



National Health
Practitioner
Ombudsman

Our work in May 2024

Monthly approaches overview

1 May 2024 to 31 May 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.

157

approaches
received



Up from 138 in
May 2023



56

Ombudsman
complaints received



Up from 51 in
May 2023



4

FOI matters
received



Up from 1 in
May 2023



2

privacy
complaints received



Up from 0 in
May 2023



94

enquiries
received



Up from 86
in May 2023



Ombudsman complaints
were made by 50
individuals (Up from 36
in May 2023)



0

FOI review
determinations
(Consistent with
0 in May 2023)



1

notifiable data
breach assessed
(Up from 0 in May
2023)

Complaints to the Ombudsman

11

early resolution
transfers made



Down from 18 in
May 2023



15

preliminary
inquiries made



Up from 11 in
May 2023



1

investigation
launched



Consistent with 1
in May 2023



81

Ombudsman
complaints finalised

Up from 62 in May 2023



Stage complaint was finalised

56 assessment

19 preliminary
inquiry

6 early resolution
transfer

0 investigation

Notification-related complaints to the Ombudsman

1 May 2024 to 31 May 2024



National Health Practitioner Ombudsman

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32

notification-related complaints received

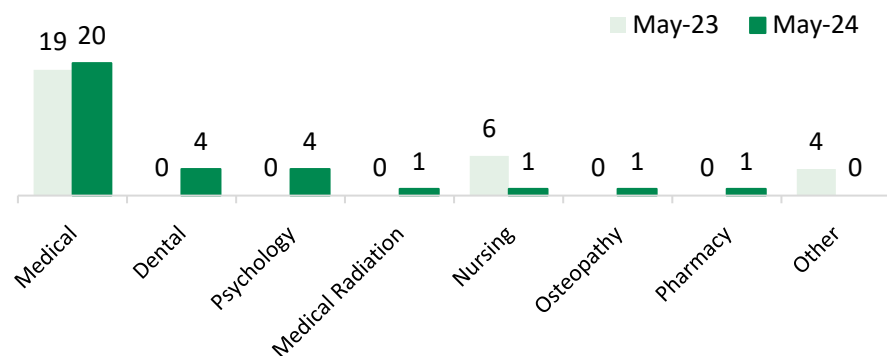


Up from 29 in May 2023

Who made notification-related complaints



Professions notification-related complaints were about



Types of notification actions 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. Concerns not processed as a notification
5. Action taken at the assessment stage

Stage notification-related complaints were finalised

26 assessment 3 early resolution transfer
9 preliminary inquiry 0 investigation

Most common outcomes of notification-related complaints

1. An investigation was not warranted in the circumstances
2. The complaint could not be progressed because the complainant did not provide information that our office had requested
3. The organisation's response to the complaint was fair and reasonable
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 complainant agreed that their concerns had been resolved to their satisfaction

Registration-related complaints to the Ombudsman

1 May 2024 to 31 May 2024



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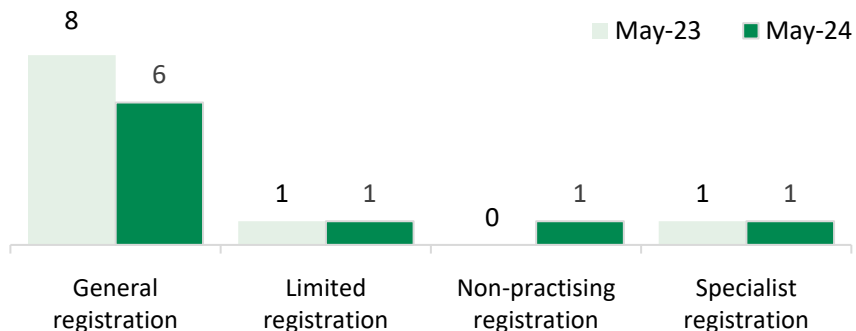
9

registration-related complaints received

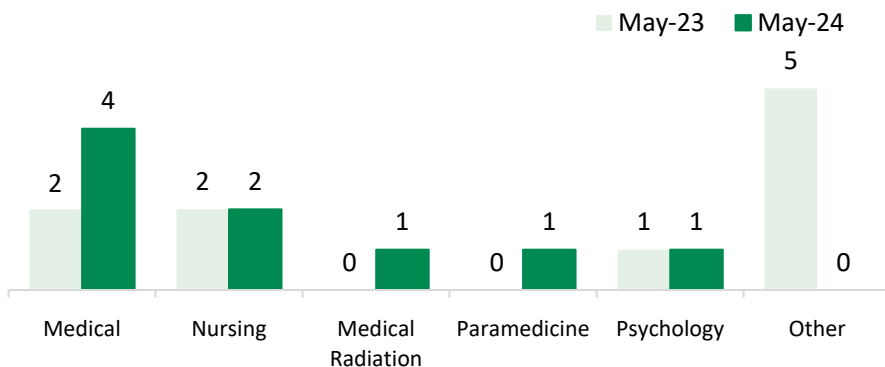


Down from 10 in May 2023

Types of registration driving registration-related complaints



Professions registration-related complaints were about



Registration processes that most frequently drove registration-related complaints

