



National Health  
Practitioner  
Ombudsman

# Our work in July 2023

# Monthly approaches overview

1 July 2023 to 31 July 2023

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).

136

approaches received



Down from 141 in July 2022



39

Ombudsman complaints received



Down from 56 in July 2022



3

FOI matters received



Up from 1 in July 2022



1

privacy complaint received



Up from 0 in July 2022



91

enquiries received



Up from 83 in July 2022



Ombudsman complaints were made by 35 individuals (down from 53 in July 2022)



0

FOI review decisions published



2

notifiable data breach assessed (up from 1 in July 2022)

## Complaints to the Ombudsman

22

early resolution transfers made



Up from 13 in July 2022



9

preliminary inquiries made



Down from 12 in July 2022



0

investigations launched



Down from 1 in July 2022



48

Ombudsman complaints finalised



Down from 56 in July 2022

Stage complaint was finalised

35

assessment

5

preliminary inquiry

7

early resolution transfer

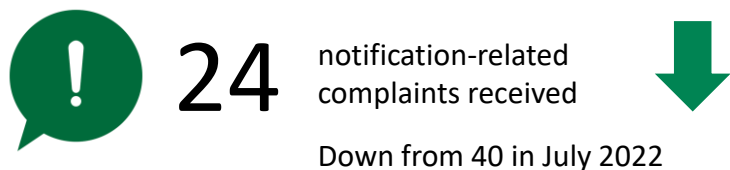
1

investigation

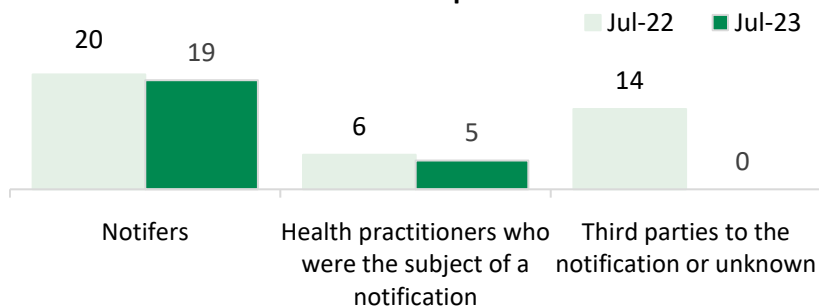
# Notification-related complaints to the Ombudsman

## 1 July 2023 to 31 July 2023

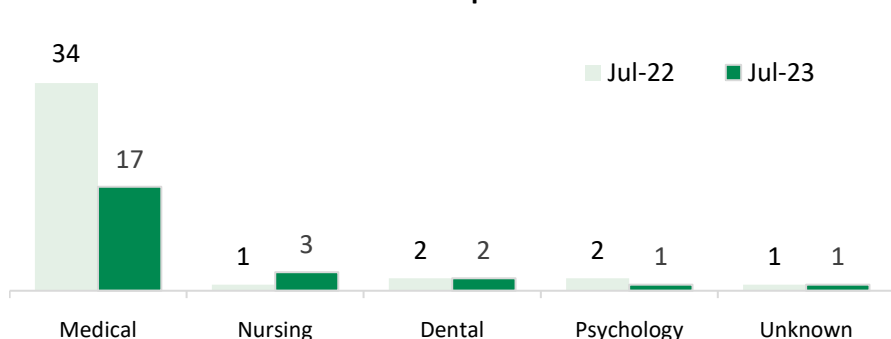
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### Who made notification-related complaints



### 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. Active notification about a practitioner
3. Action taken at the investigation stage
4. Action taken at the assessment stage
5. Stage and outcome of the notification are unknown

### Stage notification-related complaints were finalised



### Most common outcomes of notification-related complaints

1. Investigation was not warranted in the circumstances
2. Matter declined as the complainant did not provide requested information
3. The organisation's response to the complaint was fair and reasonable
4. Matter declined as the NHPO has previously considered the same concerns
5. Matter declined as it related to the merits of the organisation's decision

# Registration-related complaints to the Ombudsman

1 July 2023 to 31 July 2023



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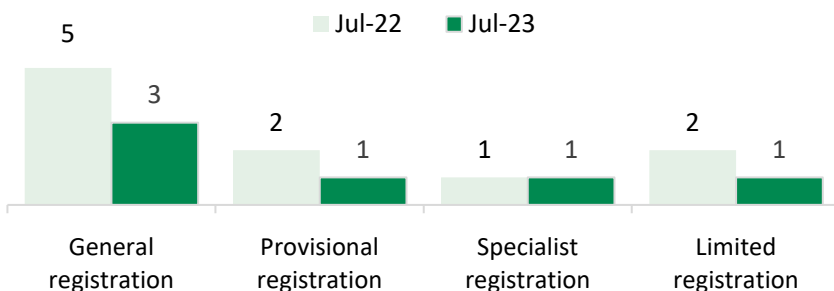
6

