



National Health
Practitioner
Ombudsman

Our work in July 2024

Monthly approaches overview

1 July 2024 to 31 July 2024



National Health
Practitioner
Ombudsman

Please note: our data is subject to change due to ongoing investigations and quality assurance activities. If you have a question about our data, please contact us on 1300 795 265 or by email via complaints@nhpo.gov.au.

200
approaches
received



Up from 134 in
July 2023



102
Ombudsman
complaints received



Up from 39 in
July 2023



1
FOI matter
received



Down from 3 in
July 2023



0
privacy
complaints received



Down from 1 in
July 2023



97
enquiries
received



Up from 89
in July 2023



Ombudsman complaints
were made by 57
individuals (Up from 35
in July 2023)



1
FOI review
determination
(Up from 0 in
July 2023)



0
notifiable data
breaches assessed
(Down from 2 in
July 2023)

Complaints to the Ombudsman

23
early resolution
transfers made



Up from 22 in
July 2023



14
preliminary
inquiries made



Up from 10 in
July 2023



5
investigation
launched



Up from 0
in July 2023



71

Ombudsman
complaints finalised

Up from 48 in July 2023



Stage complaint was finalised

47
assessment

18
preliminary
inquiry

6
early resolution
transfer

0
investigation

OFFICIAL

Notification-related complaints to the Ombudsman

1 July 2024 to 31 July 2024



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75

notification-related complaints received

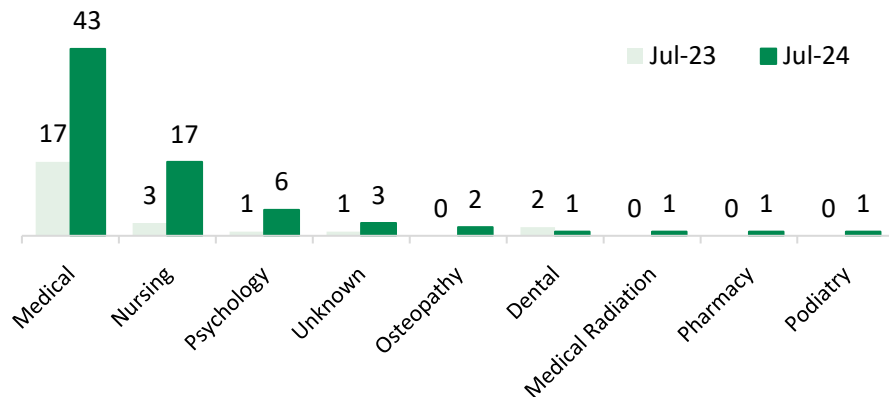


Up from 24 in July 2023

Who made notification-related complaints



Professions notification-related complaints were about



Types of notification actions that most frequently drove notification-related complaints

1. No further action taken at the assessment stage
2. Concerns were not processed as a notification
3. Active notification
4. No further action taken at the investigation stage
5. Notification is being investigated following immediate action

Stage notification-related complaints were finalised

30 assessment 3 early resolution transfer
 13 preliminary inquiry 0 investigation

Most common outcomes of notification-related complaints

1. An investigation was not warranted in the circumstances
2. The matter complained about was still actively being considered by the organisation
3. The complaint concerned the merits of the organisation's decision and we do not have the power to review the merits of a decision
4. The complaint could not be progressed because the complainant did not provide information that our office had requested
5. Our office is monitoring the concern as a systemic issue

Registration-related complaints to the Ombudsman

1 July 2024 to 31 July 2024

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10 registration-related complaints received