1. Processing of a new application for registration
2. Assessment of an international qualification
3. Processing of an application for registration renewal
4. Processing of a practitioner's application for a 'change of circumstances'
5. Supervision requirements on a practitioner's registration

Stage registration-related complaints were finalised

11 assessment 3 early resolution transfer
 5 preliminary inquiry 0 investigation

Most common outcomes of registration-related complaints

1. An investigation was not warranted in the circumstances
2. Our office is monitoring the concern as a systemic issue
3. The organisation's response to the complaint was fair and reasonable
4. The complaint could not be progressed because the complainant did not provide information that our office had requested
5. The complainant had not yet raised their concerns with the organisation being complained about

Accreditation-related complaints to the Ombudsman

1 May 2024 to 31 May 2024



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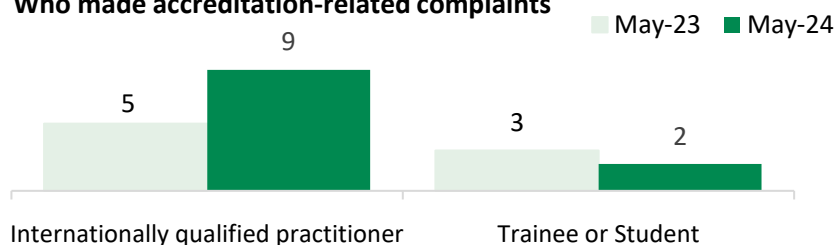
11

accreditation-related
complaints received

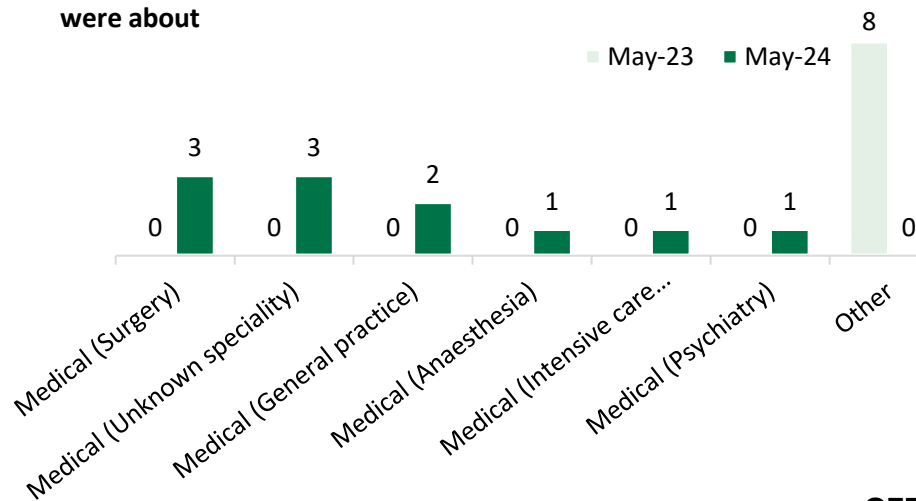


Up from 8 in May 2023

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. Merits review processes
3. Assessment of an international qualification
4. Concerns about bullying or harassment at a training site
5. Application of an accreditation standard

Stage accreditation-related complaints were finalised

15 assessment 0 early resolution transfer
1 preliminary inquiry 0 investigation

Most common outcomes of accreditation-related complaints

1. Our office is monitoring the concern as a systemic issue
2. The organisation's response to the complaint was fair and reasonable
3. An investigation was not warranted in the circumstances
4. A complaint about the matter was already active with the organisation being complained about



