



National Health  
Practitioner  
Ombudsman

# Our work in November 2023

# Monthly approaches overview

1 November 2023 to 30 November 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).

139

approaches  
received



Down from 183 in  
November 2022



47

Ombudsman  
complaints received



Down from 55 in  
November 2022



0

FOI matters  
received



Down from 2 in  
November 2022



2

privacy  
complaints received



Up from 1 in  
November 2022



89

enquiries  
received



Down from 125 in  
November 2022



Ombudsman complaints  
were made by 42  
individuals (down from  
48 in November 2022)



0

FOI review  
decisions  
published



1

notifiable data  
breach assessed  
(Up from 0 in  
November 2022)

## Complaints to the Ombudsman

8

early resolution  
transfers made



Down from 15 in  
November 2022



23

preliminary  
inquiries made



Up from 6 in  
November 2022



0

investigations  
launched



Consistent with 0  
in November 2022



60

Ombudsman  
complaints finalised



Down from 62 in November 2022

### Stage complaint was finalised

35

assessment

12

early resolution  
transfer

11

preliminary  
inquiry

2

investigation

# Notification-related complaints to the Ombudsman

1 November 2023 to 30 November 2023



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29

notification-related  
complaints received

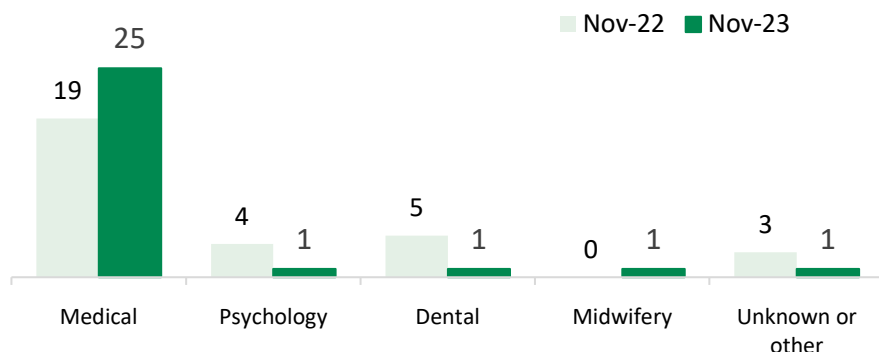


Down from 32 in November 2022

## 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 at an unknown stage
3. Action taken at the investigation stage
4. Notification remains active
5. Matter not processed as a notification

## Stage notification-related complaints were finalised

20 assessment      8 early resolution transfer  
11 preliminary inquiry      2 investigation

## Most common outcomes of notification-related complaints

1. Investigation was not warranted in the circumstances
2. We provided feedback to the organisation being complained about
3. The complainant did not provide the NHPO with requested information
4. Matter declined as it related to the merits of the organisation's decision
5. The organisation's response to the complaint was fair and reasonable

# Registration-related complaints to the Ombudsman

1 November 2023 to 30 November 2023



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Practitioner  
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8

registration-related  
complaints received

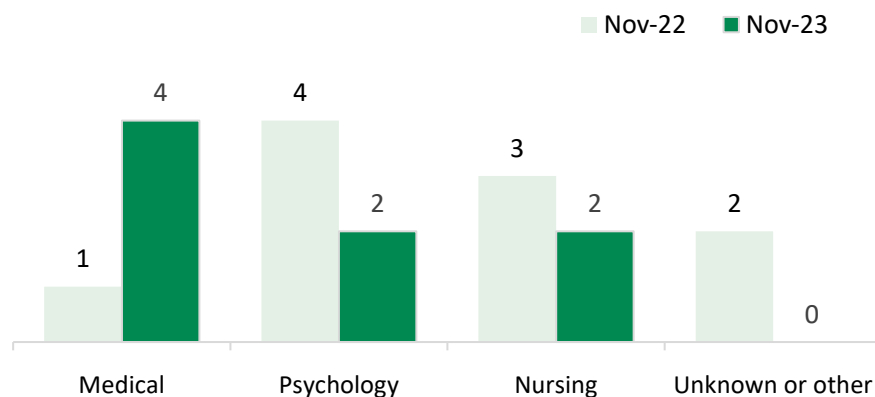


Down from 10 in November 2022

## 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. Processing of a renewal of registration application
4. Lapse of a practitioner's registration
5. Review of restrictions on a practitioner's registration

