



National Health
Practitioner
Ombudsman

Our work in January 2025

Monthly approaches overview

1 January 2025 to 31 January 2025



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.

163

approaches
received



Up from 115 in
January 2024



54

Ombudsman
complaints received



Up from 50 in
January 2024



1

FOI matter
received



Consistent with 1 in
January 2024

1

privacy
complaints received



Consistent with 1 in
January 2024

106

enquiries
received



Up from 63 in
January 2024



Ombudsman complaints
were made by 44
individuals (up from 39
in January 2024)



1 FOI review
determinations
(0 in January
2024)



1 notifiable data
breach assessed (0
in January 2024)

Complaints to the Ombudsman

10

early resolution
transfers made

Down from 19 in
January 2024



10

preliminary
inquiries made

Consistent with 10 in
January 2024

2

investigations
launched

Consistent with 2 in
January 2024



58

Ombudsman
complaints finalised

Up from 50 in
January 2024



Stage complaint was finalised

48 assessment

7 preliminary
inquiry

3 early resolution
transfer

0 investigation

Notification-related complaints to the Ombudsman

1 January 2025 to 31 January 2025



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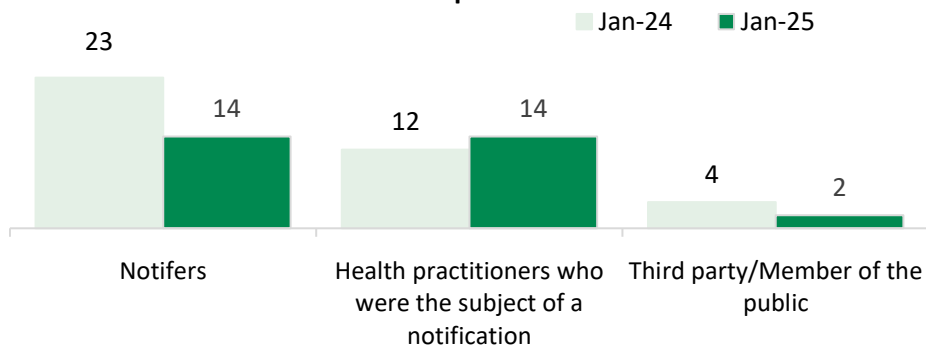
30

notification-related
complaints received

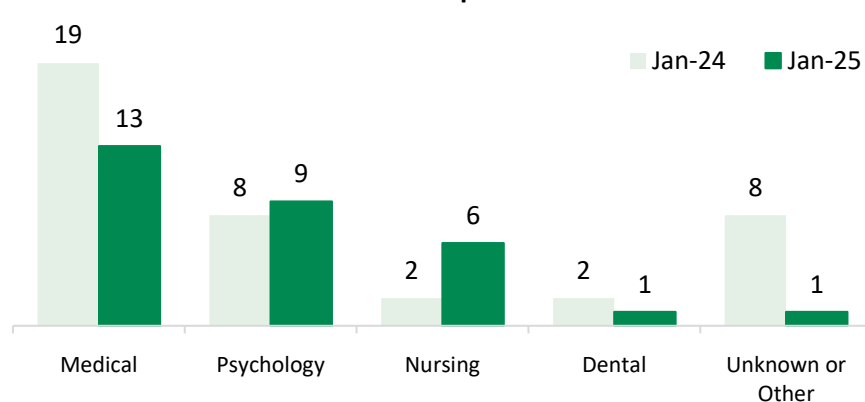


Down from 39 in January 2024

Who made notification-related complaints



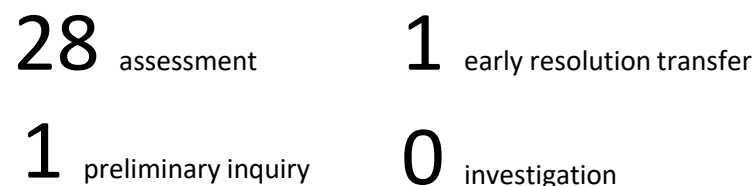
Professions notification-related complaints were about



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. Action taken in the form of immediate action
4. Action taken at the investigation stage
5. Action 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. 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 organisation that the complaint relates to has not yet had an opportunity to respond to the complaint
5. The complainant requested to withdraw their complaint

