

A healthy regulatory system

It's only fair.

Stakeholder Engagement Kit - Getting to know the NHPO

February 2025



National Health
Practitioner
Ombudsman

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Introduction

At the National Health Practitioner Ombudsman (“NHPO”), we believe that fairness isn’t just an idea; it’s a fundamental right. Our role is to provide independent oversight and complaint resolutions to enable the continuous improvement of health practitioner registration and accreditation processes.

We’re here to help make sure decisions are fair, transparent, and comply with relevant laws.

We work closely with the organisations we oversee to address complaints as early and informally as possible.

Our involvement can help explain decisions, resolve complaints, and lead to improvements in policies and processes. By working together, we can ensure fairness is accessible to all.

Purpose of this kit

We encourage the entities we accept complaints about, including accreditation authorities and specialist medical colleges, to inform those engaging with them about their right to make a complaint.

This kit provides you with a range of resources to assist with how to describe the role of our office to those who may need to access our services, and those who wish to make a complaint to us.

NHPO - Vision, Purpose, Values

Vision

A healthy regulatory system that makes fair and just decisions.

Purpose

We champion fairness by taking every complaint seriously and shining a light on systemic issues to effect positive change.

Values

Our team is committed to our values:

We are independent - we make decisions and recommendations based on evidence and without taking sides.

We are fair - we are open and follow impartial processes to make sure everyone is treated equally.

We are courageous - we do what is in the public interest even if it is challenging.

We are respectful - we listen to and seek to understand the unique perspectives of everyone we engage with.

We are collaborative - we work with others to resolve issues and identify opportunities to improve.

Sharing information about the NHPO

We encourage entities to include information about our office on the relevant pages of their website and other relevant documents or communication.

We suggest this information should ideally be included on webpages which detail an organisation's complaints process and in correspondence regarding the final outcome of an administrative complaint made by an individual.

Referring to our office on your website and in relevant documentation

We recommend including this message (or similar) for stakeholders on your website and disclosure documents, to explain the next step in the complaints process, particularly if an issue has not been resolved to an individual's satisfaction:

If an issue has not been resolved to your satisfaction, you can lodge a complaint with the National Health Practitioner Ombudsman (NHPO). The NHPO provides an independent complaint handling service, and it is free to make a complaint.

Website: www.nhpo.gov.au

Telephone: 1300 795 265 (free call)

Email: complaints@nhpo.gov.au

In writing to:

National Health Practitioner Ombudsman
GPO Box 2630
Melbourne VIC 3001

Referring complainants to us

We recommend including this message (or similar) in the final outcome notice (letter or email) following your complaint handling process.

This is the end of our internal complaints process. If you remain dissatisfied, you can lodge a complaint with the National Health Practitioner Ombudsman (NHPO).

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Melbourne VIC 3001

How to share what the NHPO does

The statements on this and the following page can be used by organisations we oversight to provide clarity regarding our role and jurisdiction. You can also use this content on your website and in any relevant materials.

Summary statement

The National Health Practitioner Ombudsman (NHPO) manages complaints and facilitates resolutions related to the regulation of Australia's registered health practitioners, aiming to ensure fairness and improve regulatory practices.

Complaints about colleges' approved programs of study we assist with

The National Health Practitioner Ombudsman (NHPO) assists with complaints about how a specialist medical college is delivering its training program. This includes considering whether a decision made by a college was fair and followed proper procedure.

Registration-related complaints we assist with

The National Health Practitioner Ombudsman (NHPO) assists with complaints about how the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (Ahpra) and the National Boards manage the registration of health practitioners, ensuring that decisions are fair and compliant with relevant laws. The NHPO does not directly handle the registration of health practitioners.

Complaints about the assessment process for overseas qualified practitioners that we assist with

The National Health Practitioner Ombudsman (NHPO) assists with complaints about the process to become a registered health practitioner in Australia, including the assessment of overseas qualified practitioners undertaken by Ahpra, a National Board, an accreditation authority or a specialist medical college.

The National Health Practitioner Ombudsman (NHPO) assists with complaints related to the process for assessing health practitioner qualifications to ensure fairness and compliance with relevant laws.

How to share what the NHPO does (continued)

Accreditation of programs of study

The NHPO can assist with complaints about processes related to the accreditation of programs of study by accreditation authorities, Ahpra and the National Boards. This includes complaints about:

- the development and approval of accreditation standards
- assessments of education providers and their program of study against the accreditation standards
- how an accreditation authority has monitored whether an approved program of study continues to meet the accreditation standards
- decisions an accreditation authority has made to place conditions on an approved program of study because it is no longer meeting the accreditation standards, or decisions to remove accreditation
- how an accreditation authority managed a complaint or application to review its decisions.

The NHPO can also consider how a decision related to the accreditation of a program of study was made to ensure proper procedure was followed. The NHPO does not directly handle the accreditation of a program of study (such as a course or training program).

