

LAW BRIEFS

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DEPRESSION RATES RISE

Billable hour targets, legal risk pressures and maintaining client satisfaction are major contributors to the alarming levels of depression within the legal profession, according to a legal recruitment specialist.

Alex Correa says the statistics speak volumes about the need to better address depression among the legal fraternity.

According to research conducted in Britain by the Brain and Mind Institute, 35 per cent of law students suffer high to very high levels of psychological distress and almost 40 per cent reported distress severe enough to require medical clinical intervention.

A significant proportion of lawyers also suffer elevated level of anxiety and depression, with 31 per cent experiencing high to very high levels of distress.

"Lawyers by their very nature are high achievers," Correa says. "They're trained to be perfectionists, to pick the detail and be critical. In many instances I have seen many junior lawyers that are left to their own devices and given extraordinary levels of responsibility. This clearly only adds to the issues."

She is supporting the Tristan Jepson Memorial Foundation, which aims to decrease distress, disability and the causes of depression and anxiety in the legal profession.

"Consciousness of these problems within the sector has increased but we all need to be vigilant and aware of the signs of depression," she says.