Registration-related complaints to the Ombudsman

1 January 2025 to 31 January 2025



National Health Practitioner Ombudsman

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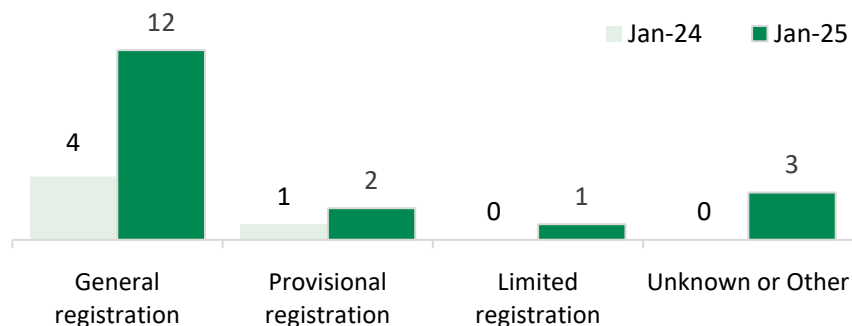
18

registration-related complaints received

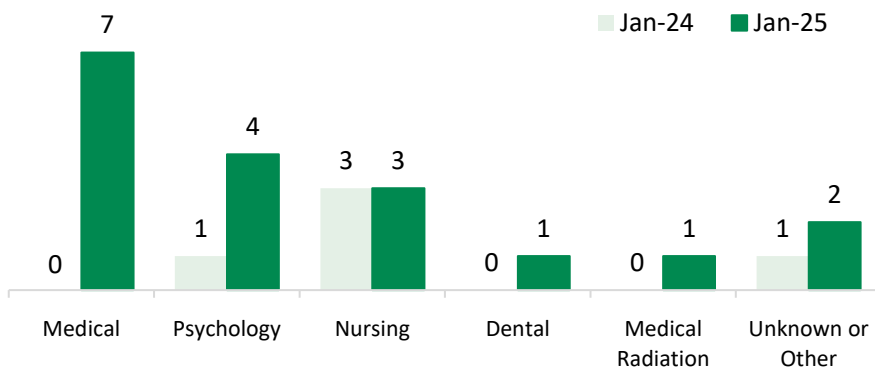


Up from 5 in January 2024

Types of registration driving registration-related complaints



Professions registration-related complaints were about



Registration processes that most frequently drove registration-related complaints

1. Compliance activity relating to restrictions imposed on a practitioner's registration
2. Processing of a new application for registration
3. Supervision requirements on a practitioner's registration
4. Application of the Criminal History Registration Standard
5. Processing of an application for renewal of registration

Stage registration-related complaints were finalised

14 assessment 2 early resolution transfer
3 preliminary inquiry 0 investigation

Most common outcomes of registration-related complaints

1. An investigation was not warranted in the circumstances
2. The complaint was made anonymously and could not be progressed without contact information
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 did not provide information that our office had requested

Accreditation-related complaints to the Ombudsman

1 January 2025 to 31 January 2025



National Health Practitioner Ombudsman

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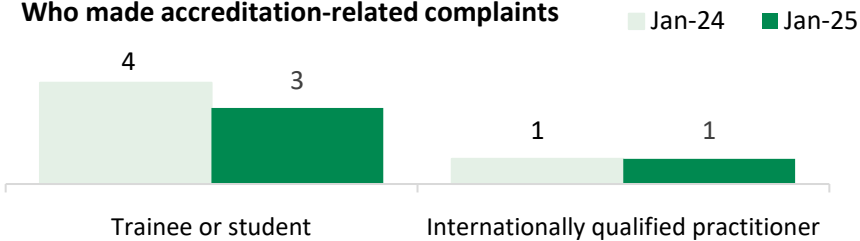
4