## Stage registration-related complaints were finalised



## Most common outcomes of registration-related complaints

1. The organisation's response to the complaint was fair and reasonable
2. Investigation was not warranted in the circumstances
3. The complainant did not provide the NHPO with requested information
4. The NHPO is monitoring the concern raised as a systemic issue
5. We provided feedback to the organisation being complained about



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# Our year to date

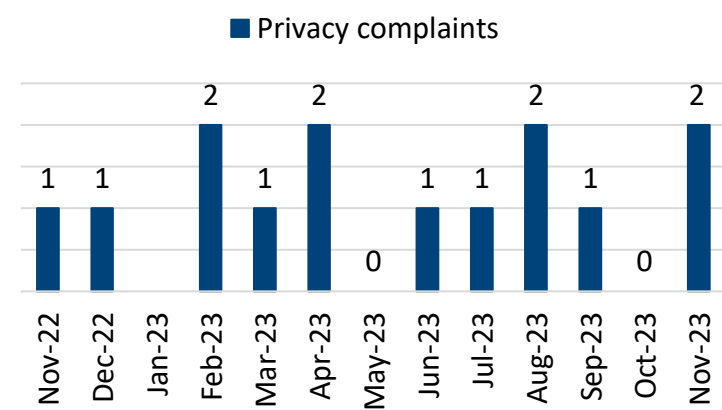
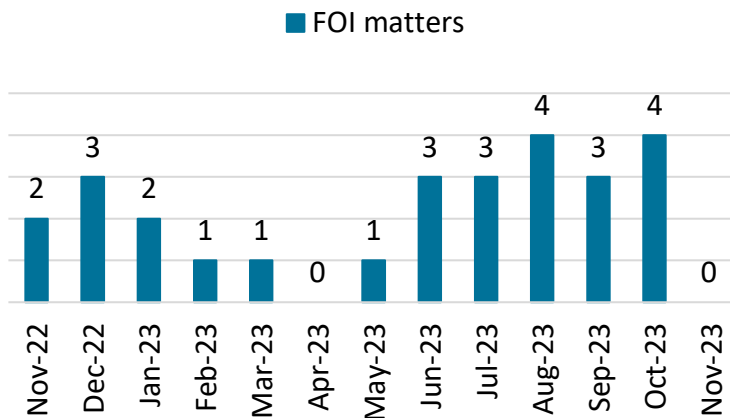
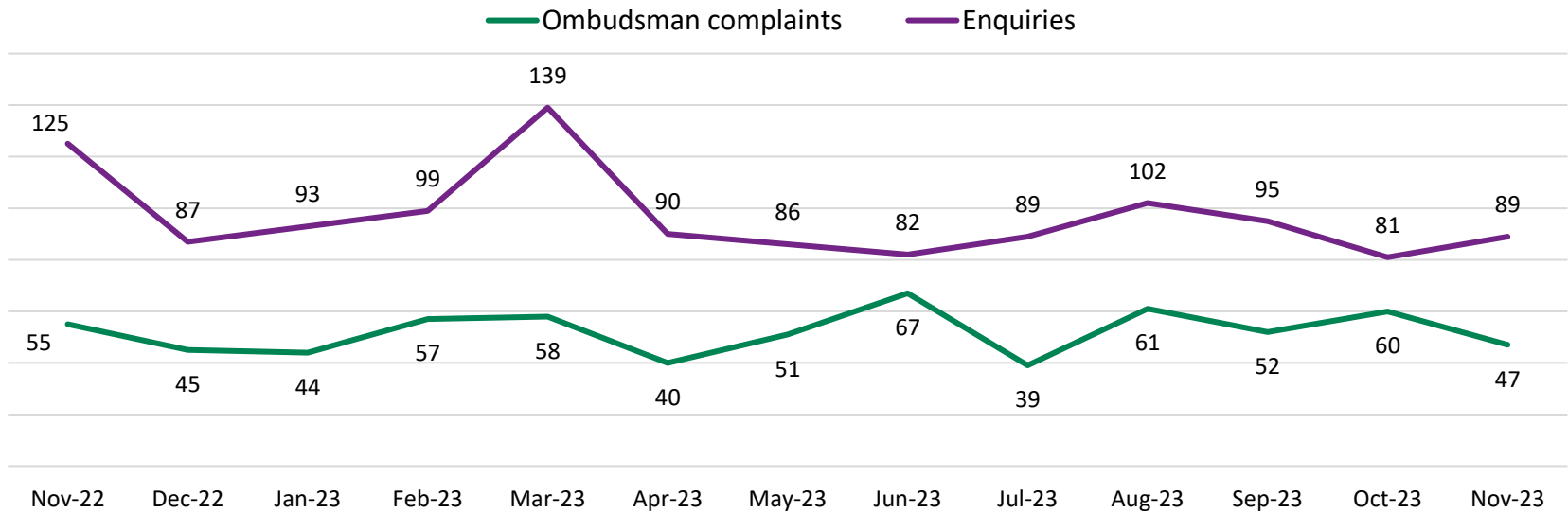
1 July 2023 to 30 November 2023

