



National Health
Practitioner
Ombudsman

Our work in September 2024

Monthly approaches overview

1 September 2024 to 30 September 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.

146

approaches
received



Down from 151 in
September 2023



43

Ombudsman
complaints received



Down from 52 in
September 2023



2

FOI matters
received



Down from 3 in
September 2023



1

privacy
complaint received



Consistent with 1 in
September 2023

99

enquiries
received



Up from 95 in
September 2023



Ombudsman complaints
were made by 36
individuals (down from
39 in September 2023)



0

FOI review
determinations
(0 in September
2023)



1

notifiable data
breaches assessed
(0 in September
2023)

Complaints to the Ombudsman

14

early resolution
transfers made



Down from 16 in
September 2023



13

preliminary
inquiries made



Down from 16 in
September 2023



1

investigation
launched



Consistent with 1
in September 2023



79

Stage complaint was finalised

51 assessment

10 early resolution
transfer

Ombudsman
complaints finalised

Up from 45 in
September 2023



18 preliminary
inquiry

0 investigation

Notification-related complaints to the Ombudsman

1 September 2024 to 30 September 2024

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20

notification-related complaints received

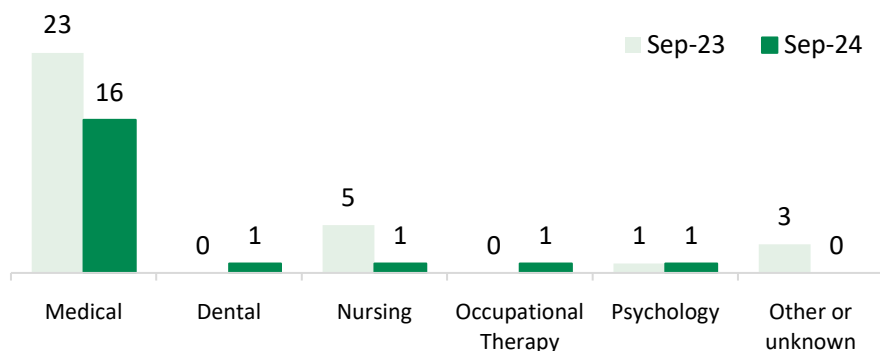


Down from 32 in September 2023

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. Stage and outcome of notification are unknown
3. Immediate action taken while a notification is investigated
4. An active notification
5. Concerns were not processed as a notification

Stage notification-related complaints were finalised



Most common outcomes of notification-related complaints

1. An investigation was not warranted in the circumstances
2. The complaint concerned the merits of the organisation's decision and we do not have the power to review the merits of a decision
3. The complaint could not be progressed because the complainant did not provide information that our office had requested
4. The organisation's response to the complaint was fair and reasonable
5. Our office is monitoring the concern as a systemic issue

Registration-related complaints to the Ombudsman

1 September 2024 to 30 September 2024



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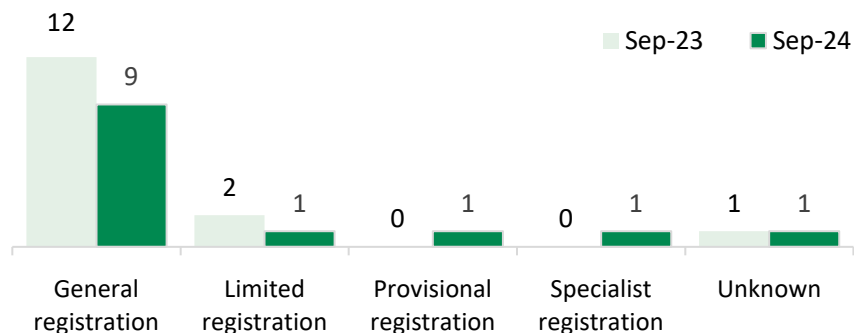


13 registration-related complaints received

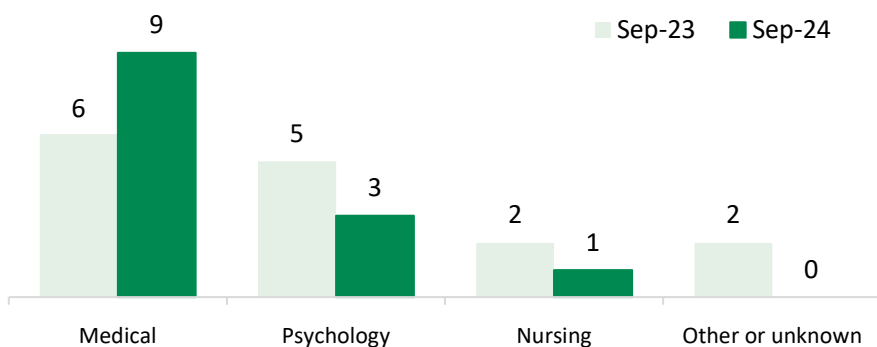


Down from 15 in September 2023

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. Processing of a new application for registration
3. Processing of an application for renewal of registration
4. Processing of an application for endorsement
5. Processing of an application for change of circumstances

