



National Health  
Practitioner  
Ombudsman

# Our work in November 2024

# Monthly approaches overview

1 November 2024 to 30 November 2024

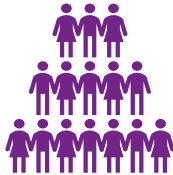


National Health  
Practitioner  
Ombudsman

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165

approaches  
received



Up from 141 in  
November 2023



74

Ombudsman  
complaints received



Up from 49 in  
November 2023



2

FOI matters  
received



Up from 0 in  
November 2023



3

privacy  
complaints received



Up from 2 in  
November 2023



86

enquiries  
received



Down from 89 in  
November 2023



Ombudsman complaints  
were made by 47  
individuals (up from 41  
in November 2023)



2

FOI review  
determinations  
(0 in November  
2023)



0

notifiable data  
breaches assessed  
(1 in November  
2023)

## Complaints to the Ombudsman

8

early resolution  
transfers made



Down from 10 in  
November 2023



8

preliminary  
inquiries made



Down from 24 in  
November 2023



1

investigations  
launched



Up from 0 in  
November 2023



51

Stage complaint was finalised

37 assessment

7 early resolution  
transfer

Ombudsman  
complaints finalised

Down from 60 in  
November 2023



3 preliminary  
inquiry

4 investigation

OFFICIAL

# Notification-related complaints to the Ombudsman

1 November 2024 to 30 November 2024

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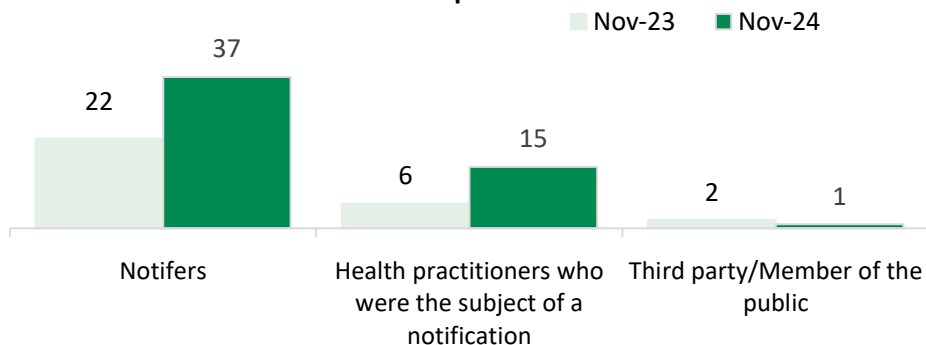
53

notification-related complaints received

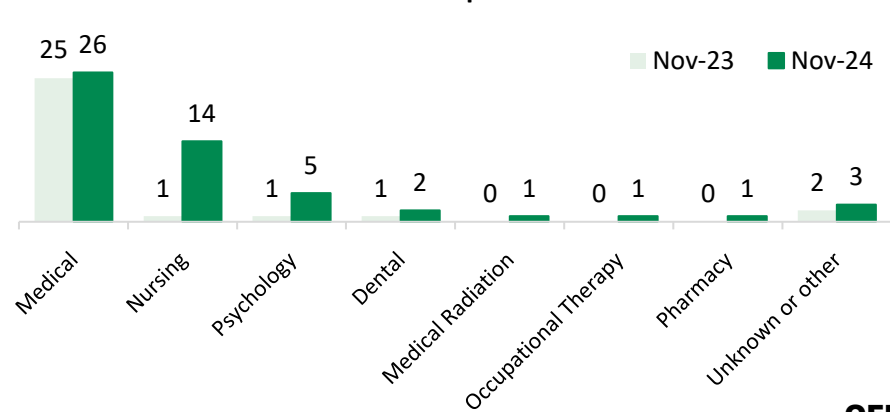


Up from 30 in November 2023

## 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. Immediate action taken while a notification is investigated
4. Action taken following an investigation
5. No further action taken at an unknown stage

## Stage notification-related complaints were finalised

23 assessment      7 early resolution transfer  
 1 preliminary inquiry      1 investigation

## Most common outcomes of notification-related complaints

1. The complaint could not be progressed because the complainant did not provide information that our office had requested
2. The organisation's response to the complaint was fair and reasonable
3. An investigation was not warranted in the circumstances
4. The matter complained about was still actively being considered by the organisation
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

