



National Health  
Practitioner  
Ombudsman

# Our work in April 2023

# Monthly approaches overview

1 April 2023 to 30 April 2023



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](mailto:complaints@nhpo.gov.au).

132

approaches  
received



Up from 97 in  
April 2022



40

Ombudsman  
complaints received



Down from 46 in  
April 2022



0

FOI matters  
received



Down from 2 in  
April 2022



2

privacy  
complaint received



Up from 1 in April  
2022



90

enquiries  
received



Up from 47 in  
April 2022



Ombudsman complaints  
were made by 32  
individuals (down from  
37 in April 2022)



0

FOI review  
decisions  
published



0

notifiable data  
breach assessed  
(1 in April 2022)

## Complaints to the Ombudsman

13

early resolution  
transfers made



Up from 10 in  
April 2022



7

preliminary  
inquiries made



Up from 4 in  
April 2022



3

investigations  
launched



Up from 2  
in April 2022



35

Ombudsman  
complaints finalised



Up from 32 in April 2022

Stage complaint was finalised

21

assessment

5

preliminary  
inquiry

8

early resolution  
transfer

1

investigation

# Notification-related complaints to the Ombudsman

1 April 2023 to 30 April 2023



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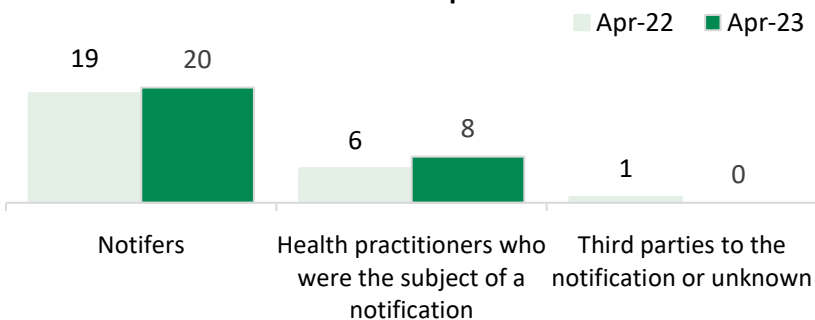
28

notification-related  
complaints received

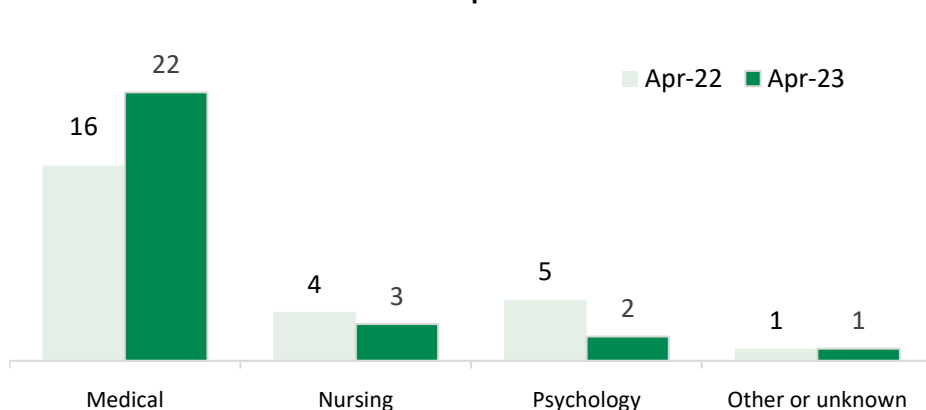


Up from 26 in April 2022

## Who made notification-related complaints



## Professions notification-related complaints were about



## Type of notifications action that most frequently drove notification-related complaints

1. No further action taken at the assessment stage
2. No further action taken where stage is unknown
3. Active notification
4. Action and stage are not yet known
5. No further action taken at the investigation stage

## Stage notification-related complaints were finalised



## Most common outcomes of notification-related complaints

1. Matter complained about was still active with the organisation
2. The organisation's response to the complaint was fair and reasonable
3. Investigation was not warranted in the circumstances
4. We have previously considered the same concerns being raised in the complaint
5. We provided feedback to the organisation