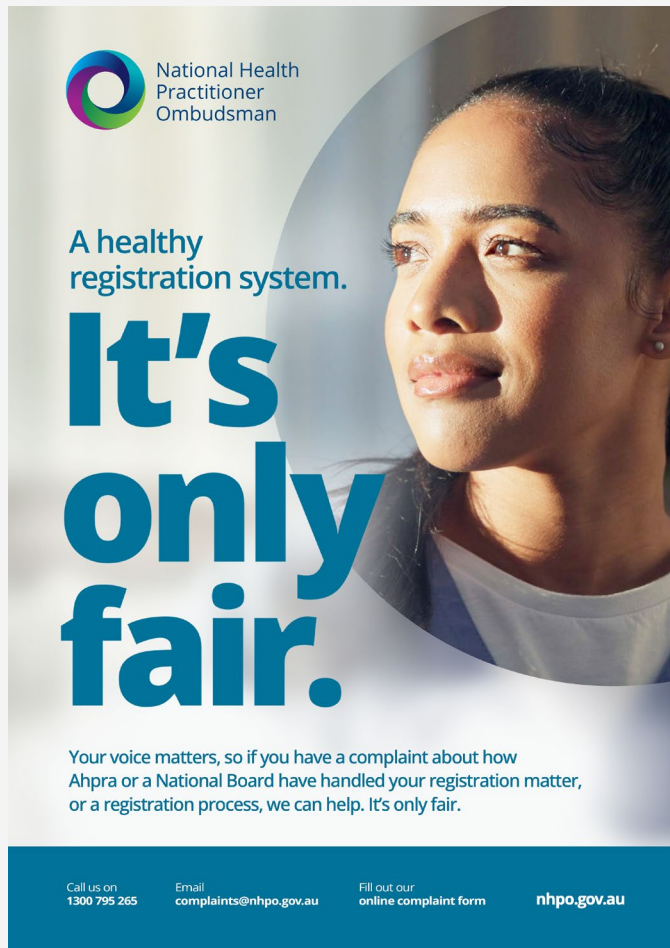
Resources:
Print posters

Print posters - Practitioner

There are a range of posters available for your use and these can be downloaded from the **resources page** on our website.

Please see page 15 of this kit for guidance around the use of this collateral.

A4/A2



A4/A2



Print posters - Industry

There are a range of posters available for your use and these can be downloaded from the **resources page** on our website. Please see page 15 of this kit for guidance around the use of this collateral.

A4/A2 - Accreditation

A poster for the National Health Practitioner Ombudsman focusing on accreditation. It features a circular inset image of a woman with glasses and long dark hair, wearing a green lab coat, looking at a laptop. The background is white. The NHPO logo is in the top left. The text 'A healthy accreditation system.' is in purple, followed by 'It's only fair.' in large purple letters. A paragraph at the bottom explains the mission. A purple footer bar contains contact information.

 National Health Practitioner Ombudsman

A healthy accreditation system.

It's only fair.

We champion fairness and ensure accountability by resolving complaints and making recommendations to improve the process for assessing health practitioner qualifications in Australia. It's only fair.

Call us on 1300 795 265 Email complaints@nhpo.gov.au Fill out our online complaint form nhpo.gov.au

A4/A2 - College

A poster for the National Health Practitioner Ombudsman focusing on college. It features a circular inset image of a woman with dark hair tied back, wearing a white lab coat and a stethoscope, looking directly at the camera. The background is white. The NHPO logo is in the top left. The text 'Accountability.' is in blue, followed by 'It's only fair.' in large blue letters. A paragraph at the bottom explains the mission. A dark blue footer bar contains contact information.

 National Health Practitioner Ombudsman

Accountability.

It's only fair.

We champion fairness by resolving complaints and making recommendations to improve the delivery of specialist medical training programs. It's only fair.

Call us on 1300 795 265 Email complaints@nhpo.gov.au Fill out our online complaint form nhpo.gov.au

Resources:
Digital collateral

Digital banners

There are two sets of static digital display banners (across five standard sizes) available for use on your digital platforms. Please email us at media@nhpo.gov.au for access to these banners.

Please see page 15 of this kit for guidance around the use of this collateral.

Practitioner-centric



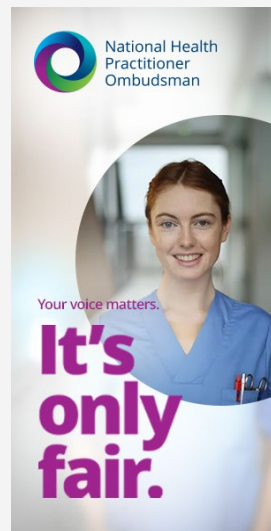
300x250



320x50



728x90



300x600



160x600

Industry centric



300x250



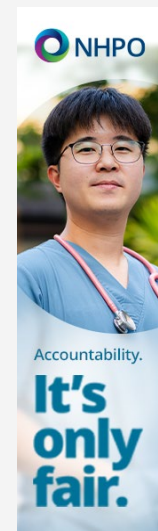
320x50



728x90



300x600



160x600

Video content

We have a range of explainer videos available for your use on your digital platforms. Please email us at media@nhpo.gov.au for access to these videos.