# Registration-related complaints to the Ombudsman

1 November 2024 to 30 November 2024

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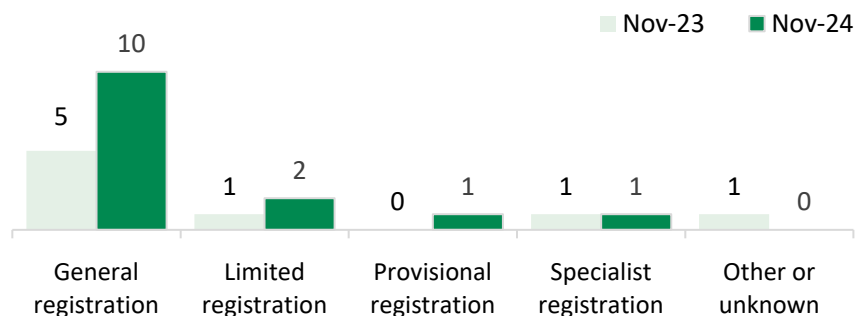
14

registration-related complaints received

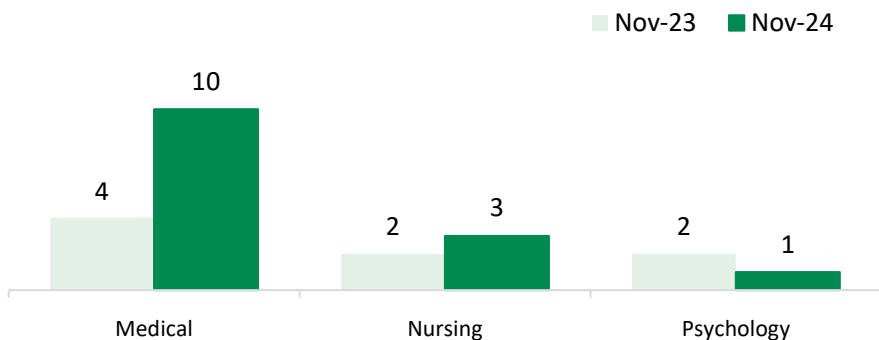


Up from 8 in November 2023

## 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. Compliance activity relating to restrictions on a practitioner's registration
4. Handling of an application for a review of restrictions on a practitioner's registration
5. Fees charged for registration

## Stage registration-related complaints were finalised

8 assessment      0 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. Our office is monitoring the concern as a systemic issue
3. The matter complained about was still actively being considered by the organisation
4. The complaint could not be progressed because the complainant did not provide information that our office had requested
5. The organisation's response to the complaint was fair and reasonable

# Accreditation-related complaints to the Ombudsman

1 November 2024 to 30 November 2024



National Health Practitioner Ombudsman

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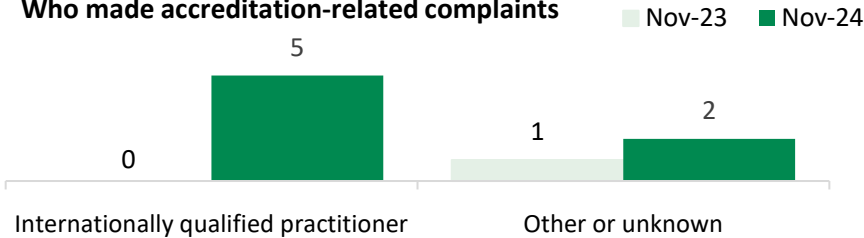
7

accreditation-related complaints received

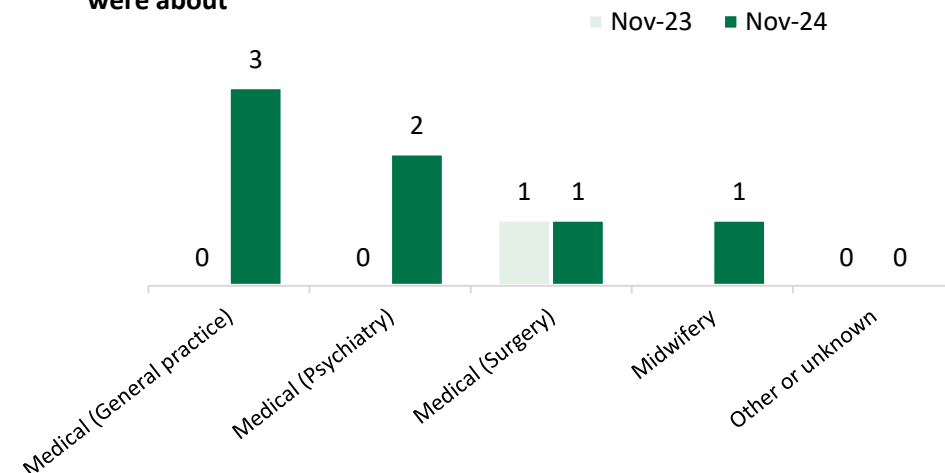


Up from 1 in November 2023

## 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. Delivery of an exam
3. Fees charged by an accreditation organisation
4. Processing of an application
5. Fairness of a training program

## Stage accreditation-related complaints were finalised



## Most common outcomes of accreditation-related complaints

1. Our office provided feedback to the organisation complained about
2. The complaint could not be progressed because the complainant did not provide information that our office had requested
3. Our office provided the complainant with further explanation
4. The complainant had not yet provided the organisation with an opportunity to respond to their concerns
5. The organisation agreed to change a policy or process



