



National Health
Practitioner
Ombudsman

Our work in August 2024

Monthly approaches overview

1 August 2024 to 31 August 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.

258
approaches
received



Up from 169 in
August 2023



143
Ombudsman
complaints received



Up from 61 in
August 2023



3
FOI matters
received



Down from 4 in
August 2023



3
privacy
complaints received



Up from 2 in
August 2023



109
enquiries
received



Up from 102 in
August 2023



Ombudsman complaints
were made by 117
individuals (up from 39
in August 2023)



0
FOI review
determinations
(0 in August
2023)



0
notifiable data
breaches assessed
(0 in August 2023)

Complaints to the Ombudsman

12
early resolution
transfers made



Down from 22 in
August 2023



26
preliminary
inquiries made



Up from 16 in
August 2023



3
investigations
launched



Up from 0
in August 2023



146

Ombudsman
complaints finalised
Up from 64 in
August 2023



Stage complaint was finalised

104 assessment

23 preliminary
inquiry

17 early resolution
transfer

2 investigation

OFFICIAL

Notification-related complaints to the Ombudsman

1 August 2024 to 31 August 2024

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46

notification-related complaints received

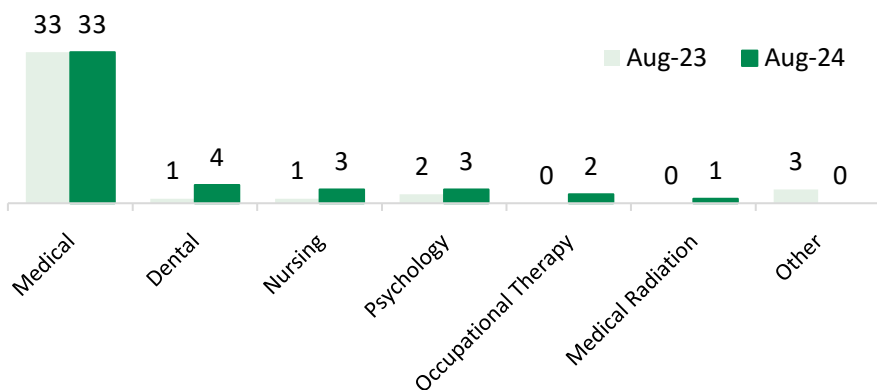


Up from 40 in August 2023

Who made notification-related complaints



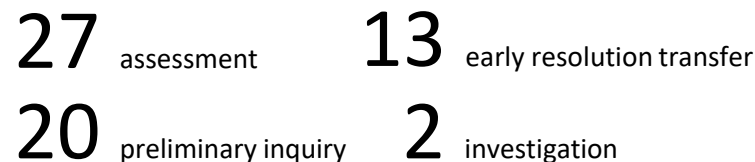
Professions notification-related complaints were about



Types of notification actions that most frequently drove notification-related complaints

1. No further action taken at the assessment stage
2. An active notification
3. Notification was referred to a tribunal or panel
4. Concerns were not processed as a notification
5. Action was taken at the assessment stage

Stage notification-related complaints were finalised



Most common outcomes of notification-related complaints

1. The matter complained about was still actively being considered by the organisation
2. An investigation was not warranted in the circumstances
3. Our office provided feedback to the organisation complained about
4. Our office is monitoring the concern as a systemic issue
5. The organisation's response to the complaint was fair and reasonable

Registration-related complaints to the Ombudsman

1 August 2024 to 31 August 2024



National Health Practitioner Ombudsman

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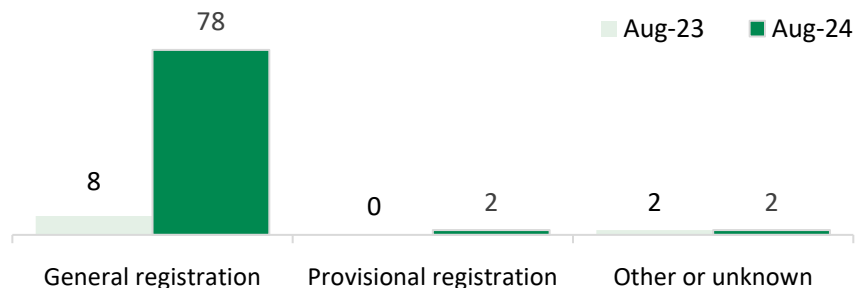