# Registration-related complaints to the Ombudsman

1 April 2023 to 30 April 2023



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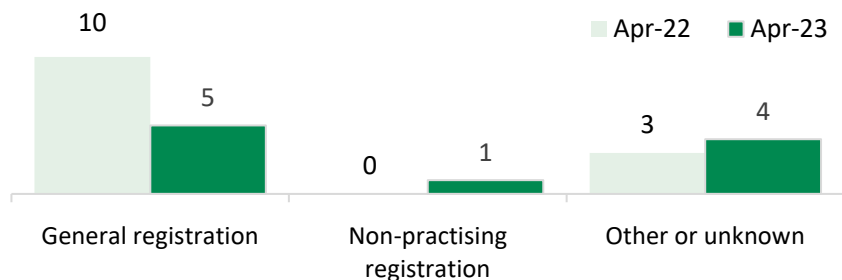
10

registration-related  
complaints received

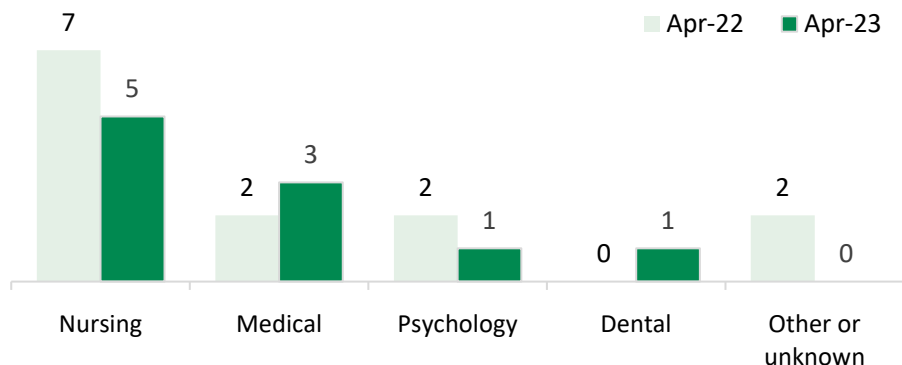


Down from 13 in April 2022

## Types of registration driving registration-related complaints



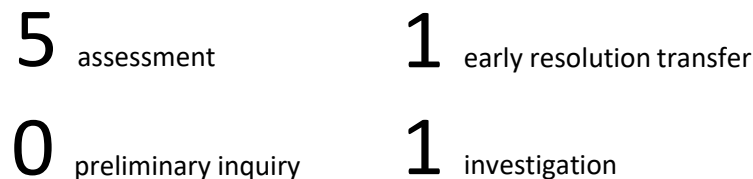
## Professions registration-related complaints were about



## Registration processes that most frequently drove registration-related complaints

1. Application of the English Language Skills Registration Standard
2. Assessment of an international qualification
3. Information included on the National Register
4. Applications for certificates of good standing/registration status
5. Assessment of health practitioner health or performance

## Stage registration-related complaints were finalised



## Most common outcomes of registration-related complaints

1. The complainant has made their complaint anonymously and cannot be contacted
2. Investigation is not warranted by the circumstances
3. Complainant did not provide requested information to the NHPO
4. Matter complained about was still active with the organisation
5. We provided feedback to the organisation



