



National Health  
Practitioner  
Ombudsman

# Our work in June 2024

# Monthly approaches overview

1 June 2024 to 30 June 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).

197

approaches  
received



Up from 154 in  
June 2023



106

Ombudsman  
complaints received



Up from 67 in  
June 2023



6

FOI matters  
received



Up from 3 in  
June 2023



1

privacy  
complaint received



Consistent with  
1 in June 2023

84

enquiries  
received



Up from 82  
in June 2023



Ombudsman complaints  
were made by 57  
individuals (Up from 42  
in June 2023)



0

FOI review  
determinations  
(Consistent with  
0 in June 2023)



0

notifiable data  
breaches assessed  
(Down from 1 in  
June 2023)

## Complaints to the Ombudsman

12

early resolution  
transfers made

Up from 10 in  
June 2023



27

preliminary  
inquiries made

Up from 5 in  
June 2023



6

investigation  
launched

Up from 0  
in June 2023



74

Ombudsman  
complaints finalised

Up from 51 in June 2023



Stage complaint was finalised

51

assessment

10

early resolution  
transfer

10

preliminary  
inquiry

3

investigation

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# Notification-related complaints to the Ombudsman

1 June 2024 to 30 June 2024



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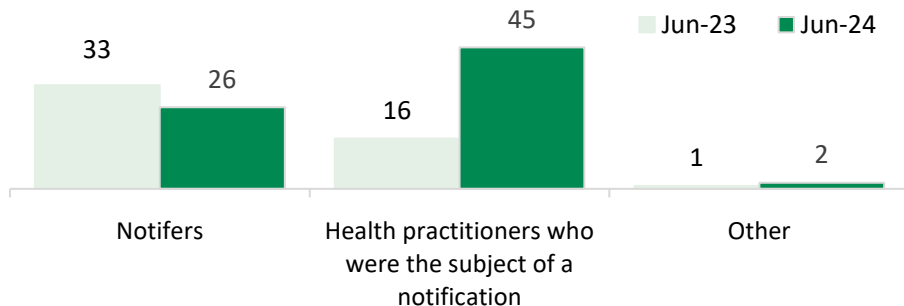
73

notification-related complaints received

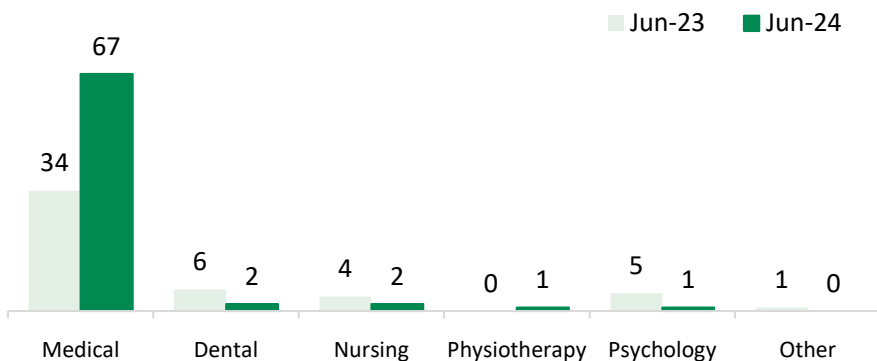


Up from 50 in June 2023

## Who made notification-related complaints



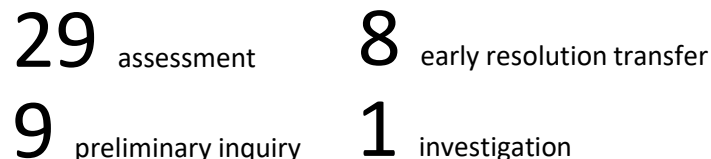
## Professions notification-related complaints were about



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

1. Active notification
2. No further action taken at the assessment stage
3. Immediate action taken while the notification is investigated
4. No further action taken at the investigation stage
5. Practitioner referred to a tribunal or panel