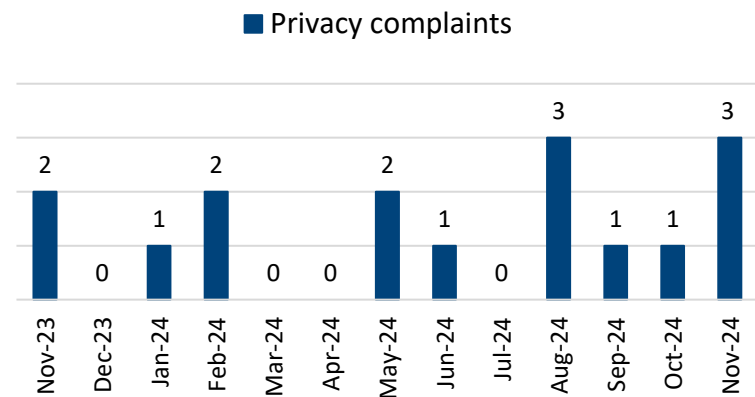
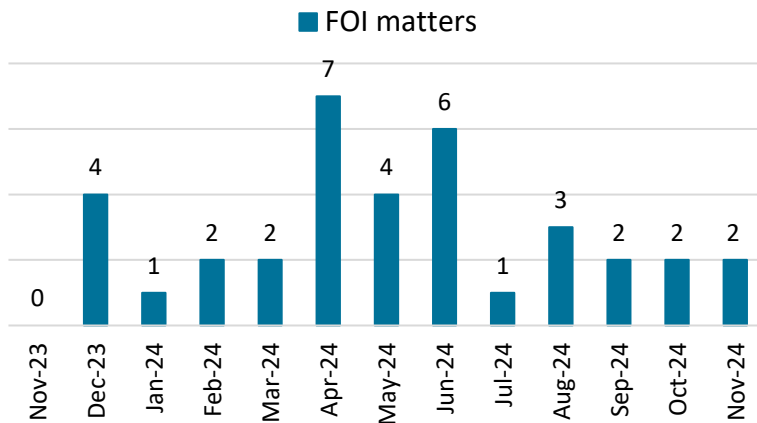
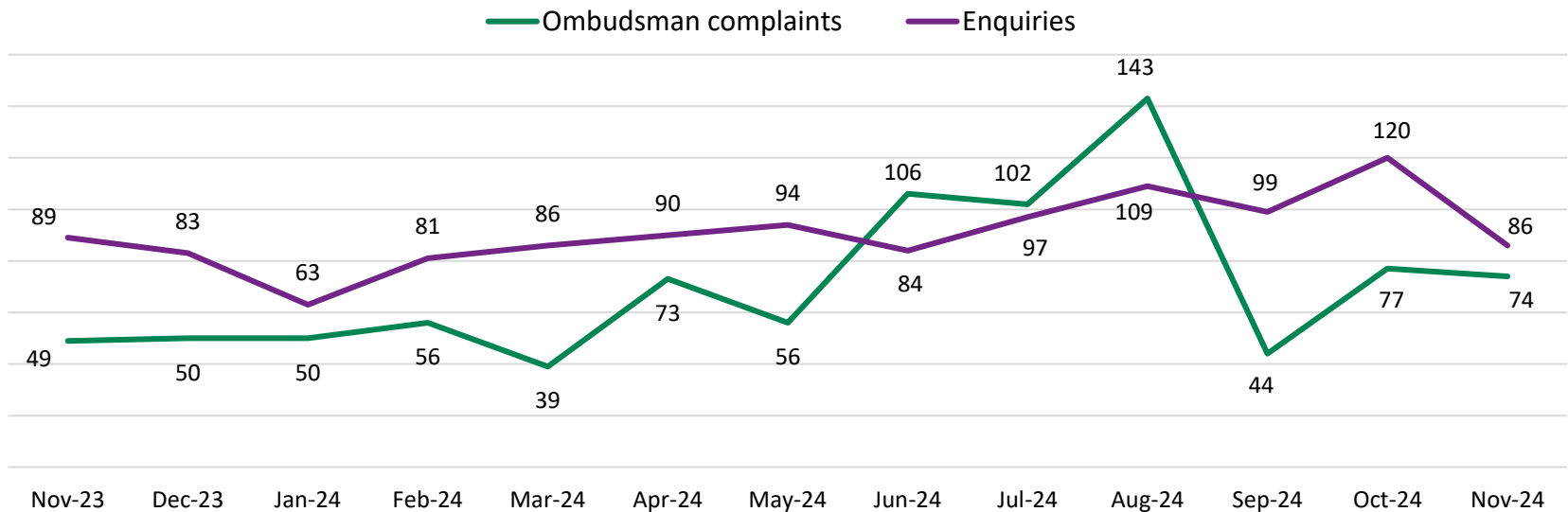
National Health  
Practitioner  
Ombudsman