registration-related  
complaints received

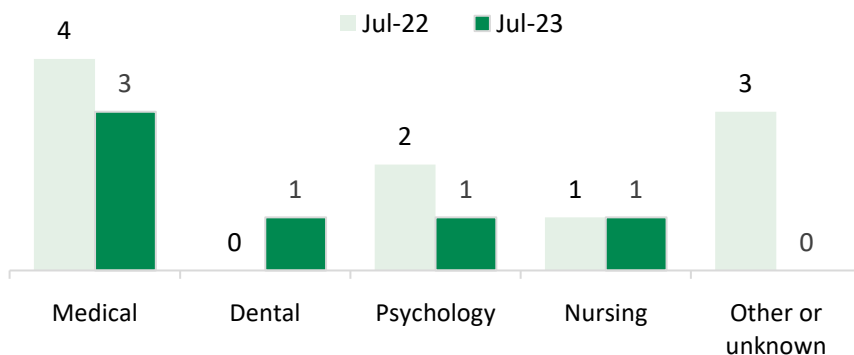


Down from 10 in June 2022

## Types of registration driving registration-related complaints



## Professions registration-related complaints were about



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

1. Compliance activity regarding restrictions on a practitioner's registration
2. Processing of a new application for registration
3. Transitioning from one registration type to another
4. Processing of a Change of Circumstances application
5. Review of conditions on a practitioner's registration

## Stage registration-related complaints were finalised



## Most common outcomes of registration-related complaints

1. Investigation is not warranted by the circumstances
2. Complainant did not provide information requested by the NHPO
3. The organisation's response to the complaint was fair and reasonable
4. Matter withdrawn by the complainant
5. Matter declined as it would be more appropriately handled by a Court or Tribunal

# Accreditation-related complaints to the Ombudsman

1 July 2023 to 31 July 2023



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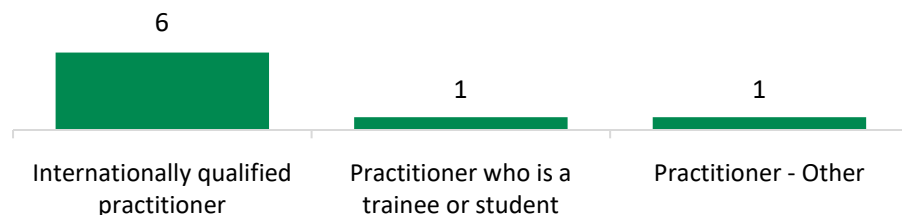
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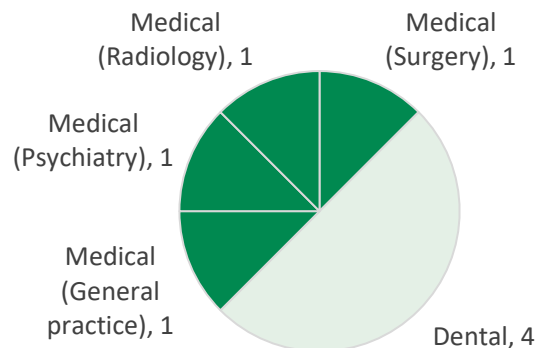
8

accreditation-related  
complaints received

## Who made accreditation-related complaints



## Professions and specialisations that accreditation-related complaints were about



## Processes that most frequently drove accreditation-related complaints

1. Change in a practitioner's assessment pathway
2. Assessment of an international qualification
3. Accessing exam results
4. Delivery of an exam
5. Review, reconsideration and appeal of an accreditation decision

