



National Health  
Practitioner  
Ombudsman

# Our work in April 2024

# Monthly approaches overview

1 April 2024 to 30 April 2024



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).

168

approaches  
received



Up from 132 in  
April 2023



71

Ombudsman  
complaints received



Up from 40 in  
April 2023



7

FOI matters  
received



Up from 0 in  
April 2023



0

privacy  
complaints received



Down from 2 in  
April 2023



90

enquiries  
received



Consistent with 90  
in April 2023



Ombudsman complaints  
were made by 55  
individuals (Up from 32  
in April 2023)



2

FOI review  
determinations  
(Up from 0 in  
April 2023)



0

notifiable data  
breaches assessed  
(Consistent with 0  
in April 2023)

## Complaints to the Ombudsman

9



early resolution  
transfers made

Down from 13 in  
April 2023



20



preliminary  
inquiries made

Up from 7 in  
April 2023



6



investigations  
launched

Up from 3  
in April 2023



52

Ombudsman  
complaints finalised

Up from 35 in April 2023



**Stage complaint was finalised**

32

assessment

3

early resolution  
transfer

15

preliminary  
inquiry

2

investigation

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# Notification-related complaints to the Ombudsman

1 April 2024 to 30 April 2024



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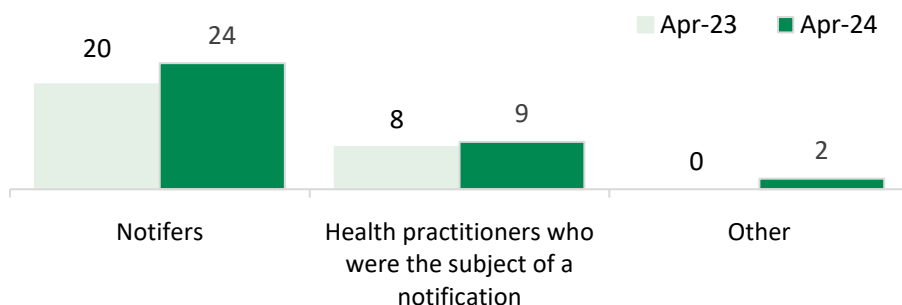
35

notification-related  
complaints received

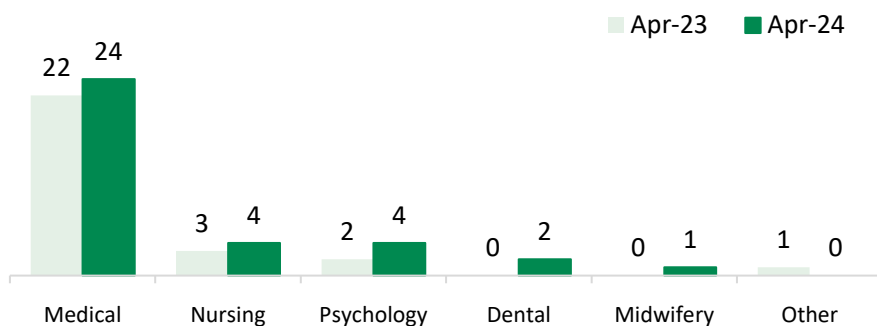


Up from 28 in April 2023

## 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. Notification is still active
3. Immediate action taken while the notification is investigated
4. No further action taken at an unknown stage
5. Action taken at the investigation stage

## Stage notification-related complaints were finalised

19 assessment      1 early resolution transfer  
11 preliminary inquiry      2 investigation

## Most common outcomes of notification-related complaints

1. An investigation was not warranted in the circumstances
2. Our office provided feedback to the organisation being complained about
3. The complaint could not be progressed because the complainant did not provide information that our office had requested
4. The complaint concerned the merits of the organisation's decision and we do not have the power to review the merits of a decision
5. A complaint about the matter was already active with the organisation being complained about

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# Registration-related complaints to the Ombudsman