# Our year to date

1 July 2024 to 30 November 2024

# Approach trends

1 November 2023 to 30 November 2024



# Ombudsman complaints received from 1 July 2024 to 30 November 2024

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## Types of complaints received

**254** ↑ notification  
Up from 166 in the same period last financial year

**129** ↑ registration  
Up from 44 in the same period last financial year

**37** ↑ accreditation  
Up from 22 in the same period last financial year

## Who made complaints

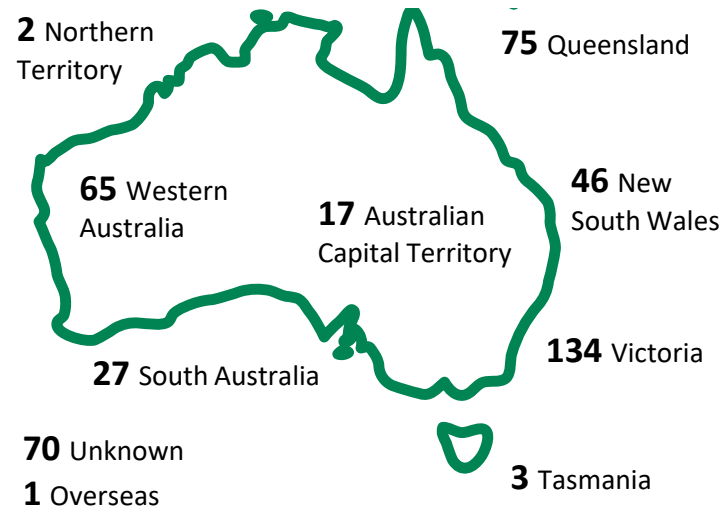
**289** health practitioners  
**151** Non-practitioners

↑ Up from 148 in the same period last financial year  
↑ Up from 113 in the same period last financial year

## Professions most complaints were about

**301** medical ↑ Up from 169 in the same period last financial year  
**57** nursing ↑ Up from 31 in the same period last financial year  
**30** psychology ↑ Up from 17 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. Third party to a notification believes a decision to take immediate action against a practitioner is unreasonable

## Most common registration-related issues that drove complaints

1. Practitioner believes the fees they were charged for general registration are unfair or unreasonable
2. Member of the public believes that they or their community are without adequate access to a preferred health practitioner as a result of a practitioner's registration being restricted
3. Practitioner with general registration believes a decision made about an application for a review of restrictions on their registration is unfair or unreasonable



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

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## Early resolution mechanisms

308



complaints  
finalised at the  
assessment stage

Up from 167 in  
the same  
period last  
financial year



68



complaints finalised  
at the preliminary  
inquiry stage

Up from 52 in  
the same  
period last  
financial year



46



complaints finalised  
at the early resolution  
transfer stage

Up from 41 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 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. Our office is monitoring the concern as a systemic issue

## Investigations

6



complaints  
finalised at the  
investigation stage

Consistent with 6 in the same period  
last financial year

### Most common investigation outcomes

1. Our office provided feedback to the organisation complained about
2. Our office provided the complainant with a further explanation
3. The organisation agreed to change a policy or process
4. Fees were waived, reduced or refunded by the organisation
5. Changes were made to the organisation's previous decision or reasons for decision

# Ombudsman and Commissioner's observations

My office received 165 approaches during November 2024, which represents a 17% increase from November 2023 (141 approaches). This growth was primarily driven by an increase in Ombudsman complaints (74, up from 49 in November 2023).

The increase in Ombudsman complaints during November 2024 was mostly due to more complaints being made about the handling of notifications (53, up from 30 in November 2023). Trends in notification-related complaints remain consistent (though in higher volume). This means that complaints continued to be mostly made by notifiers, about the medical profession, and about decisions to take no further action.

We also saw an increase in registration-related complaints (14, up from 8 in November 2023) and accreditation-related complaints (7, up from 1 in November 2023). There was a spike in registration-related concerns associated with the medical profession, though the issues raised in registration related complaints were consistent with past trends.

We finalised 51 complaints to the Ombudsman in November 2024, including 4 formal investigations. Of the investigations we concluded, 3 related to 2 external accreditation authorities. The outcomes we achieved across the 4 investigations included changes to an accreditation authority's decision or reasons, the waiver or refund of fees charged to a complainant, and changes to an accreditation authority's policy or process. We also provided feedback about further opportunities for improvement, and gave complainants further explanations to assist them to better understand a decision or process.

I made 2 determinations regarding reviews of Ahpra's Freedom of Information decisions. These determinations are available on our **website**: <<https://www.nhpo.gov.au/foi-review-decisions>>