# Approach trends

1 July 2023 to 30 November 2023



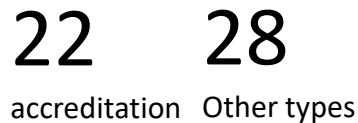
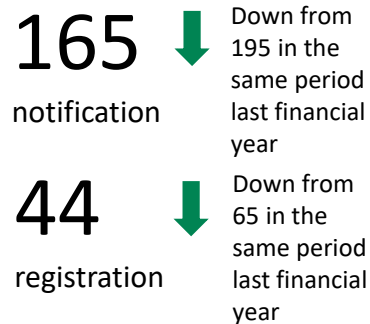
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Ombudsman



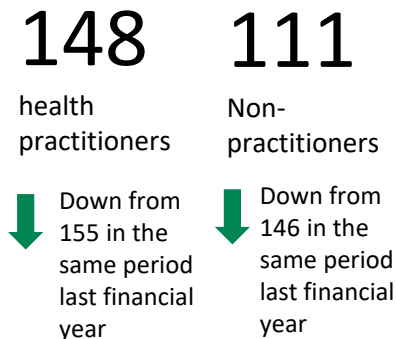
# Ombudsman complaints received from 1 July 2023 to 30 November 2023

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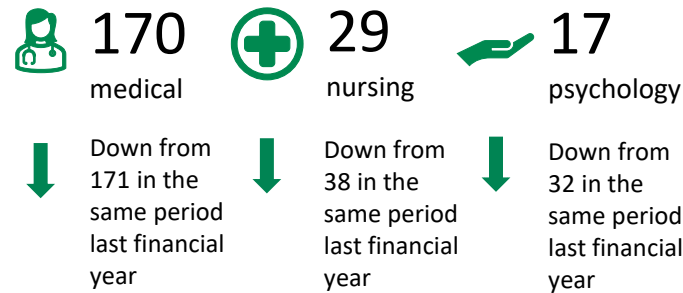
## Types of complaints received