1 April 2024 to 30 April 2024



National Health Practitioner Ombudsman

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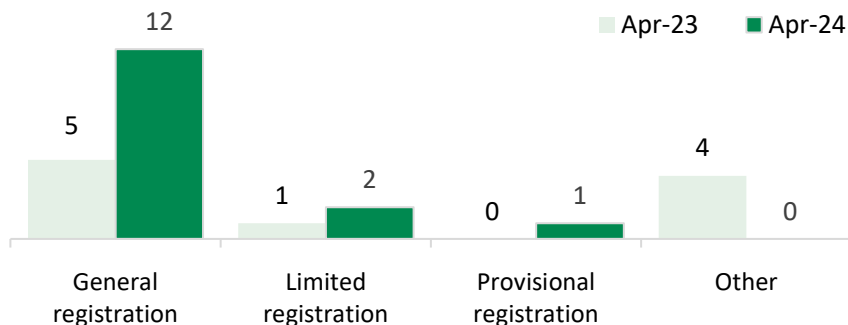


**15** registration-related complaints received

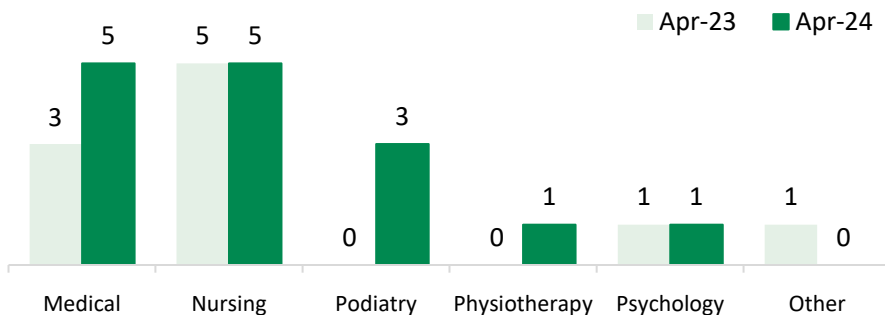


Up from 10 in April 2023

## 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. Compliance activity related to restrictions on a practitioner's registration
4. Processing of a new application for registration
5. Fees charged for registration

## Stage registration-related complaints were finalised

**4** assessment      **1** early resolution transfer  
**1** preliminary inquiry      **0** investigation

## Most common outcomes of registration-related complaints

1. Our office is monitoring the concern as a systemic issue
2. An investigation was not warranted in the circumstances
3. The organisation's response to the complaint was fair and reasonable
4. A complaint about the matter was already active with the organisation being complained about
5. An investigation was not appropriate because the complainant became aware of the issue more than 12 months ago

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# Accreditation-related complaints to the Ombudsman

1 April 2024 to 30 April 2024



National Health Practitioner Ombudsman

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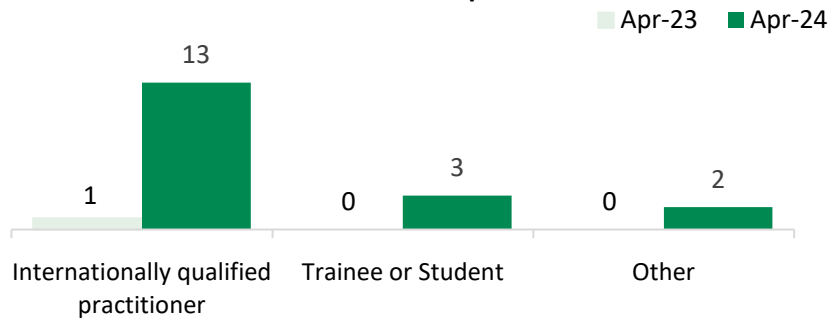