82 registration-related complaints received

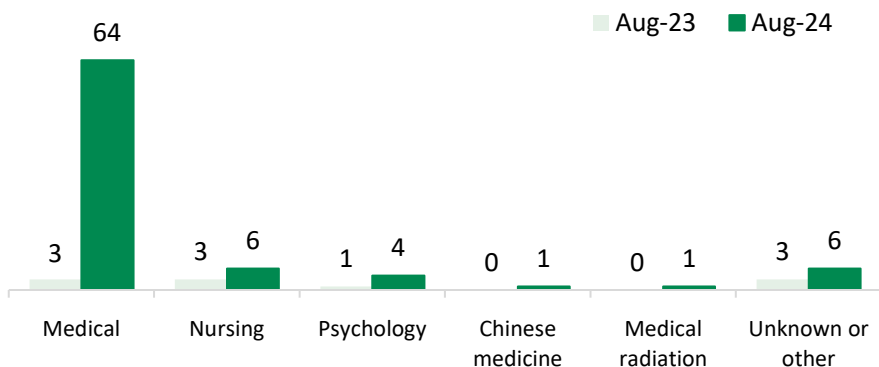


Up from 10 in August 2023

Types of registration driving registration-related complaints



Professions registration-related complaints were about



Registration processes that most frequently drove registration-related complaints

1. Fees charged for registration
2. Review of restrictions on a practitioner's registration
3. Application of the English Language Skills Registration Standard
4. Processing of a new application for registration
5. Assessment of a practitioner's health or performance

Stage registration-related complaints were finalised

72 assessment **3** early resolution transfer
2 preliminary inquiry **0** investigation



Most common outcomes of registration-related complaints

1. An investigation was not warranted in the circumstances
2. The complainant could not be contacted as their concerns were submitted anonymously
3. Our office is monitoring the concern as a systemic issue
4. The organisation's response to the complaint was fair and reasonable
5. The complainant had not provided the organisation with an opportunity to respond to their concerns

Accreditation-related complaints to the Ombudsman

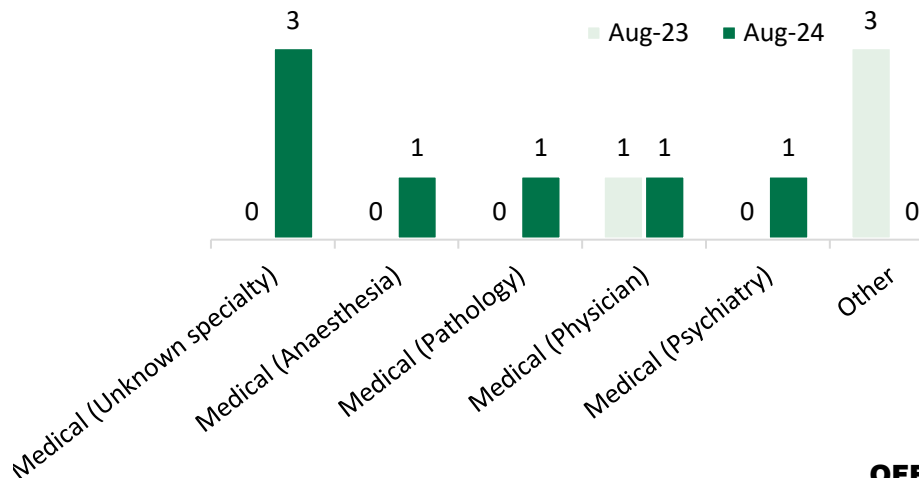
1 August 2024 to 31 August 2024

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 **7** accreditation-related complaints received 
Up from 4 in August 2023



Professions and specialties that accreditation-related complaints were about



Processes that most frequently drove accreditation-related complaints

1. Accreditation of a program of study
2. Removal of a trainee from a training program
3. Merits review processes
4. Delivery of an exam
5. Delivery of a training program

Stage accreditation-related complaints were finalised

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

Most common outcomes of accreditation-related complaints

1. An investigation was not warranted in the circumstances
2. The organisation's response to the complaint was fair and reasonable
3. Our office is monitoring the concern as a systemic issue
4. The complainant could not be contacted as their concerns were submitted anonymously
5. The complainant agreed that their concerns had been resolved to their satisfaction