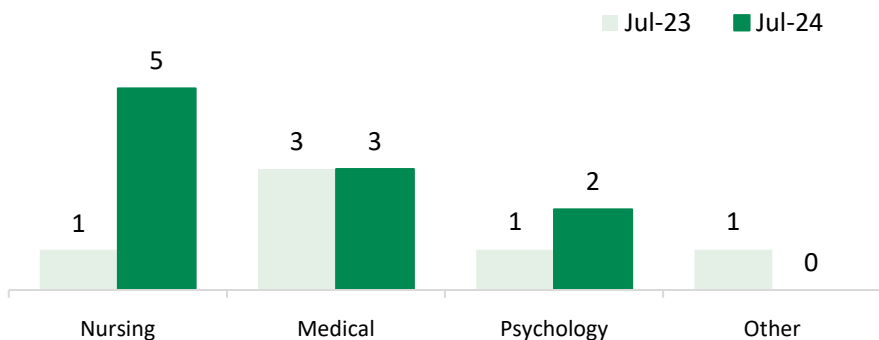
Up from 6 in July 2023



Types of registration driving registration-related complaints



Professions registration-related complaints were about



Registration processes that most frequently drove registration-related complaints

1. Information published on the national register
2. Fees charged for registration
3. Assessment of an international qualification
4. Processing of a new application for registration
5. Restrictions on a practitioner's registration requiring supervision

Stage registration-related complaints were finalised

7 assessment **1** early resolution transfer
2 preliminary inquiry **0** investigation

Most common outcomes of registration-related complaints

1. The matter complained about was still being considered by the organisation
2. An investigation was not warranted in the circumstances
3. The organisation's response to the complaint was fair and reasonable
4. The complaint could not be progressed because the complainant did not provide information that our office had requested
5. The complainant agreed that their concerns had been resolved to their satisfaction

Accreditation-related complaints to the Ombudsman

1 July 2024 to 31 July 2024



National Health Practitioner Ombudsman

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11

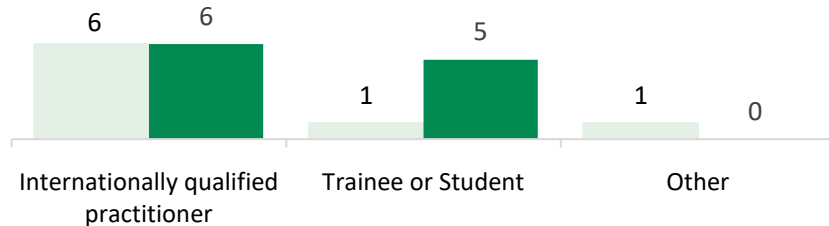
accreditation-related complaints received



Up from 8 in July 2023

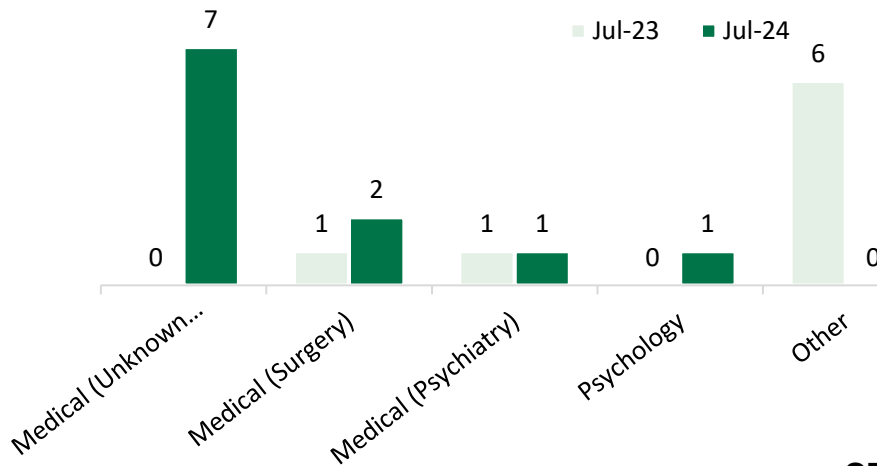
Who made accreditation-related complaints

Jul-23 Jul-24



Professions and specialties that accreditation-related complaints were about

Jul-23 Jul-24



Processes that most frequently drove accreditation-related complaints

1. Delivery of an exam
2. Oversight and monitoring of an accreditation organisation
3. Fairness of an exam
4. Merits review processes
5. Assessment of an international qualification