## Stage notification-related complaints were finalised



## Most common outcomes of notification-related complaints

1. An investigation was not warranted in the circumstances
2. The organisation's response to the complaint was fair and reasonable
3. The complainant agreed that their concerns had been resolved to their satisfaction
4. Investigation was declined as the complainant had become aware of the issues more than 12 months ago
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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# Registration-related complaints to the Ombudsman

1 June 2024 to 30 June 2024



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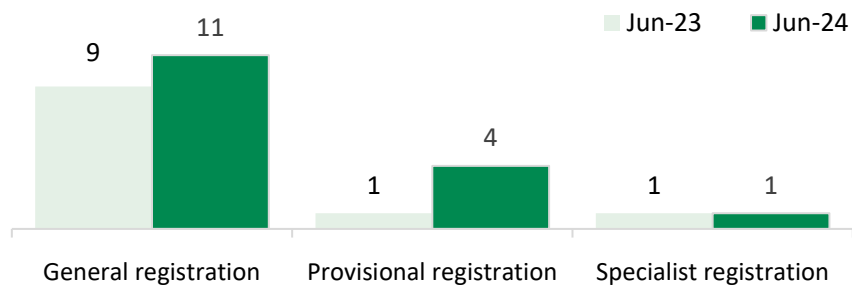


**16** registration-related complaints received

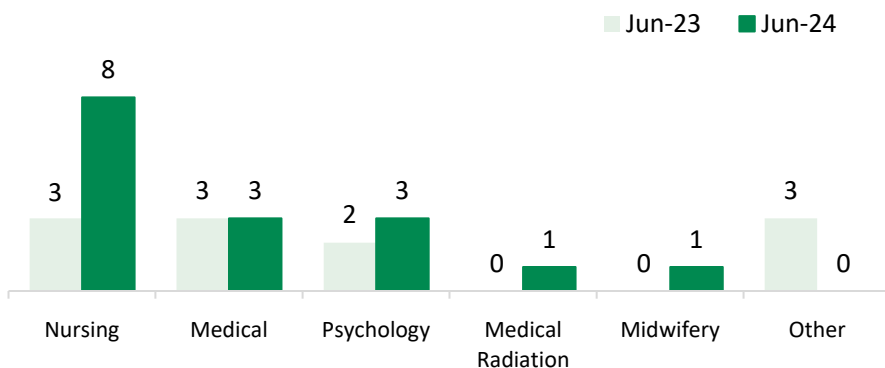
Up from 11 in June 2023



## 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. Application of the English language skills registration standard
3. Fees charged for registration
4. Processing of an application for registration renewal
5. Assessment of an international qualification

## Stage registration-related complaints were finalised

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

## Most common outcomes of registration-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. Our office is monitoring the concern as a systemic issue
4. Our office provided the complainant with a further explanation following investigation of their concerns
5. The organisation's response to the complaint was fair and reasonable

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# Accreditation-related complaints to the Ombudsman

1 June 2024 to 30 June 2024



National Health Practitioner Ombudsman

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11

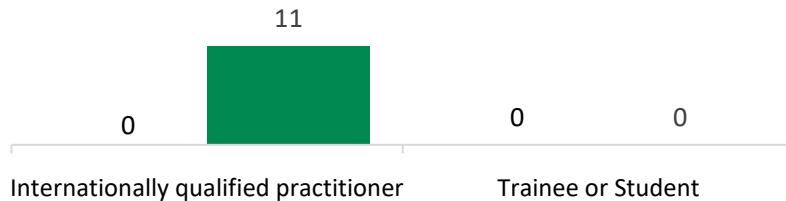
accreditation-related complaints received