## Stage accreditation-related complaints were finalised



## Most common outcomes of accreditation-related complaints

1. Nil for July 2023



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# Our year to date

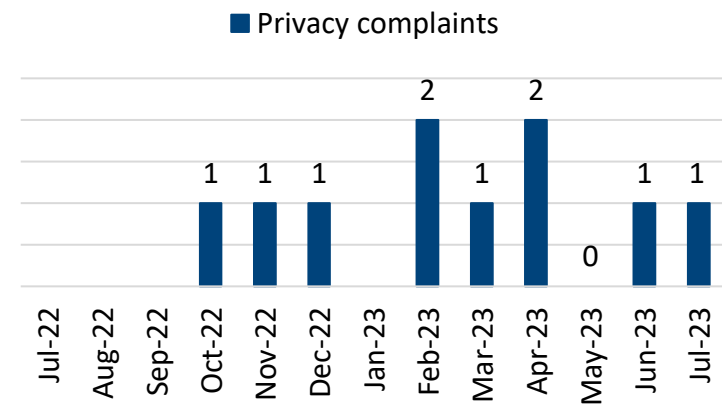
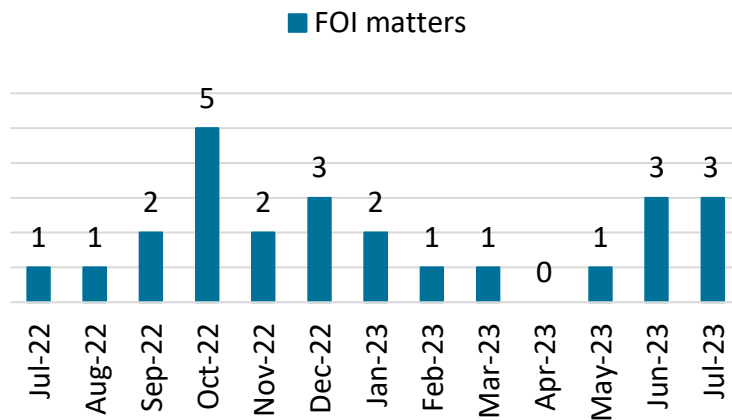
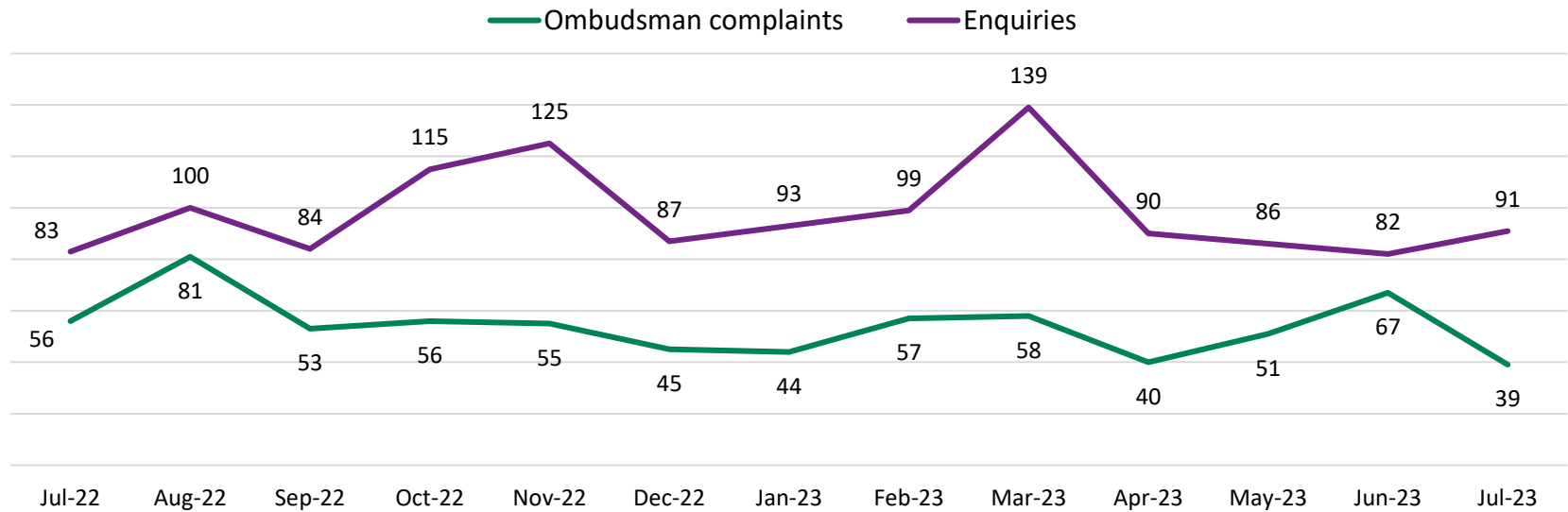
1 July 2023 to 31 July 2023

# Approach trends

1 July 2022 to 31 July 2023



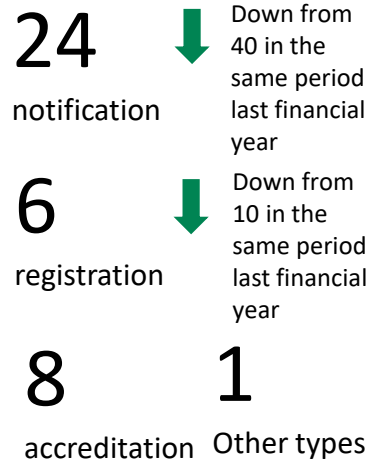
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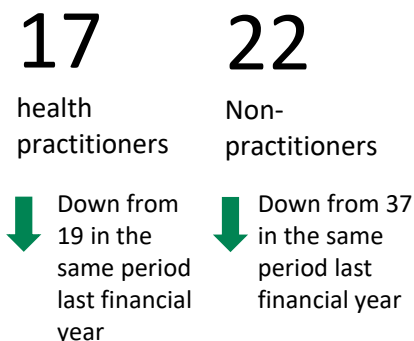
# Ombudsman complaints received from 1 July 2023 to 31 July 2023