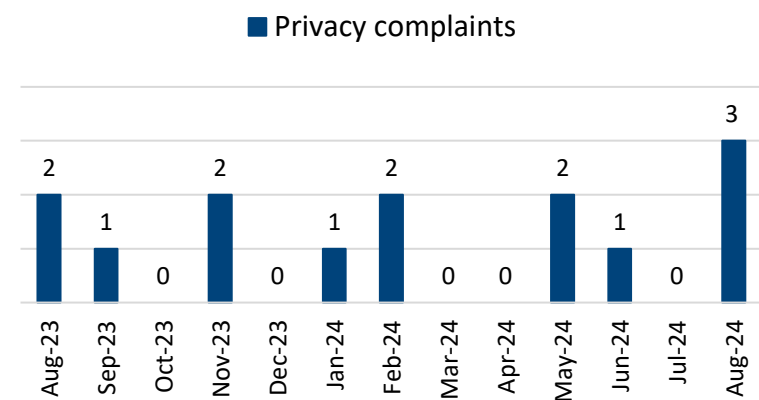
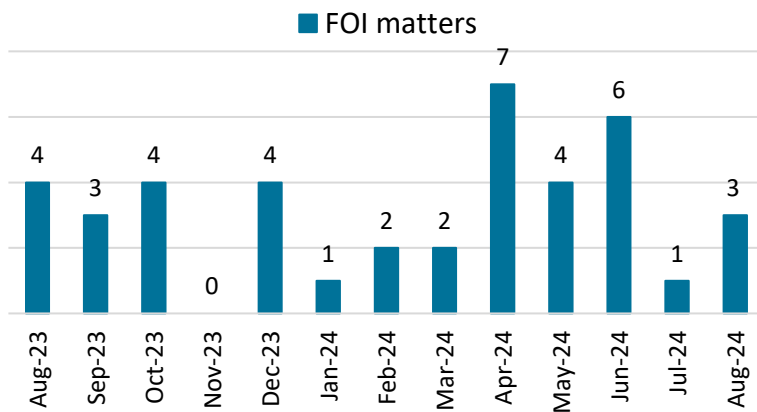
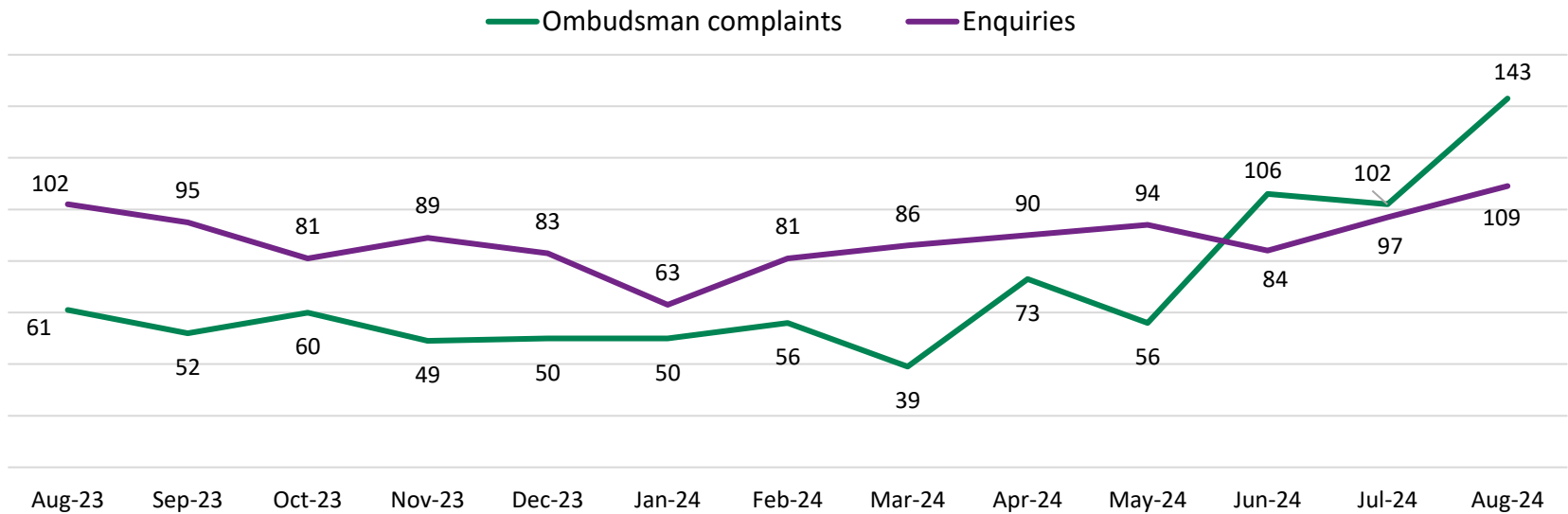
National Health
Practitioner
Ombudsman