Stage registration-related complaints were finalised

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

Most common outcomes of registration-related complaints

1. An investigation was not warranted in the circumstances
2. The matter complained about was still actively being considered by the organisation
3. The complaint concerned the merits of the organisation's decision and we do not have the power to review the merits of a decision
4. The complaint could not be progressed because the complainant did not provide information that our office had requested
5. The concerns raised would be more appropriately considered by a court or tribunal

Accreditation-related complaints to the Ombudsman

1 September 2024 to 30 September 2024



National Health Practitioner Ombudsman

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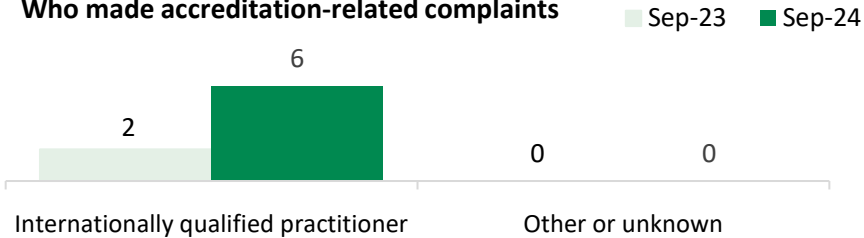
6

accreditation-related complaints received

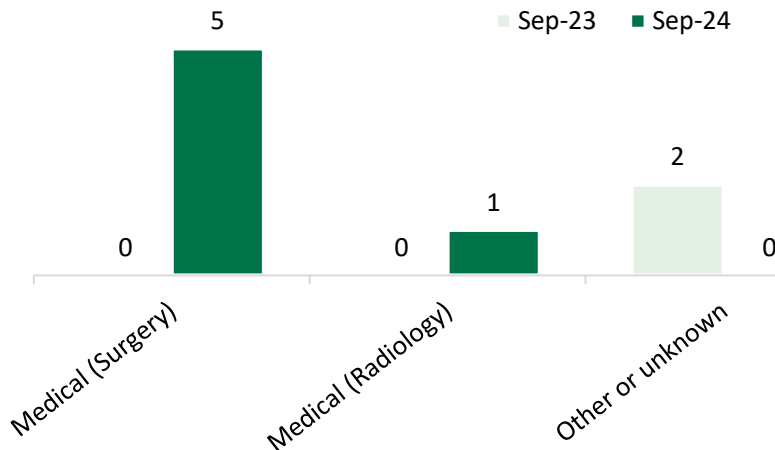


Up from 2 in September 2023

Who made accreditation-related complaints



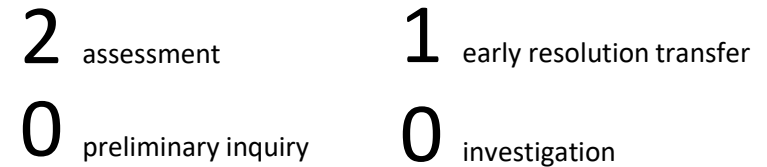
Professions and specialties that accreditation-related complaints were about



Processes that most frequently drove accreditation-related complaints

1. Assessment of an international qualification
2. Fairness of an exam
3. Oversight or monitoring of an accreditation organisation
4. Fees charged for an accreditation process