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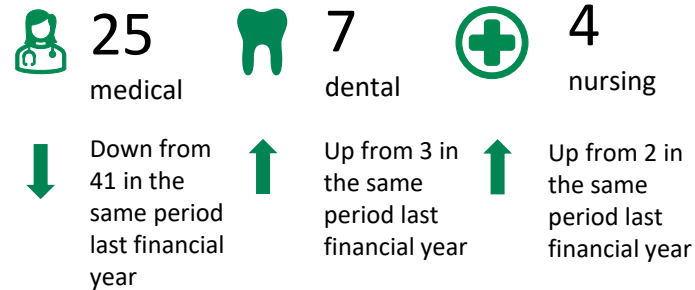
## Types of complaints received



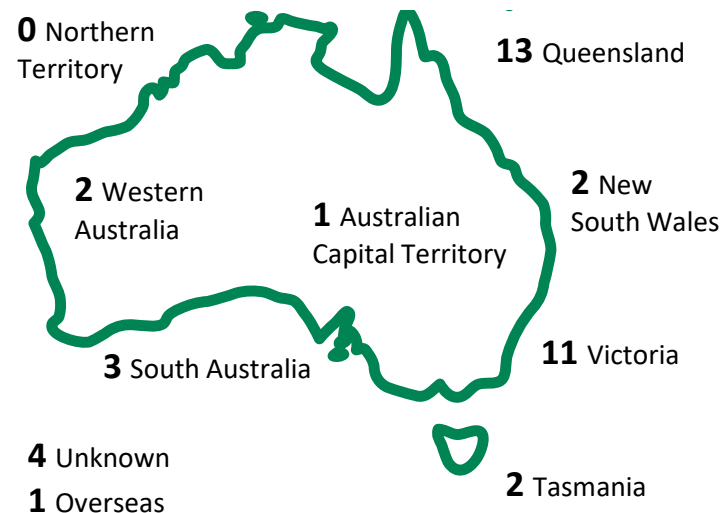
## Who made complaints



## Professions most complaints were about



## 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 the decision to take no further action at the assessment stage has been reached without all information being considered
3. Notifier believes the decision to take action at the assessment stage is unfair or unreasonable

## Most common registration-related issues that drove complaints

1. Practitioner seeking general registration believes compliance activity is unfair or unreasonable
2. Practitioner seeking limited registration believes the outcome of their application for a Change of Circumstances is unfair or unreasonable
3. Practitioner seeking specialist registration believes the processing of their new application for registration is unfair



# Resolution of Ombudsman complaints from 1 July 2022 to 31 July 2023

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## Early resolution mechanisms

35



complaints  
finalised at the  
assessment stage

Up from 33 in  
the same  
period last  
financial year



5



complaints finalised  
at the preliminary  
inquiry stage

Down from  
10 in the  
same period  
last financial  
year



7



complaints finalised  
at the early resolution  
transfer stage

Down from  
11 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. Complainant did not provide requested information
4. NHPO has previously considered same concerns
5. Matter was still active with the organisation being complained about.

## Investigations

1



complaints  
finalised at the  
investigation stage



Down from 2 in the same  
period last financial year

### Most common investigation outcomes

1. We provided feedback to the organisation being complained about
2. Apology or acknowledgement was provided by the organisation being complained about

# Ombudsman and Commissioner's observations

My office has begun the new financial year with 136 approaches, which is slightly less than we received in June 2023 (141). The number of enquiries received by my office remained consistently high, particularly those relating to matters outside of our jurisdiction (91, up from 82 in June 2023). We also received three applications for a review of a Freedom of Information (FOI) decision made by Ahpra, two notifications from Ahpra under the Notifiable Data Breaches Scheme, and 1 privacy complaint.

The overall decrease in approaches was primarily due to a reduction in the number of Ombudsman complaints received in July 2023 (39, down from 67 in June 2023). In particular, we saw reductions in both notification-related (24) and registration-related (6) complaints to the Ombudsman. However, there was a significant increase in complaints relating to our recently expanded accreditation function. We received 8 complaints about accreditation matters in July 2023, which is noteworthy because it is more than the number of registration-related complaints received during the same period. Most of the accreditation-related complaints in July 2023 were made by internationally qualified practitioners in relation to the assessment of their knowledge, judgement and professional skills.

During July 2023 we made 22 early resolution transfers, which is more than double the number of transfers made during the previous month (10). This indicates that a high number of complainants contacted our office before fully exhausting the complaint mechanisms offered by the organisation they were complaining about. We finalised 48 Ombudsman complaints, including one investigation which resulted in our office providing feedback to Ahpra and obtaining an apology from Ahpra for the complainant. We also finalised four FOI review applications and two privacy complaints in July 2023.