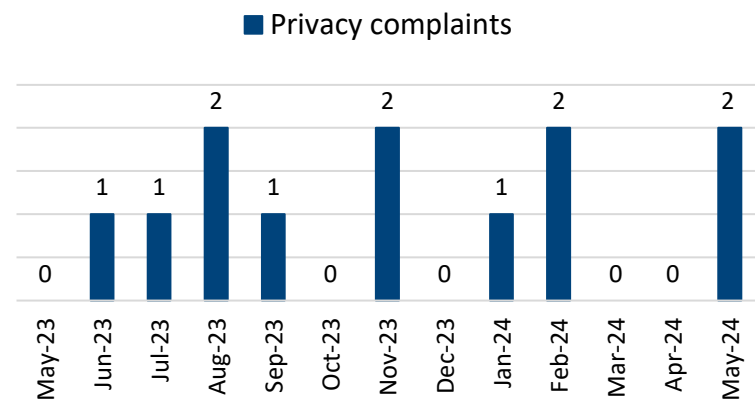
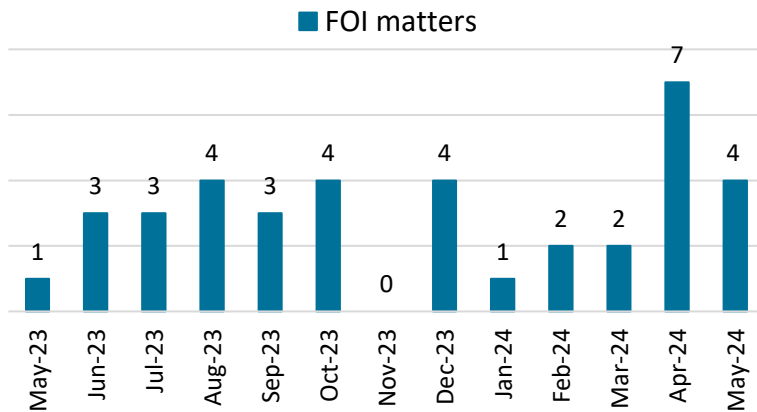
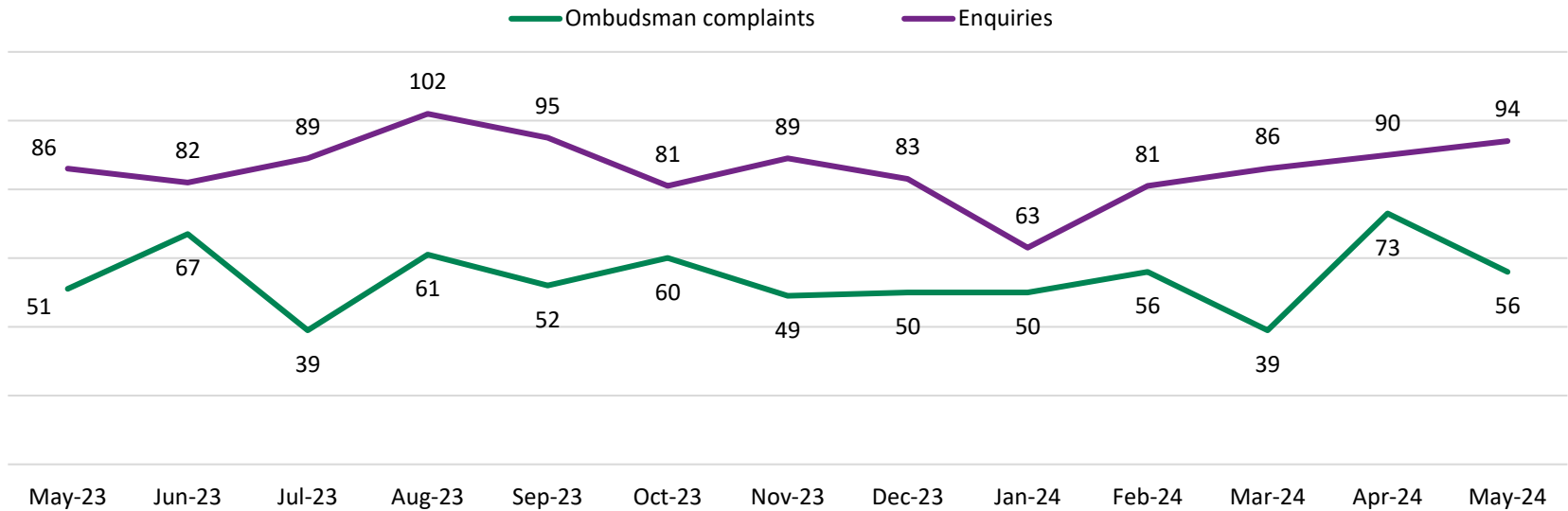
National Health
Practitioner
Ombudsman

Our year to date

1 July 2023 to 31 May 2024

Approach trends

1 May 2023 to 31 May 2024



Ombudsman complaints received from 1 July 2023 to 31 May 2024

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Types of complaints received

