those suffering anxiety (20 per cent), depression (17 per cent) and stress (15 per cent) are least likely to inform their workplace of their condition.

Other key findings from the health checks were 40 per cent of executives had high cholesterol, 73 per cent were not getting enough exercise (150 minutes per week), just over half not getting enough fruit, vegetables and whole grains and 48 per cent binge drinking (4+ standard drinks).

Over 70 per cent of executives were referred to their GP for something found as part of the executive health check.

[Save](#)[Share](#)[License article](#)**TOPICS**[Illness](#)[Legal industry](#)[Workplace](#)

**Patrick Durkin** is Melbourne bureau chief and Boss deputy editor. He writes on news, business and leadership. *Connect with Patrick on [Twitter](#). Email Patrick at [pdurkin@afr.com.au](mailto:pdurkin@afr.com.au)*

**MOST VIEWED IN LEADERSHIP**

- 1 Sydney developer admits to blackmail in ATO fraud**
- 2 Honesty the bedrock of leadership for eBay executive**
- 3 What Uber's CEO asks when hiring**
- 4 Citadel executive expects the unexpected**
- 5 'Take it on the chin', Asian Australians told**

**LATEST STORIES**[Special Reports](#)**China poised for more growth, say analysts**

4 mins ago

[Investment banking](#)**At a grim moment for banking jobs, Citigroup says it's hiring**

12 mins ago

Commercial real estate

### AustralianSuper buys into LOGOS estate in Auckland

12 mins ago

Gold

### Dacian dares to defeat debt as shares rally on revised plan

25 mins ago

---

#### SPONSORED

---

---

#### RECOMMENDED

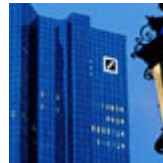
**Conditions ripe for Fed to spring dove trap**



**Trump attacks 'foolish' UK PM and 'wacky' envoy**



**Deutsche Bank price fall 'disturbing'**



**Deutsche Bank careers end in an envelope, a hug and a cab...**




 powered by plista


PROMOTED

Mozo 


**UBank joins 2.99% home loan party**

Health Insurance 

**Aussie seniors with private health insurance should know this**

Life Insurance Comparison 

**Aussies over 50 should know about this life insurance affordability...**

NAB   
**Buying a home? Try our loan repayment calculator**



**Average workers lose \$30,000 in super rise**



**Rosebery site sold for \$32 million**



 powered by plista

---

**THE AUSTRALIAN**  
**Financial Review Magazine**

The young head chef who restores cars on the side

Jock Zonfrillo is creating a billion-dollar industry from native foods

6 dishes that define Australia at its most inventive

What fashion can teach you about economics

The beer-makers at Australia's wild frontier





# FINANCIAL REVIEW



SUBSCRIBE

LOG IN

Subscription Terms



Contact & Feedback



Markets Data



Brands



Our Network



© Copyright 2019 The Australian Financial Review

[Reprints & Permissions](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

[Terms & Conditions Of Use](#)