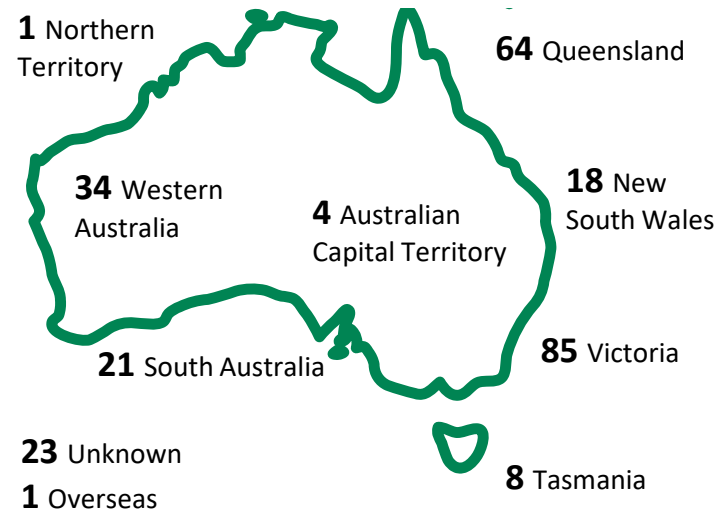
## Who made complaints



## Professions most complaints were about



## Location the complaints were made from



## Most common notification-related issues that drove complaints

1. Notifier believes a decision to take no further action at the assessment stage was unfair or unreasonable
2. Notifier believes a decision to take no further action at the assessment stage was made without all relevant evidence being considered
3. Notifier believes inadequate steps were taken before a decision to take no further action was made at the assessment stage

## Most common registration-related issues that drove complaints

1. Practitioner seeking general registration believes application of the English Language Skills Registration Standard has resulted in a decision that is unfair or unreasonable
2. Practitioner seeking general registration believes the fees they have been charged for registration are unfair or unreasonable
3. Practitioner seeking to transition to general registration from another registration type believes the process for doing so is unfair

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

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## Early resolution mechanisms

167 

complaints  
finalised at the  
assessment stage

Down from  
194 in the  
same period  
last financial  
year




52 

complaints finalised  
at the preliminary  
inquiry stage

Up from 48  
in the same  
period last  
financial  
year



41 

complaints finalised  
at the early resolution  
transfer stage

Down from  
65 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. The complainant did not provide information the NHPO had requested
4. The complaint concerned the merits of the organisation's decision
5. We have previously considered the concerns raised by the complainant

## Investigations

6 

complaints  
finalised at the  
investigation stage



Down from 11 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
3. We provided formal comments or suggestions to the organisation being complained about
4. We provided further explanation to the complainant
5. We are monitoring the concern raised as a systemic issue



# Ombudsman and Commissioner's observations

My office received 139 approaches during November 2023. This is 24 per cent less than November 2022 (183) and five per cent less than October 2023 (147). The decrease was largely due to a 29 per cent decrease in enquiries from November 2022 (89, down from 125).

In line with previous complaint trends, most complaints to the Ombudsman recorded in November 2023 related to Ahpra and the Boards' notifications process (29). Most of these complaints related to the medical profession (25) and were made by the person who made the notification (21).

My office received eight registration-related complaints during November 2023. The number of registration-related complaints was lower than in November 2022 (10), though slightly higher than in October 2023 (five). We only received one accreditation complaint.

During November 2023 my office continued to focus on early and efficient resolution of complaints wherever possible. My office initiated eight early resolution transfers (seven less than in November 2022) and made preliminary inquiries 23 times (a significant increase from six in November 2022). My office did not commence any new investigations.

My office finalised 60 complaints to the Ombudsman in November 2023. Most of these complaints were finalised at the assessment stage (35). Between July and November this year, 63 per cent of all complaints to the Ombudsman (167) were finalised at the assessment stage. An additional 35 per cent have been finalised without the need for a formal investigation following an early resolution transfer (41) or preliminary inquiries (52).

My office concluded two investigations into complaints to the Ombudsman in November 2023. My office provided feedback to Ahpra about the importance of promptly notifying practitioners about the receipt of a notification about them, and Ahpra's handling of allegations that a notification was made vexatiously. In addition, my office commented on the quality of information presented to the Boards, and the threshold which must be met before regulatory action can be proposed.