

# Financial woes add to stress among SA professionals

Financial stress has increased among South African professionals when compared to last year, where previous numbers were attributed to work stress, according to the 2018 Profmed Stress Index.



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The index, which is compiled from the responses of nearly 2,500 of medical scheme's professional membership base, revealed that apart from the increased financial stresses, over half the respondents reported that they are more stressed overall this year when compared to last year.

“The rise in financial stress is not surprising, considering the economic conditions which continue to take their toll on every sector of South African society,” explains Graham Anderson, CE of Profmed.

However, one area of concern from 2018's findings is the increase in the number of professionals who indicated they were suffering from stress-induced anxiety and depression. Almost 40% of respondents reported feeling more detached this year and wanting to be alone.

“Due to higher demands from careers, like working late or working overtime, people may have less time and energy to socialise with their peers, adding to feelings of detachment and wanting to be alone,” says Anderson.

Findings further reveal that while stress still affects respondents emotionally, physically and mentally, over 75% of

respondents feel they handle stress well. This year, less than 10% of respondents took leave due to a stress-related illness when compared to last year.

Compared to last year's statistics, 2018 has seen almost 60% of respondents actively doing something about their stress, with exercise cited as the leading 'remedy'.

"Exercise not only improves your physical wellbeing but also your mental health. Studies have shown that exercise releases endorphins, which increases levels of focus and improves your sleep, all of which gives you a greater sense of control over your life," Anderson concludes.

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