**18** accreditation-related complaints received

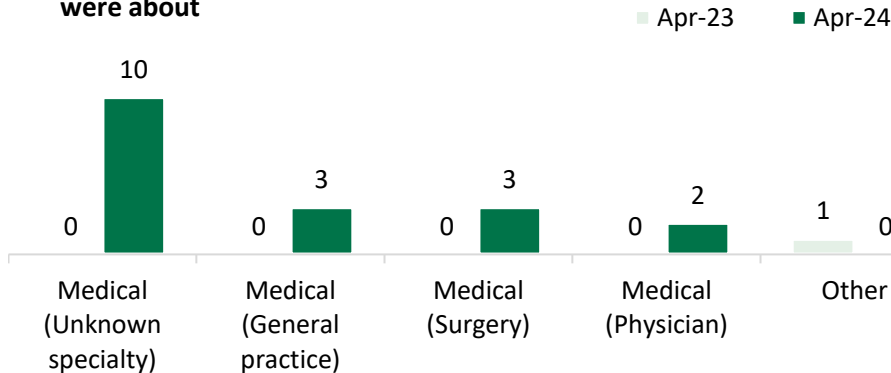


Up from 1 in April 2023

## Who made accreditation-related complaints



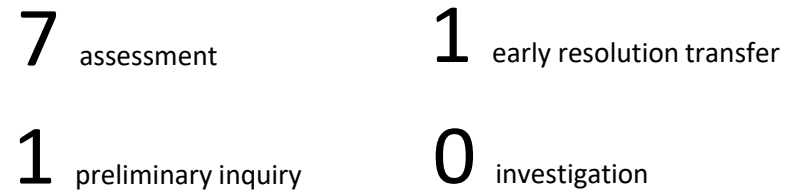
## Professions and specialties that accreditation-related complaints were about



## Processes that most frequently drove accreditation-related complaints

1. Fairness of an exam
2. Assessment of an international qualification
3. Entry to a specialist medical training program
4. Merits review processes
5. Oversight and/or monitoring processes

## Stage accreditation-related complaints were finalised



## Most common outcomes of accreditation-related complaints

1. The matter could not be progressed because the complainant was anonymous and couldn't be contacted
2. An investigation was not warranted in the circumstances
3. An investigation was not appropriate because the complainant became aware of the issue more than 12 months ago
4. A complaint about the matter was already active with the organisation being complained about
5. The complaint concerned the merits of the organisation's decision and we do not have the power to review the merits of a decision

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# Our year to date

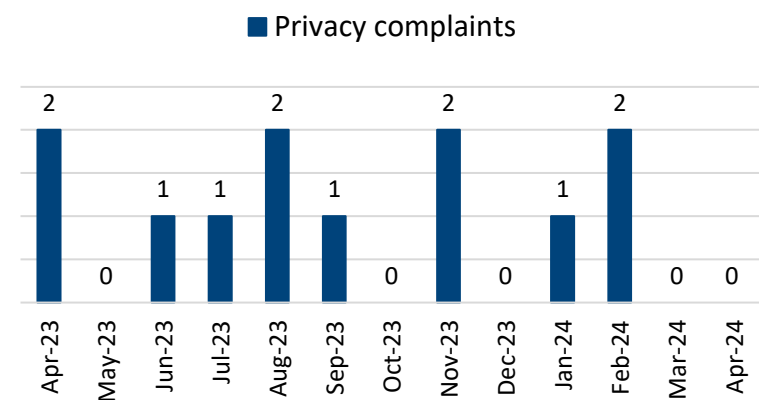
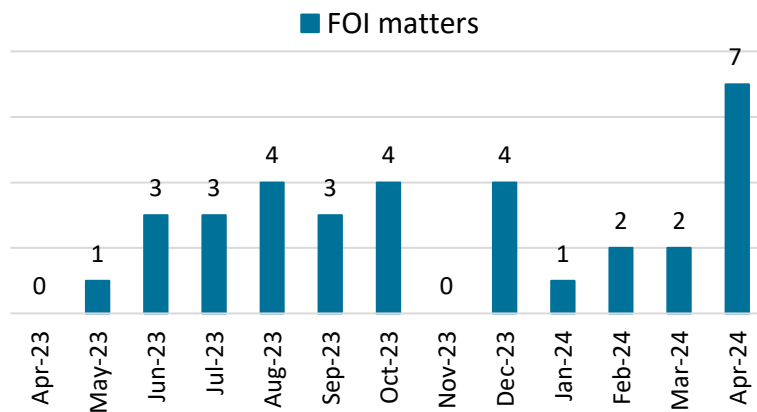
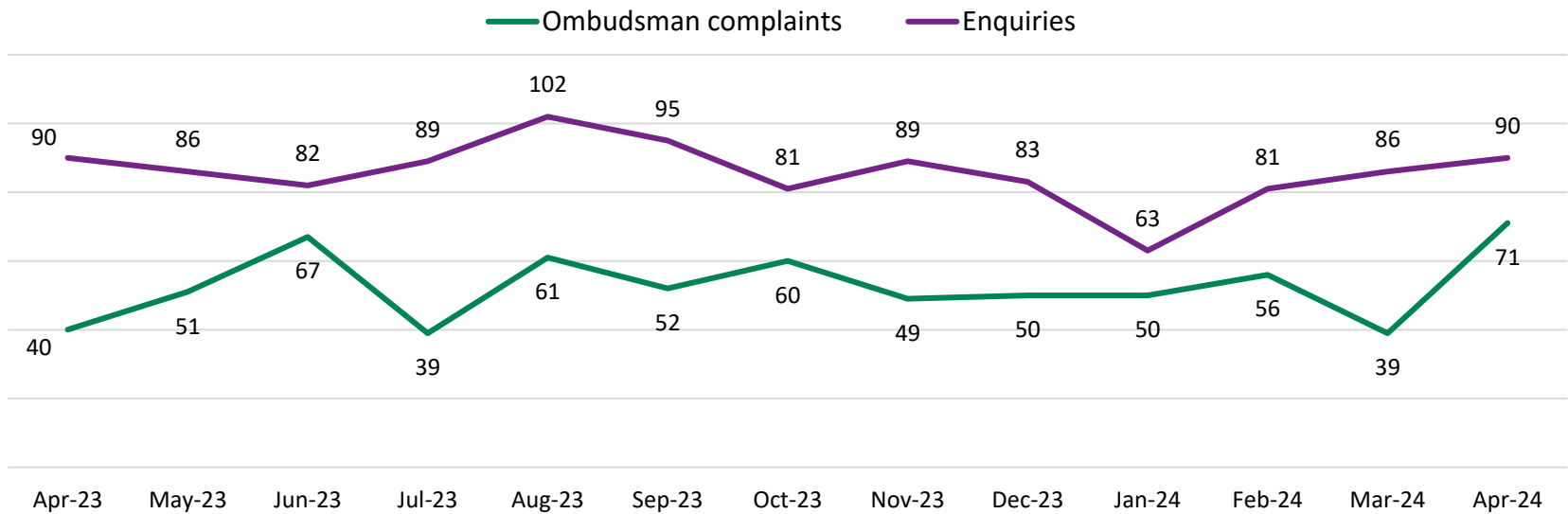
1 July 2023 to 30 April 2024