Our year to date

1 July 2024 to 31 August 2024

Approach trends

1 August 2024 to 31 August 2024



Ombudsman complaints received from 1 July 2024 to 31 August 2024

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Types of complaints received

121 ↑ notification
Up from 64 in the same period last financial year

92 ↑ registration
Up from 16 in the same period last financial year

18 ↑ accreditation
Up from 12 in the same period last financial year

Who made complaints

169 health practitioners
76 Non-practitioners

↑ Up from 57 in the same period last financial year
↑ Up from 43 in the same period last financial year

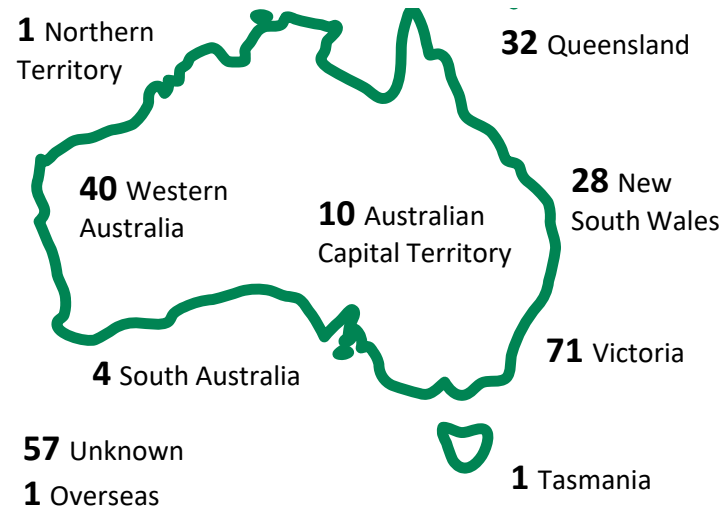
Professions most complaints were about

168 medical
↑ Up from 65 in the same period last financial year

31 nursing
↑ Up from 11 in the same period last financial year

16 psychology
↑ Up from 5 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 inadequate reasons were provided for a decision to take no further action at the assessment stage
3. Notifier believes a decision to not process their concerns as a notification was unfair or unreasonable

Most common registration-related issues that drove complaints

1. Practitioner is concerned that the fees they were charged for general registration are unfair or unreasonable
2. Practitioner with general registration believes a decision made about a review of restrictions on their registration is unfair or unreasonable
3. Practitioner with general registration believes an application they made for review of restrictions on their registration has been unreasonably delayed

Resolution of Ombudsman complaints from 1 July 2024 to 31 August 2024

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Early resolution mechanisms

151



complaints
finalised at the
assessment stage

Up from 80 in
the same
period last
financial year



23



complaints finalised
at the preliminary
inquiry stage

Up from 10 in
the same
period last
financial year



41



complaints finalised
at the early resolution
transfer stage

Up from 20 in
the same
period last
financial year



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 matter complained about was still actively being considered by the organisation
3. The complainant could not be contacted as their concerns were submitted anonymously
4. Our office is monitoring the concern as a systemic issue
5. The organisation's response to the complaint was fair and reasonable

Investigations

2



complaints
finalised at the
investigation stage

Consistent with 2 in the same period
last financial year

Most common investigation outcomes

1. Our office provided feedback to the organisation complained about
2. The complaint was withdrawn by the complainant after we commenced the investigation

Ombudsman and Commissioner's observations

My office received 258 approaches during August 2024, which represents a significant increase from August 2023 (169). This growth was predominantly driven by complaints to the Ombudsman, which jumped from 61 in August 2023 to 143 in August 2024. This is our third consecutive month of higher than usual complaint numbers.

After a substantial spike in notification-related complaints in June and July 2024, August 2024 brought a return to more usual notifications-related complaint trends. We received 46 notification-related complaints, most of which related to the medical profession and were raised by notifiers.

While registration-related complaints have been steadily decreasing over recent years, it was registration-related complaints that drove most complaints this month (82, up from 10 in August 2023). We received 70 complaints relating to registration fees, which is more than we'd usually receive in a whole financial year. This growth was overwhelmingly linked to the recent increase in registration fees for the medical profession (59 complaints).

We received 7 accreditation-related complaints during August 2024. Consistent with recent trends, most complaints concerned the medical profession and related to the delivery of exams and specialist training programs. However, we also received our first complaint from an education provider since our role expanded in relation to accreditation.

My team successfully finalised 146 Ombudsman complaints this month while managing the increased number of incoming complaints. We facilitated 12 early resolution transfers, made 26 preliminary inquiries and commenced 3 new investigations.