Stage accreditation-related complaints were finalised



Most common outcomes of accreditation-related complaints

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

OFFICIAL



National Health
Practitioner
Ombudsman

Our year to date

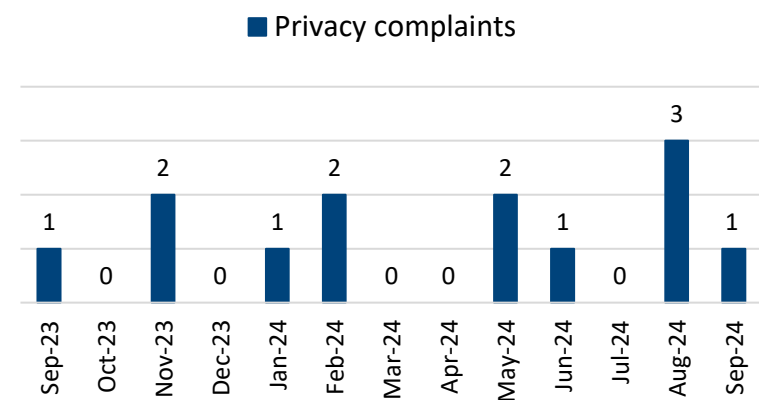
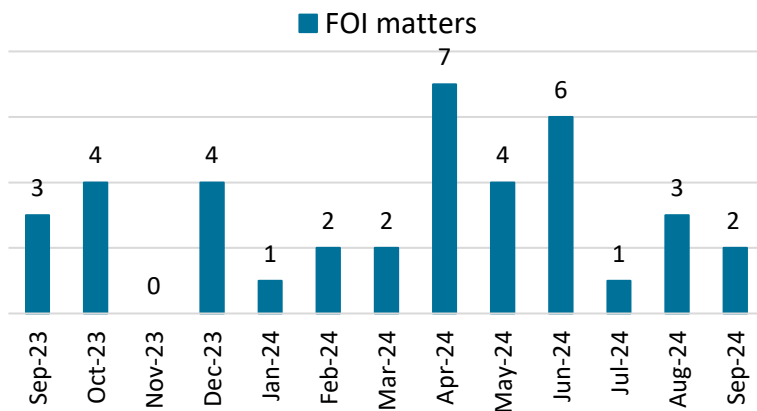
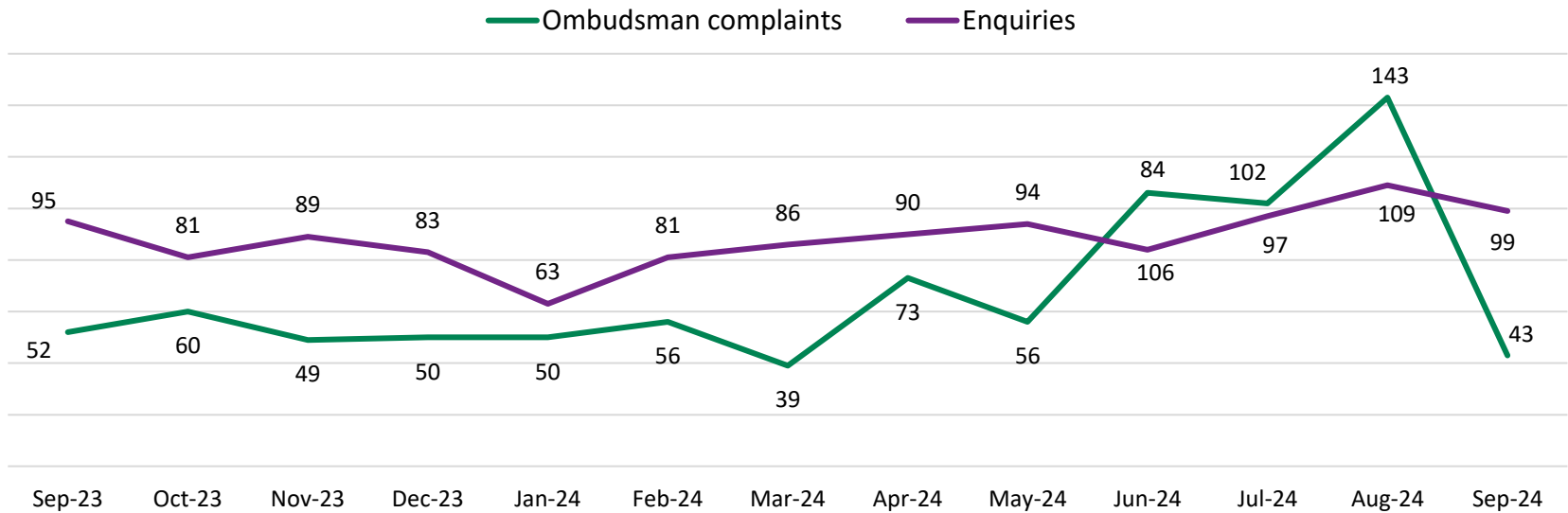
1 July 2024 to 30 September 2024

Approach trends

1 September 2023 to 30 September 2024



National Health
Practitioner
Ombudsman



Ombudsman complaints received from 1 July 2024 to 30 September 2024

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Types of complaints received