363 ↓ Down from 381 in the same period last financial year
notification

107 ↓ Down from 141 in the same period last financial year
registration

68 accreditation
47 Other types

Who made complaints

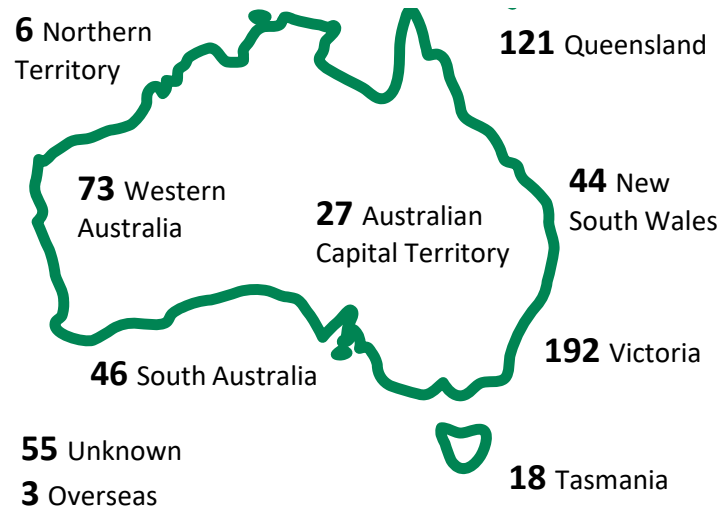
349 health practitioners
236 Non-practitioners

↑ Up from 344 in the same period last financial year
↓ Down from 252 in the same period last financial year

Professions most complaints were about

371 medical ↑ Up from 331 in the same period last financial year
77 nursing ↓ Down from 83 in the same period last financial year
48 psychology ↓ Down from 65 in the same period last financial year

Location 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

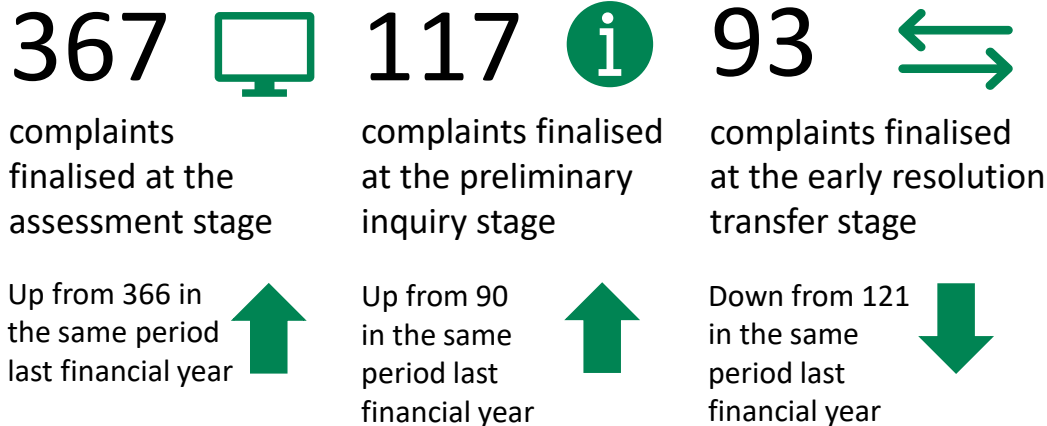
Most common registration-related issues that drove complaints

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 31 May 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 157 approaches in May 2024, 14 per cent more than in May 2023 (138). We saw an increase across all types of matters we receive, including privacy and Freedom of Information matters.

We received slightly more notification-related complaints in May 2024 when compared to May 2023 (32, up from 29). Trends in notification-related complaints remained consistent, with concerns more likely to be raised about the medical profession and by the person who made the notification. Interestingly, we saw a reduction in complaints relating to the nursing profession when compared with last year (one, down from six).

Trends in registration-related complaints remained relatively consistent when compared with May 2023 (nine, down from 10). We did, however, see a change in the professions which complaints related to. For example, we received complaints related to the medical, nursing and psychology professions in both May 2023 and May 2024. However, in May 2023 we also received two complaints about the osteopathy profession and a complaint about each of the dental, physiotherapy and occupational therapy professions. In May 2024 we did not receive complaints about these professions, but received a complaint about the medical radiation and paramedicine professions.

The complaints my office received about accreditation-related concerns in May 2024 also remained relatively consistent when compared with May 2023 (11, up from eight). In both May 2023 and May 2024, the concerns raised with my office predominantly related to exams provided to internationally qualified practitioners by accreditation organisations. However, the professions (and associated specialties) of the practitioners involved in complaints were significantly different. This month all complaints related to the medical profession.

My office initiated one new investigation, facilitated 11 early resolution transfers and made preliminary inquiries into 15 Ombudsman complaints in May 2024.

We finalised 81 Ombudsman complaints during May 2024 (up from 62 in May 2023). All complaints were finalised without undertaking a formal investigation. Notably, we finalised 13 complaints because they raised very similar concerns which we are considering as part of an 'own motion' investigation.