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| Statement |
| 20 August 2021 |

### Richelle McCausland welcomes reappointment as Ombudsman and Commissioner

The [Health Council has announced](https://www.nhpo.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-08/NHPO%20reappointment%20HMM%20communique.docx) Richelle McCausland’s reappointment to the roles of National Health Practitioner Ombudsman and National Health Practitioner Privacy Commissioner for a second term.

Ombudsman and Commissioner Richelle McCausland has welcomed the opportunity to continue to strive for fair and positive change in the regulation of Australia’s registered health practitioners.

“It is a privilege to champion fairness for patients and practitioners by providing accountability in health practitioner regulation,” said Richelle McCausland.

“My office will continue to focus on making systemic improvements in registration and notifications processes, and making sure those who need our services contact us.”

Reflecting on her first term, Richelle said that her office has come a long way since it was created in 2010. The office has seen an approximately fivefold increase in approaches from 2014–15 to 2020–21.

The Ombudsman and Commissioner said her first term marked a phase of transformation for the office. This included implementing a new early resolution complaint transfer process with Ahpra and improving the office’s ability to identity and report on complaints issues and trends.

“Our ability to make positive change has grown significantly over time, and we are also preparing to expand our role to accept complaints related to accreditation entities. This is an important step towards further accountability in the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme.”

The Ombudsman’s vision for her office’s next phase is based on four key [strategic directions](http://www.nhpo.gov.au/strategic-directions): influencing systemic improvements, engaging and communicating, building capacity, and enhancing accountability.

“We offer a free and empathetic complaint handling service and work with complainants to identity and resolve issues such as unreasonable delay, unfair processes and inadequate communication,” said the Ombudsman and Commissioner.

“Every complaint matters to us. I look forward to continuing to work with our community to identity and address problems in the regulation of health practitioners so they can be fixed for the benefit of all Australians.”

#### Contact the NHPO

Complaints line: 1300 795 265

Email: complaints@nhpo.gov.au

Post: GPO Box 2630, Melbourne VIC 300

For more information or for high resolution images please email media@nhpo.gov.au.