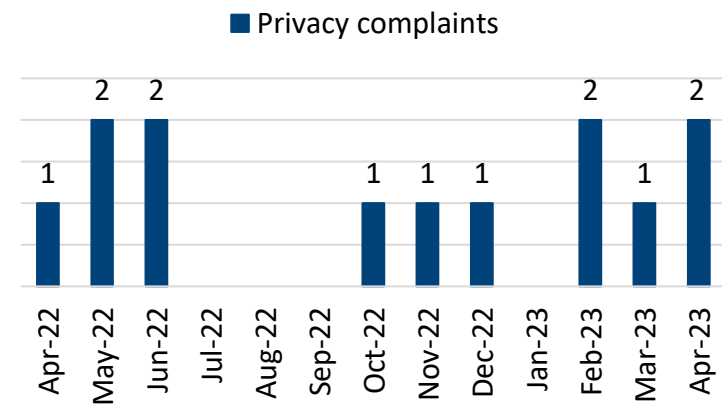
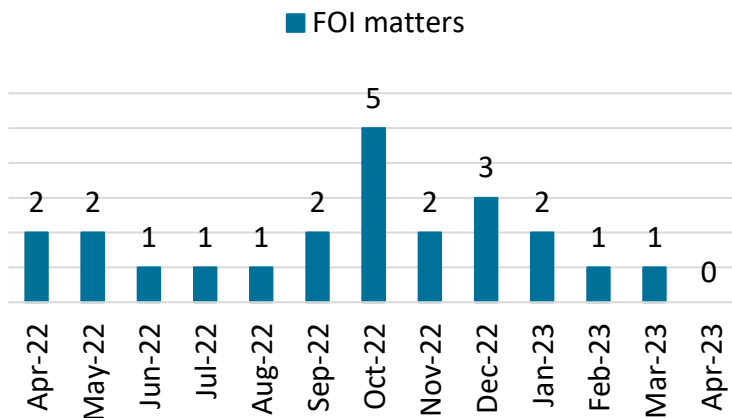
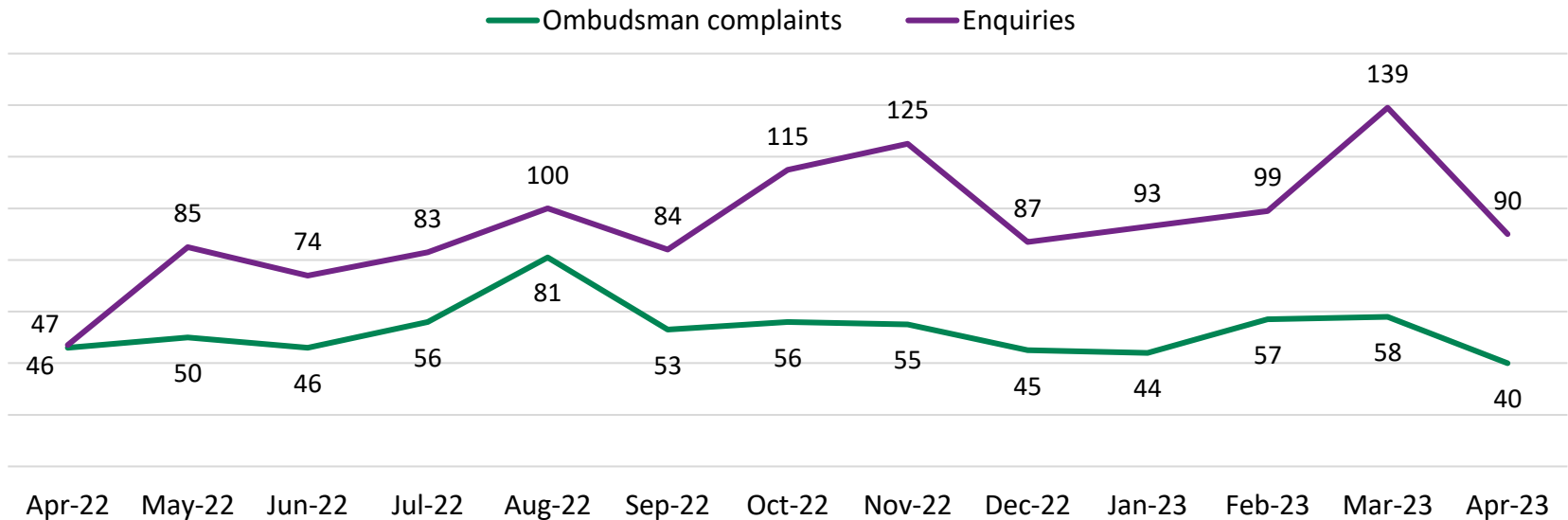
National Health  
Practitioner  
Ombudsman

# Our year to date

1 July 2022 to 30 April 2023

# Approach trends

1 July 2022 to 31 March 2023



# Ombudsman complaints received from 1 July 2022 to 30 April 2023

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## Types of complaints received

**352** ↑ notification  
Up from 264 in the same period last financial year

**135** ↑ registration  
Up from 117 in the same period last financial year

**12** Pandemic policy/ response  
**46** Other types

## Who made complaints

**309** health practitioners  
**236** Non-practitioners

↑ Up from 243 in the same period last financial year  
↓ Down from 487 in the same period last financial year