# Approach trends

1 April 2023 to 30 April 2024



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# Ombudsman complaints received from 1 July 2023 to 30 April 2024

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## Types of complaints received

**329** ↓ Down from 352 in the same period last financial year  
notification

**98** ↓ Down from 131 in the same period last financial year  
registration

**57** accreditation  
**43** Other types

## Who made complaints

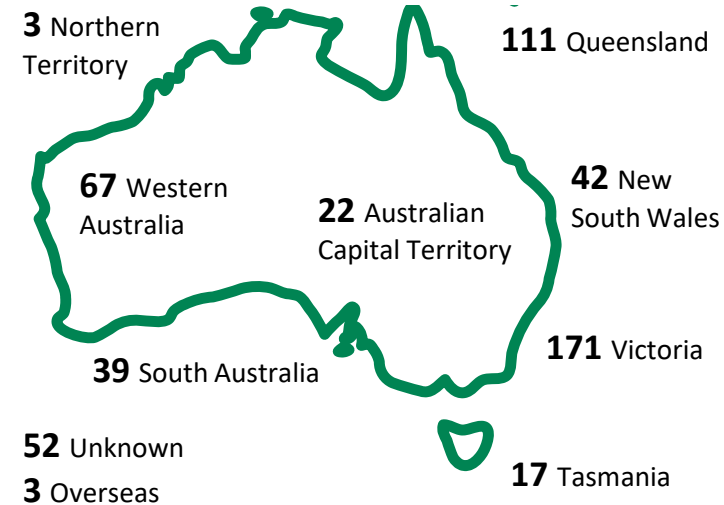
**311** health practitioners  
**216** Non-practitioners

↑ Up from 307 in the same period last financial year  
↓ Down from 238 in the same period last financial year

## Professions most complaints were about

**335** medical ↑ Up from 305 in the same period last financial year  
**72** nursing ↓ Down from 74 in the same period last financial year  
**41** psychology ↓ Down from 64 in the same period last financial year

## 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 information being considered
3. Notifier believes inadequate reasons have been given for a decision to take no further action at the assessment stage

