



National Health
Practitioner
Ombudsman

Bi-Annual Performance Report

1 July 2025 to 31 December 2025

From the Ombudsman and Commissioner: Highlights of our impact



Fairness and transparency in registration fees

On 27 November 2025, my office published the findings and suggestions for improvement from my investigation into the charging model for health practitioner registration fees. The investigation found that the way registration fees are charged can lead to unfair financial outcomes for some practitioners.

I recognised positive developments Ahpra announced during the investigation, including the introduction of a 30% rebate on annual registration fees for practitioners who take parental leave or other protected leave from 1 July 2025, and the commencement of a wider review of its pro rata fees strategy.

I also welcomed Ahpra's acceptance of my suggestions for improvement and the Health Chief Executives Forum's noting of the report.

I acknowledge that it is necessary for Ahpra and the National Boards to charge registration fees and this is enabled by the relevant law. But the way fees are charged must be fair.

Processes for Progress in accreditation

On 5 September 2025, I shared our Processes for Progress Review's Part 2 Consultation Report with the organisations subject to review and the Health Workforce Taskforce, to seek their valued perspectives and feedback.

The Consultation Report outlined the review's preliminary findings and recommendations in relation to 4 key areas of accreditation processes: governance, program of study accreditation, assessment of overseas qualified practitioners and grievance processes.

In August 2025, I attended and provided a keynote address as part of the Medical Board of Australia's 'Streamlining the Specialist Pathway' stakeholder workshop. This was an important opportunity to discuss process improvements related to the assessment of specialist international medical graduates.

I will present the findings from Part 2 of the Processes for Progress Review to the Health Workforce Taskforce in early 2026.

Enhancing internal processes

Over the past 6 months, my office has sought to more proactively identify potential psychosocial hazards in the workplace. This included introducing a tailored survey to identify potential psychosocial hazards, which achieved a high completion rate. We are carefully considering the results to ensure we respond effectively. This work is particularly important given our staff regularly manage complex and sensitive health-related complaints.

My office has also sought to ensure that it celebrates, values and includes people of all backgrounds, genders, sexualities, cultures, bodies and abilities. On 29 August 2025, for example, we celebrated 'Wear It Purple Day' and took the opportunity to share further information about inclusion and allyship with LGBTIQIA+ young people.

My office has continued our efforts to appropriately embed new performance measures in our reporting framework. This included, for example, facilitating a workshop in December 2025 to identify and address potential barriers and enablers to achieving our goals.

Bi-Annual Progress Report

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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.

Between 1 July and 31 December 2025, we **received 956 approaches** (down from 1,118 approaches in the same period last financial year). These approaches included:



465 enquiries

(down from 604 in Jul-Dec 2024)



14 FOI review applications

(up from 13 in Jul-Dec 2024)



17 privacy complaints

(up from 9 in Jul-Dec 2024)

Notably, in December 2025 we received a spike in privacy-related complaints associated with 2 notifications of privacy breaches that we received from Ahpra.

We also saw an increase in complaints about the renewal of health practitioner registration, largely associated with Ahpra's new practitioner portal. This continues the trend highlighted in our 2024–25 Annual Report.



460

Ombudsman
complaints received

(down from 490 in Jul-Dec 2024)

While there were changes to the volume of Ombudsman complaints received, complaint trends **remained largely consistent**. Most complaints were about the notifications process and related to the medical profession.



268

medical

(down from 336
in Jul-Dec 2024)



58

nursing

(down from 66
in Jul-Dec 2024)



46

psychology

(up from 34
in Jul-Dec 2024)

Types of Ombudsman complaints received

261

Notification-
related
complaints

(down from 284 in
Jul-Dec 2024)

Most common issue:

A notifier believed a decision to take no further action on their notification at the assessment stage was unfair or unreasonable.

138

Registration-
related
complaints

(down from 139 in
Jul-Dec 2024)

Most common issue:

A practitioner believed the process for renewing their general registration was unfair.

30

Accreditation-
related
complaints

(down from 42 in
Jul-Dec 2024)

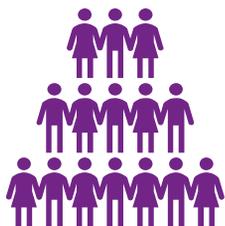
Most common issue:

An internationally qualified practitioner believed the process for assessing whether they are qualified for registration was unfair or unreasonable.

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947

approaches finalised

(down from 1,114 in
Jul-Dec 2024)

The small decrease in new approaches received provided our office with an opportunity to finalise more complex open matters, particularly Ombudsman complaints. For example, we finalised 25 investigations (up from 8 in the same period last financial year).

The Commissioner made **4 FOI review decisions** between July and December 2025. The Commissioner decided to affirm 2 of Ahpra's decisions. In the other 2 matters, the Commissioner set aside the decision Ahpra had made and substituted it with a new decision. These decisions are published on our **website**: <www.nhpo.gov.au/foi-review-decisions>.



454

Ombudsman
complaints finalised

(down from 488 in
Jul-Dec 2024)

Most common investigation outcomes

1. Our office provided feedback to the organisation complained about
2. Our office provided the complainant with a further explanation
3. Our office is addressing the issue via a separate systemic review
4. The organisation took appropriate steps to address a systemic problem
5. The organisation provided an apology or acknowledgement.

Including:

25 complaints
following an
investigation



We provide feedback and suggestions for systemic improvements when needed. Between July and December 2025 this included suggested improvements to how:

- a specialist medical college implements and documents significant policy changes affecting applicants seeking to enter a training program
- a specialist medical college documents its assessment of specialist international medical graduates
- identified errors in conditions imposed on a practitioner's registration can be remedied.