Up from 0 in June 2023

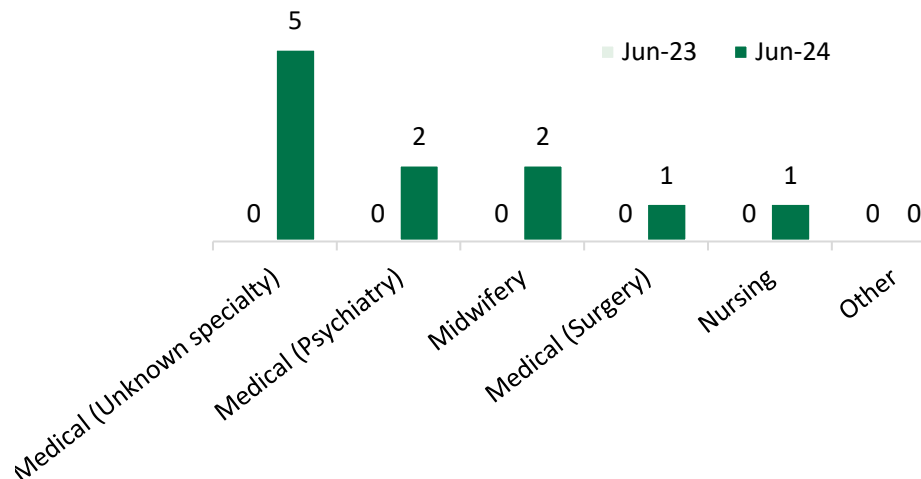
## Who made accreditation-related complaints

Jun-23 Jun-24



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

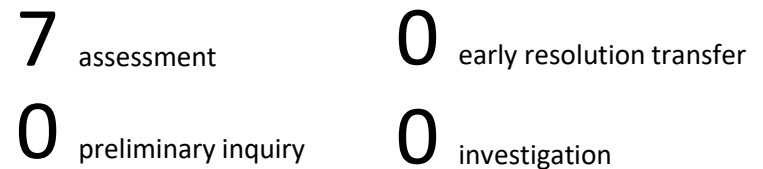
Jun-23 Jun-24



## Processes that most frequently drove accreditation-related complaints

1. Fairness of an exam
2. Merits review processes
3. Delivery of an exam
4. Assessment of an international qualification
5. Access to examination results