## Most common registration-related issues that drove complaints

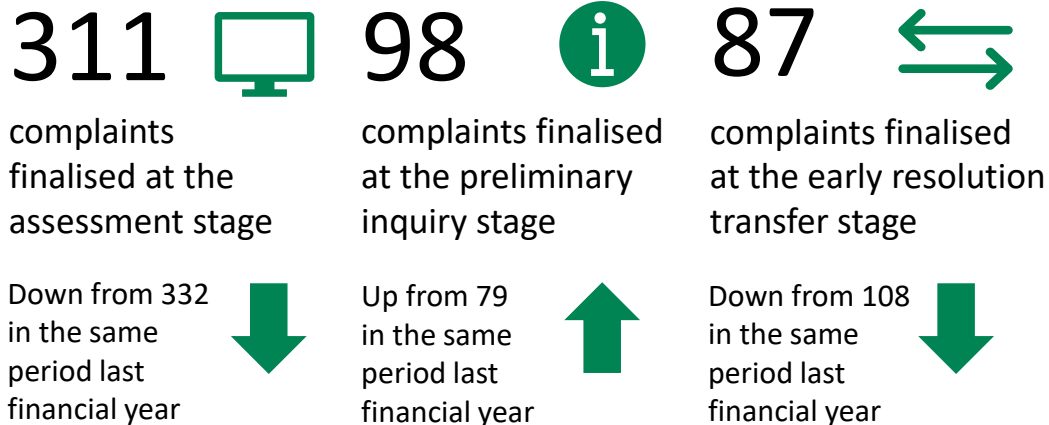
1. Practitioner seeking general registration believes the process for satisfying the English Language Skills Registration Standard is unfair
2. Practitioner seeking general registration believes the application of the English Language Skills Registration Standard has resulted in a decision that is unfair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



# Resolution of Ombudsman complaints from 1 July 2024 to 30 April 2024

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## Early resolution mechanisms



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

1. An investigation was not warranted in the circumstances
2. The organisation's response to the complaint was fair and reasonable
3. The complaint could not be progressed because the complainant did not provide information that our office had requested
4. The complaint concerned the merits of the organisation's decision and we do not have the power to review the merits of a decision
5. The underlying matter complained about remains active and the organisation should be given an opportunity to finalise it

## Investigations



### Most common investigation outcomes

1. We provided feedback to the organisation being complained about
2. An apology or acknowledgement was provided by the organisation being complained about
3. We are monitoring the concern raised as a systemic issue
4. We provided a further explanation of a decision or action to the complainant
5. We provided formal comments or suggestions for improvement to the organisation being complained about

# Ombudsman and Commissioner's observations

My office received 168 approaches in April 2024, which is a significant increase from April 2023 (132). The increase in contact can be attributed to a growth in Ombudsman complaints (71, up from 40 in April 2023). A considerable increase in FOI review applications was also noted (seven, up from zero in April 2023).

Enquiries about matters that my office cannot assist with continued to form a large part of approaches received (90) in April 2024. This was consistent with the number of enquiries received in April 2023 (also 90).

Notification-related complaints (35, up from 28), registration-related complaints (15, up from 10) and accreditation-related complaints (18, up from one) all increased in April 2024 compared to April 2023. The types of concerns raised in notification-related complaints remained consistent with past trends; complaints were more likely to be made by notifiers in relation to a decision to take no further action.

The changed nature of registration-related complaints noted in March 2024 did not continue in April 2024. Concerns about the assessment of English language skills and international qualifications returned to prominence. A small but uncharacteristic increase in registration concerns relating to the podiatry profession was observed. My office will continue to closely monitor any changes in registration-related complaints.

A record number of accreditation-related complaints were received in April 2024 (18). This was largely driven by a cohort of internationally qualified medical practitioners with similar concerns about the fairness of an exam and their ability to access further exam sittings. My office is working closely with the organisation complained about in relation to these issues.

My office initiated six new investigations, facilitated nine early resolution transfers and made preliminary inquiries into 20 Ombudsman complaints in April 2024.

My office finalised 52 Ombudsman complaints during April 2024 (up from 35 in April 2023). This included two investigations, the outcomes of which included providing feedback to the organisation complained about regarding opportunities for improvement. April 2024 also saw my office conclude five FOI review applications, two of which were finalised with a determination to affirm Ahpra's original FOI decision. These FOI determinations will soon be published on my office's website.