Stage accreditation-related complaints were finalised

6 assessment **1** early resolution transfer
2 preliminary inquiry **0** investigation

Most common outcomes of accreditation-related complaints

1. Our office is monitoring the concern as a systemic issue
2. An investigation was not warranted in the circumstances
3. The complainant agreed that their concerns had been resolved to their satisfaction
4. The complainant had not provided the organisation with an opportunity to respond to their concerns
5. The organisation's response to the complaint was fair and reasonable



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Our year to date

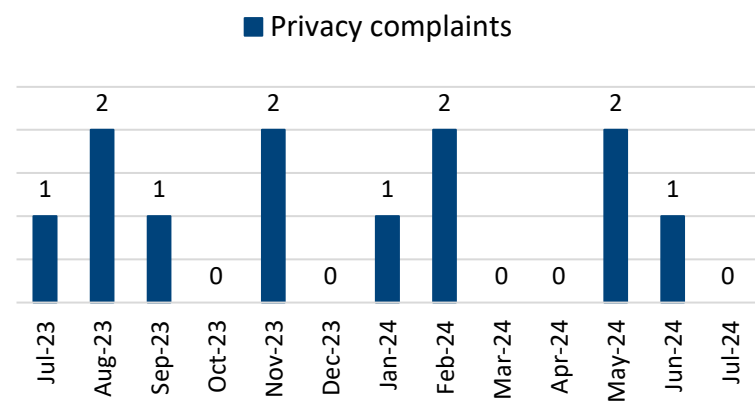
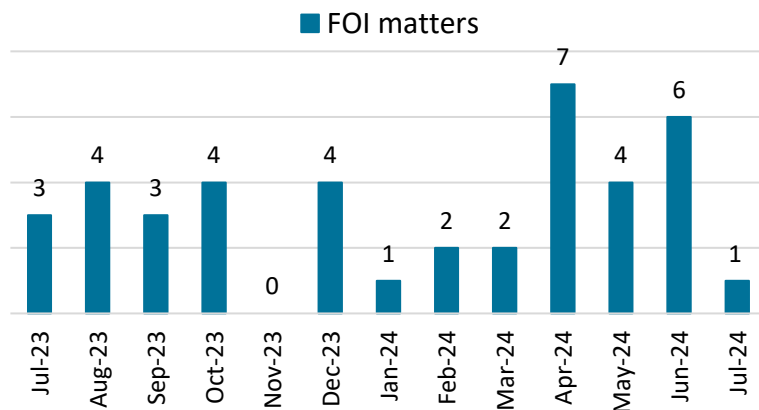
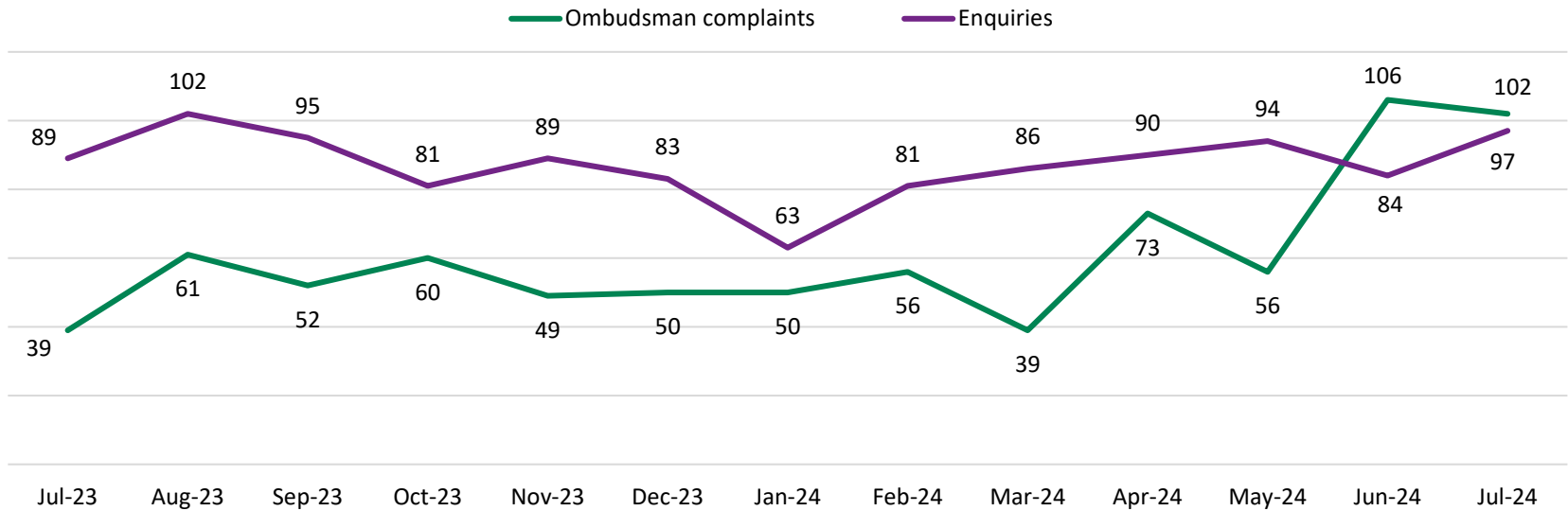
1 July 2024 to 31 July 2024