## Stage accreditation-related complaints were finalised



## Most common outcomes of accreditation-related complaints

1. Our office is monitoring the concern as a systemic issue
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



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# Our year to date

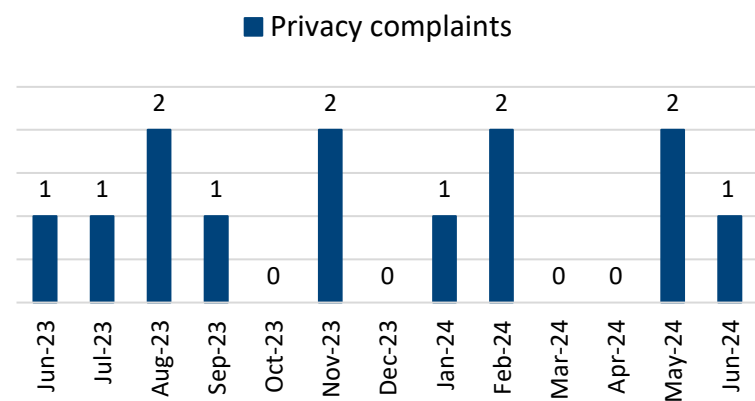
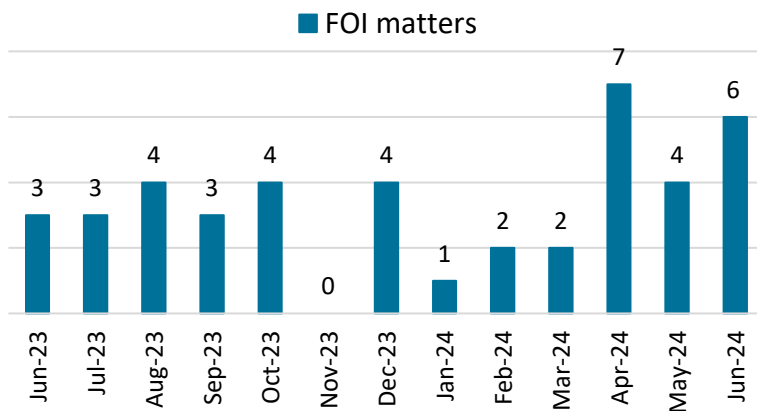
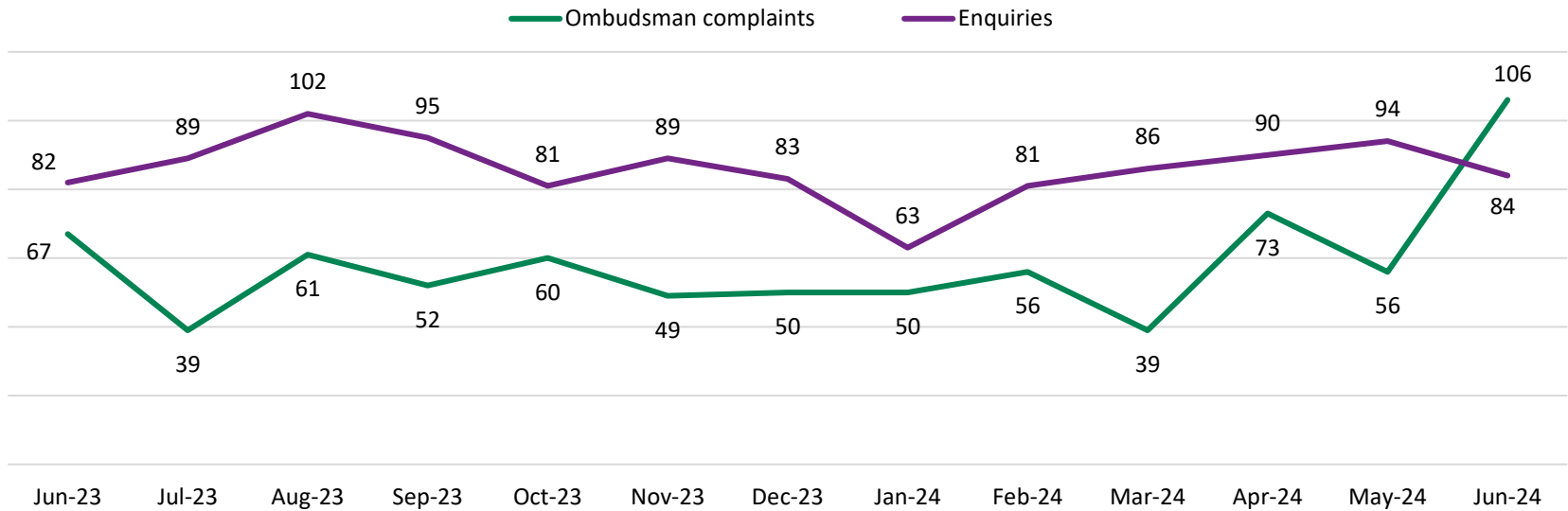
1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024

# Approach trends

1 June 2023 to 30 June 2024



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

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## Types of complaints received

**435** ↑ notification  
Up from 430 in the same period last financial year

**123** ↓ registration  
Down from 153 in the same period last financial year

**79** accreditation  
**54** Other types

## Who made complaints

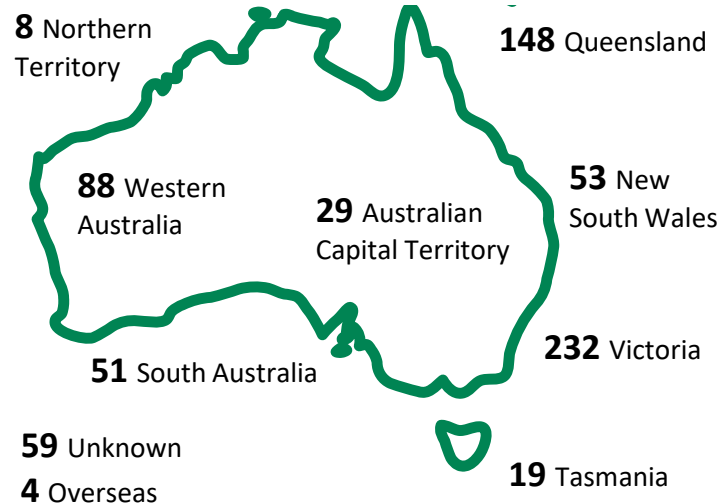
**435** health practitioners  
**256** Non-practitioners