This video content includes one long form video with a detailed explanation about the NHPO and its services, along with multiple cut-down videos, including on topics such as (but not limited to):

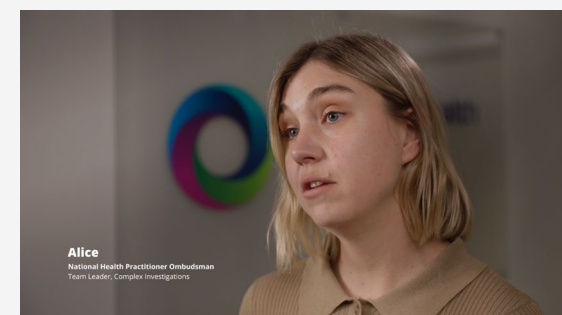
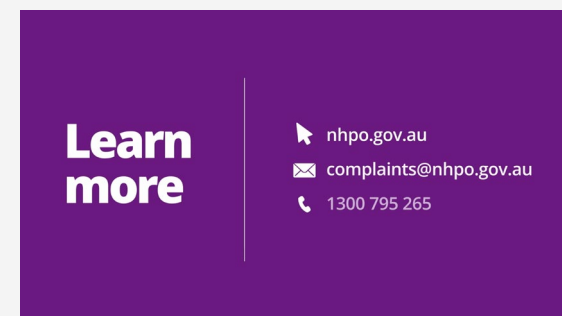
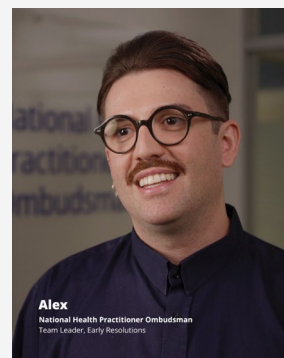
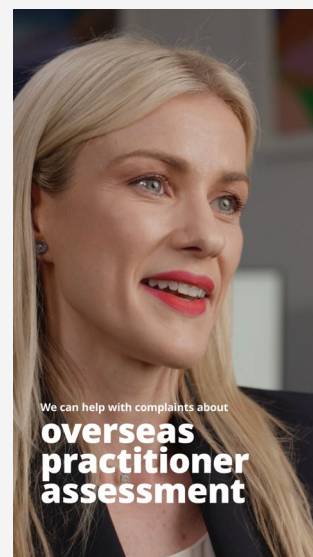
- Common complaints we assist with
- How we can assist overseas qualified practitioners
- Our role in assisting with accreditation-related complaints
- FAQs, including that we accept anonymous complaints

All videos are available to view on our Vimeo channel:

<https://vimeo.com/user196077410>

If you wish to use any of this video content, please send us a request in writing stating the purpose for its use.


These videos are also available on our social media platforms and can be shared via Facebook or LinkedIn (see page 14 for links to our social media platforms).



Social media content

We use social media (Facebook and LinkedIn) to provide the community with regular news, updates, case studies and reports from our office.

 **national health practitioner ombudsman**

 **national health practitioner ombudsman**

You are welcome to:

- Follow the NHPO on Facebook or LinkedIn
- Share or repost content shared on the NHPO's social media pages.

Please ensure you familiarise yourself with our social media terms of use: <https://www.nhpo.gov.au/social-media>



Outcomes

Our role expanded to assist with complaints about accreditation authorities and specialist medical colleges.

Outcomes

We published 'A roadmap for greater transparency and accountability in specialist medical training site accreditation'.

Outcomes

The Ombudsman joined the expert panel for the independent review of the regulation of podiatric surgeons.

Accountability.

It's only fair.



In 2023-24:

691

complaints were made to the Ombudsman.

63%

related to how a notification was handled.

18%

related to a registration matter.

Did you know?

Most complaints were about the regulation of the medical, nursing and psychology professions.

Use of our logo and collateral

Bodies we oversight may use the NHPO name, contact details, and logo solely for the purposes of advising individuals of their right to lodge a complaint with us. The logo should only be used in the artworks as supplied for the purposes described in this kit.

Please refer to us as National Health Practitioner Ombudsman in the first instance. Subsequently, referring to us as the NHPO is sufficient.

You must not use the NHPO name or logo in a way that implies endorsement of any entity, a program of study or other accreditation activities in general communications, including business cards, letterheads, emails, websites and other promotional material.

What can I do now?

1.

Update your website with information about the NHPO where it is likely to be helpful for individuals.

2.

Review your complaint outcome letters to add the NHPO's information where appropriate.

3.

Follow the NHPO on **Facebook** or **LinkedIn**.

4.

Join the NHPO's mailing list for monthly updates about the NHPO's work. Email media@nhpo.gov.au

Contact us

If you would like more specific information about our office, or how to refer complainants to us, please contact us via email at **media@nhpo.gov.au**