Approach trends

1 July 2023 to 31 July 2024



National Health
Practitioner
Ombudsman



Ombudsman complaints received from 1 July 2024 to 31 July 2024

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Types of complaints received

75 ↑ Up from 24 in the same period last financial year
notification

10 ↑ Up from 6 in the same period last financial year
registration



11 ↑ Up from 8 in the same period last financial year
accreditation

Who made complaints

64 health practitioners
38 Non-practitioners

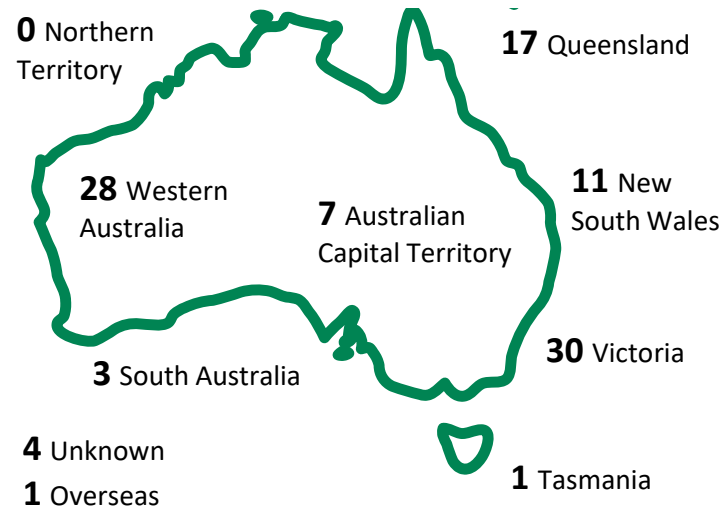
↑ Up from 19 in the same period last financial year
↑ Up from 20 in the same period last financial year

Professions most complaints were about

 **59** medical
 **22** nursing
9 psychology

↑ Up from 25 in the same period last financial year
↑ Up from 4 in the same period last financial year
↑ Up from 2 in the same period last financial year

Location complaints were made from



Most common notification-related issues that drove complaints

1. Notifier believes a decision to take no further action at the assessment stage was unfair or unreasonable
2. Notifier believes a decision to not process their concerns as a notification was unfair or unreasonable
3. Notifier believes inadequate reasons were provided for a decision to take no further action at the assessment stage