↑ Up from 381 in the same period last financial year  
↓ Down from 282 in the same period last financial year

## Professions most complaints were about

**453** medical ↑ Up from 371 in the same period last financial year  
**89** nursing ↓ Down from 90 in the same period last financial year  
**52** psychology ↓ Down from 73 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

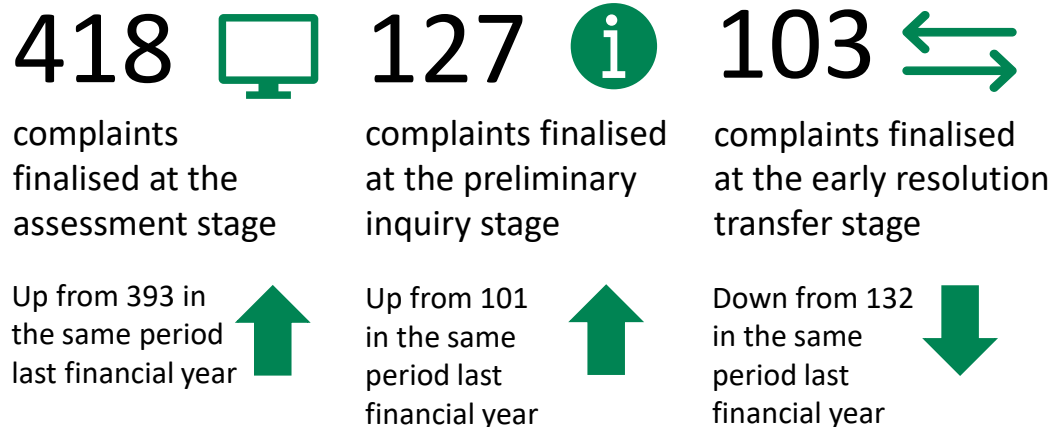
1. Practitioner seeking general registration believes the process for satisfying the English Language Skills Registration Standard is unfair
2. Practitioner seeking general registration believes the fees they have been charged for registration are unfair or unreasonable
3. Practitioner seeking general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



# Resolution of Ombudsman complaints from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 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. We provided a further explanation of a decision or action to the complainant
3. An apology or acknowledgement was provided by the organisation being complained about
4. We are monitoring the concern raised as a systemic issue
5. We provided formal comments or suggestions for improvement to the organisation being complained about

# Ombudsman and Commissioner's observations

My office received 197 approaches in June 2024, which is 28 per cent more than in June 2023 (154). The increase was driven by a significant jump in complaints to the Ombudsman (106, up from 67). This included three medical practitioners lodging several different complaints in relation to multiple notifications that had been made about them.

Trends in notification-related complaints were different this month. These complaints continued to mostly be related to the medical profession. However, more complaints were made by practitioners than we usually receive (45, up from 16 in June 2023). In comparison, we received a smaller number of complaints from notifiers (26, compared to 33 in June 2023). Due to receiving more complaints from practitioners, we saw more issues raised about active notifications, immediate action and decisions to refer a practitioner to a tribunal.

My office also saw increases in registration-related complaints and accreditation-related complaints during June 2024. Trends in the types of complaints remained relatively consistent, with concerns about the fairness of English language requirements, the reasonableness of registration fees, and the assessment or examination of internationally qualified practitioners remaining common.

June 2024 also saw a doubling in FOI review applications compared with June 2023 (6, up from 3).

While managing the increase in workload during June 2024, my office initiated 12 early resolution transfers, 27 preliminary inquiries and 6 investigations of Ombudsman complaints. We also finalised 74 Ombudsman complaints (up from 51 in June 2023), included three investigations. One of these investigations resulted in formal comments to the agency being complained about, and two investigations were finalised with my office providing feedback about opportunities for improvement to the agencies involved.

We also finalised an investigation under the Privacy Act and 10 FOI review applications.