141 ↑ notification
Up from 96 in the same period last financial year

105 ↑ registration
Up from 31 in the same period last financial year

24 ↑ accreditation
Up from 14 in the same period last financial year

Who made complaints

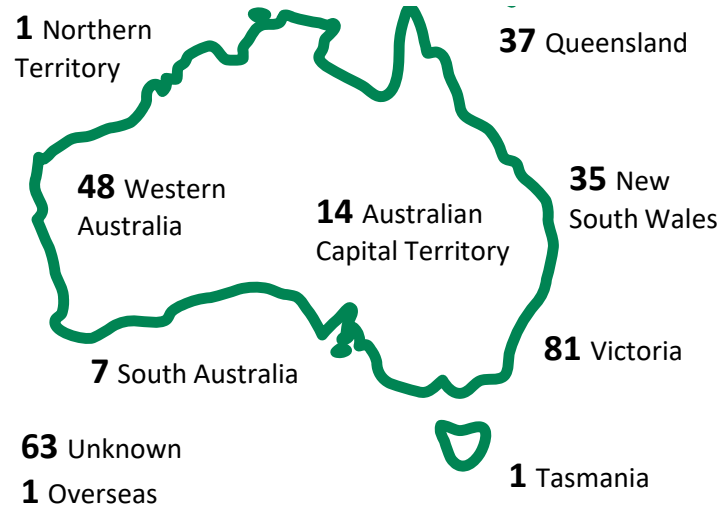
202 health practitioners
86 Non-practitioners

↑ Up from 88 in the same period last financial year
↑ Up from 64 in the same period last financial year

Professions most complaints were about

201 medical ↑ Up from 96 in the same period last financial year
34 nursing ↑ Up from 19 in the same period last financial year
20 psychology ↑ Up from 11 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

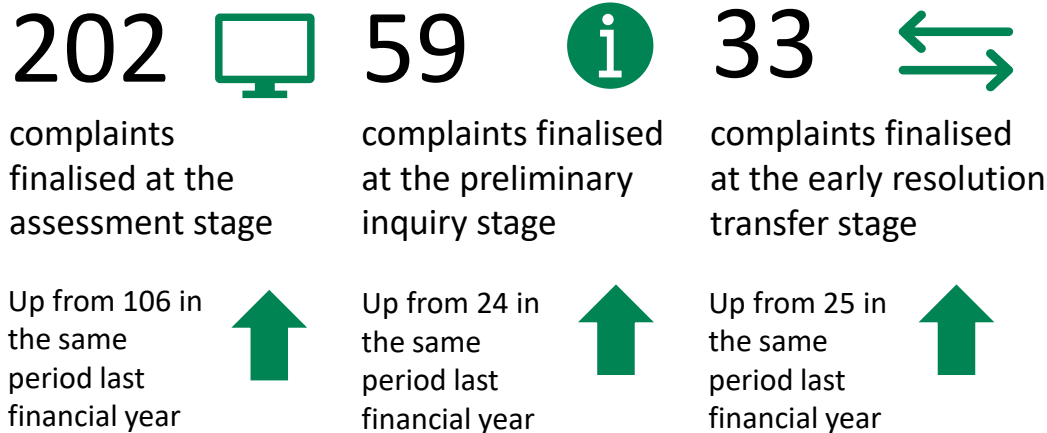
Most common registration-related issues that drove complaints

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 a review of restrictions on their registration has been unreasonably delayed

Resolution of Ombudsman complaints from 1 July 2024 to 30 September 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 matter complained about was still actively being considered by the organisation
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 organisation's response to the complaint was fair and reasonable

Investigations



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 successfully managed a significantly higher volume of approaches during the first quarter of the 2024–25 financial year compared with the previous financial year. In particular, we managed an 89% increase in the number of complaints to the Ombudsman (from 152 to 288).

However, September 2024 reflected a return to more normal trends after three consecutive months of unusually high volumes.

My office received 146 approaches in September 2024, 43 of which were complaints to the Ombudsman. This is 100 fewer complaints than were received in August 2024.

Notification-related complaints were less common in September 2024 (20) than they have been in previous months (75 in July 2024 and 46 in August 2024). However, the types of concerns being raised remained consistent, with the majority of complaints being made by notifiers and commonly in relation to the medical profession.

Registration-related complaints also reduced in September 2024 (13) after a significant spike in August 2024 (82). While registration-related complaint numbers were low, we continued to see concerns being raised about the fairness of registration fees. It is noteworthy that concerns relating to the processing of applications for endorsement and renewal were more common in September 2024 than they have been in previous months.

We received six accreditation-related complainants in September 2024. All six complaints were made by internationally qualified practitioners and concerns commonly related to the assessment of international qualifications.

My office used the month of reduced complaint volume to focus on progressing open cases. We initiated one new investigation, facilitated 14 early resolution transfers and made preliminary inquiries into 13 complaints. We finalised 79 Ombudsman complaints, one Freedom of Information review matter, and three privacy complaints. Notably, one of the privacy complaints was finalised with a formal determination which can be found on our website.