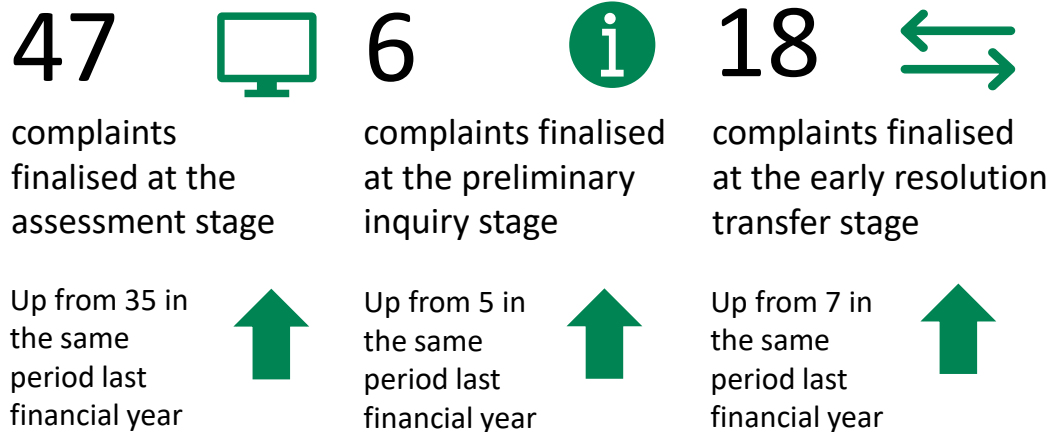
Most common registration-related issues that drove complaints

1. Practitioner is concerned that the fees they were charged for registration are unfair or unreasonable
2. Practitioner with general registration believes a decision to publish information on the national register was unfair or unreasonable
3. Practitioner with general registration believes inadequate reasons were provided for a decision to publish information on the national register

Resolution of Ombudsman complaints from 1 July 2024 to 31 July 2024

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Early resolution mechanisms



Most common outcomes at early resolution stages (assessment, preliminary inquiry and early resolution transfer)

1. An investigation was not warranted in the circumstances
2. The underlying matter complained about remains active and the organisation should be given an opportunity to finalise it
3. Our office is monitoring the concern as a systemic issue
4. The complaint could not be progressed because the complainant did not provide information that our office had requested
5. The complainant agreed that their concerns had been resolved to their satisfaction

Investigations



Most common investigation outcomes

We have not yet concluded the investigation of an Ombudsman complaint this financial year.

Ombudsman and Commissioner's observations

My office began the 2024–25 financial year with a significant increase in people seeking our assistance (200 approaches, up from 134 in July 2023). This included receiving more than double the number of Ombudsman complaints compared with July 2023 (102 complaints, up from 39). While increases were seen across all types of Ombudsman complaints (including notification, registration and accreditation-related complaints), notification-related complaints grew most significantly (75 complaints, up from 24 in July 2023). The cause of this change is not clear but may be due to an increased number of notifications being closed by Ahpra. Alternatively, it may be that notification outcomes have led to more dissatisfaction than usual.

The notification-related complaints we received were mostly made by notifiers (55 complaints, up from 19 in July 2023). However, complaints from practitioners who were the subject of a notification also increased (19, up from 5 in July 2023). Most notification-related complaints concerned the medical profession (43, up from 17 in July 2023), though complaints related to other professions also increased. For example, we received 17 complaints related to the nursing profession (up from 3 in July 2023) and six complaints relation to the psychology profession (up from 1 in July 2023).

Despite a month of higher than usual complaint numbers, my team made 23 early resolution complaint transfers, initiated 14 preliminary inquiries and launched five new investigations into Ombudsman complaints.

My office finalised 71 Ombudsman complaints and concluded two reviews of a decision Ahpra made under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (Cth). Notably, I made a formal determination after an individual requested my review of Ahpra's decision to refuse access to certain information related to a notification they had made to the Medical Board of Australia. I affirmed Ahpra's decision. My determination is available on our [website](http://www.nhpo.gov.au/foi-review-decisions): <www.nhpo.gov.au/foi-review-decisions>