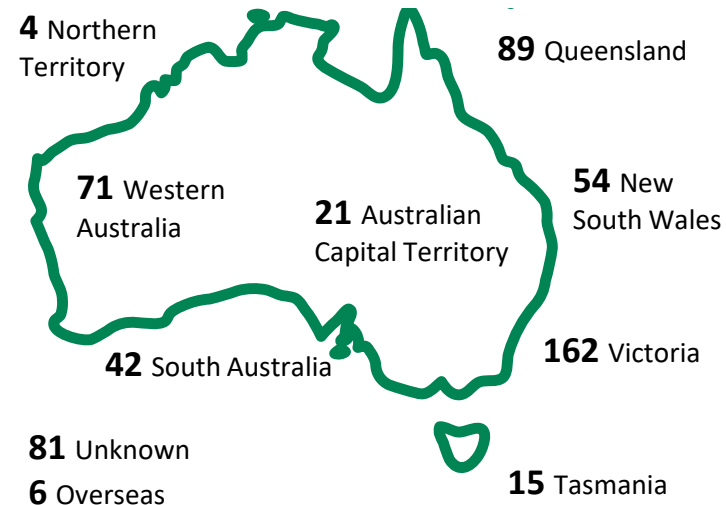
## Professions most complaints were about

**305** medical  
↓ Down from 523 in the same period last financial year

**74** Nursing  
↑ Up from 65 in the same period last financial year

**64** psychology  
↑ Up from 51 in the same period last financial year

## Location the complaints were made from



## Most common notification-related issues that drove complaints

1. Notifier believes the decision to take no further action at the assessment stage is unfair or unreasonable
2. Notifier believes an active notification has been unreasonably delayed
3. Practitioner believes an active notification has been unreasonably delayed

## Most common registration-related issues that drove complaints

1. Practitioner seeking general registration believes an assessment of whether they meet the English Language Skills Registration Standard is unfair or unreasonable
2. Practitioner seeking general registration believes the assessment of their international qualification is unreasonably delayed
3. Practitioner seeking general registration believes the process for satisfying the English Language Skills Registration Standard is unfair.

# Resolution of Ombudsman complaints from 1 July 2022 to 30 April 2023

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## Early resolution mechanisms

332 

complaints  
finalised at the  
assessment stage

Down from  
529 in the  
same period  
last financial  
year



79 

complaints finalised  
at the preliminary  
inquiry stage

Up from 78  
in the same  
period last  
financial  
year



108 

complaints finalised  
at the early resolution  
transfer stage

Up from 82  
in the same  
period last  
financial year



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

1. Investigation was not warranted in the circumstances
2. The organisation's response to the complaint was fair and reasonable
3. Matter was still active with the organisation
4. Complainant did not provide requested information
5. Investigation declined as the complaint concerned the merits of the organisation's decision

## Investigations

25 

complaints  
finalised at the  
investigation stage



Down from 90 in the same  
period last financial year

### Most common investigation outcomes

1. We provided feedback to the organisation
2. We provided a further explanation to the complainant
3. The organisation agreed to assess new material
4. Apology or acknowledgement was provided by the organisation
5. We facilitated contact between the complainant and organisation



# Ombudsman and Commissioner's observations

In April 2023 my office received 36 per cent more approaches when compared with April 2022, continuing the pattern of increased approaches to my office this financial year. However, we did see a reduction in approaches from March 2023, with 34 per cent fewer approaches recorded, including fewer complaints to the Ombudsman. The proportion of Ombudsman complaints we received remains consistent with last month, however, representing approximately 30 per cent of all approaches.

Concerns relating to the medical profession remain the main driver of notification-related complaints to the Ombudsman. Most notification-related complaints continue to be made by dissatisfied notifiers. In comparison, most registration-related complaints to the Ombudsman relate to the nursing profession, mainly regarding international qualification assessments and the application of the English Language Skills Registration Standard.

Of the 35 complaints to the Ombudsman we finalised in April 2023, most were resolved without formal investigation. We finalised one investigation which led to Ahpra updating its public facing information and undertaking to change a process. We also provided feedback to Ahpra about opportunities for improvement.