accreditation-related complaints received

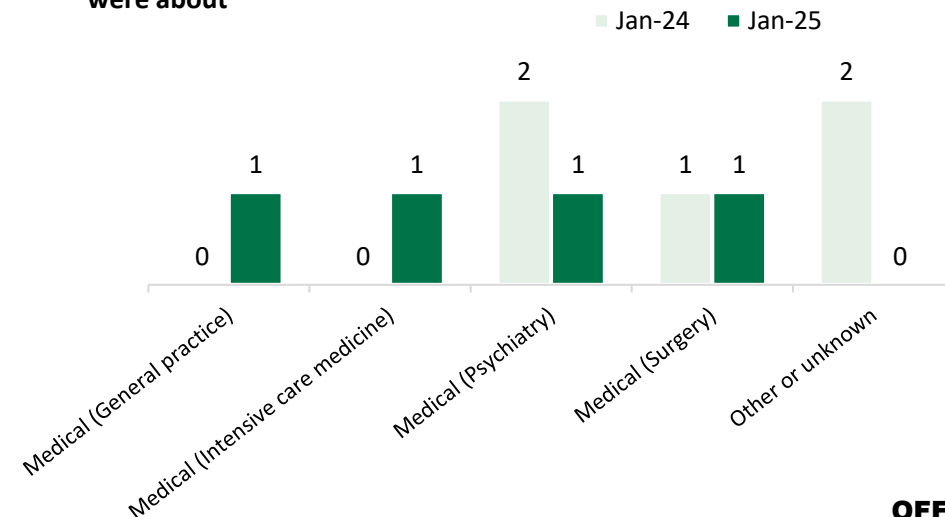


Down from 5 in January 2024

Who made accreditation-related complaints



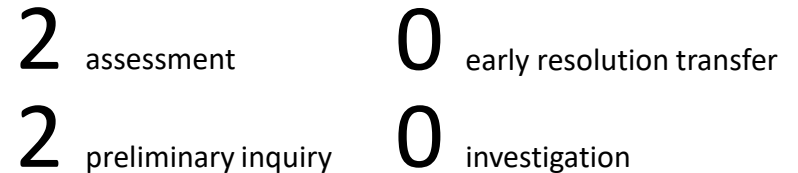
Professions and specialties that accreditation-related complaints were about



Processes that most frequently drove accreditation-related complaints

1. Delivery of an exam
2. Merits review processes
3. Delivery of a training program
4. Fairness of an exam
5. Oversight and monitoring of another accreditation entity

Stage accreditation-related complaints were finalised



Most common outcomes of accreditation-related complaints

1. An investigation was not warranted in the circumstances
2. We provided feedback to the organisation
3. The matter complained about was still actively being considered by the organisation
4. The organisation's response to the complaint was fair and reasonable
5. We have previously considered and made a decision regarding the complainant's concerns



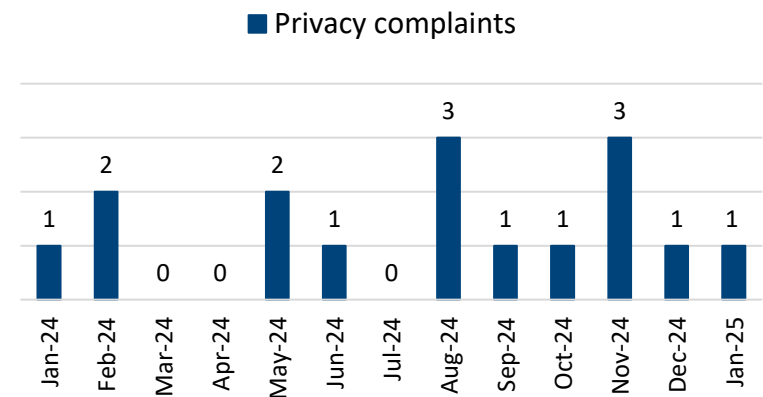
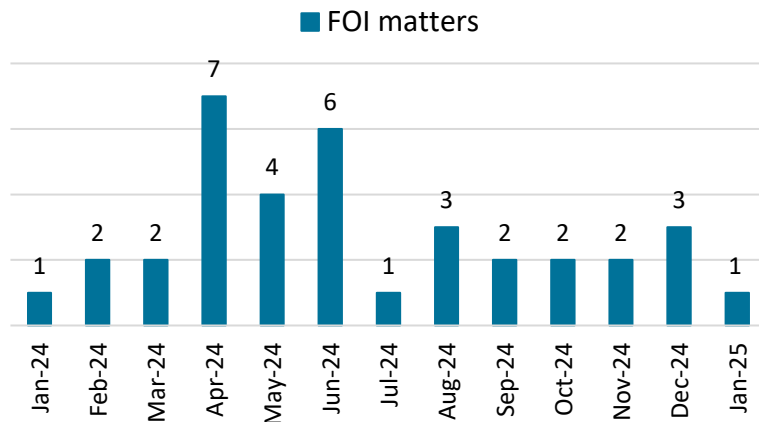
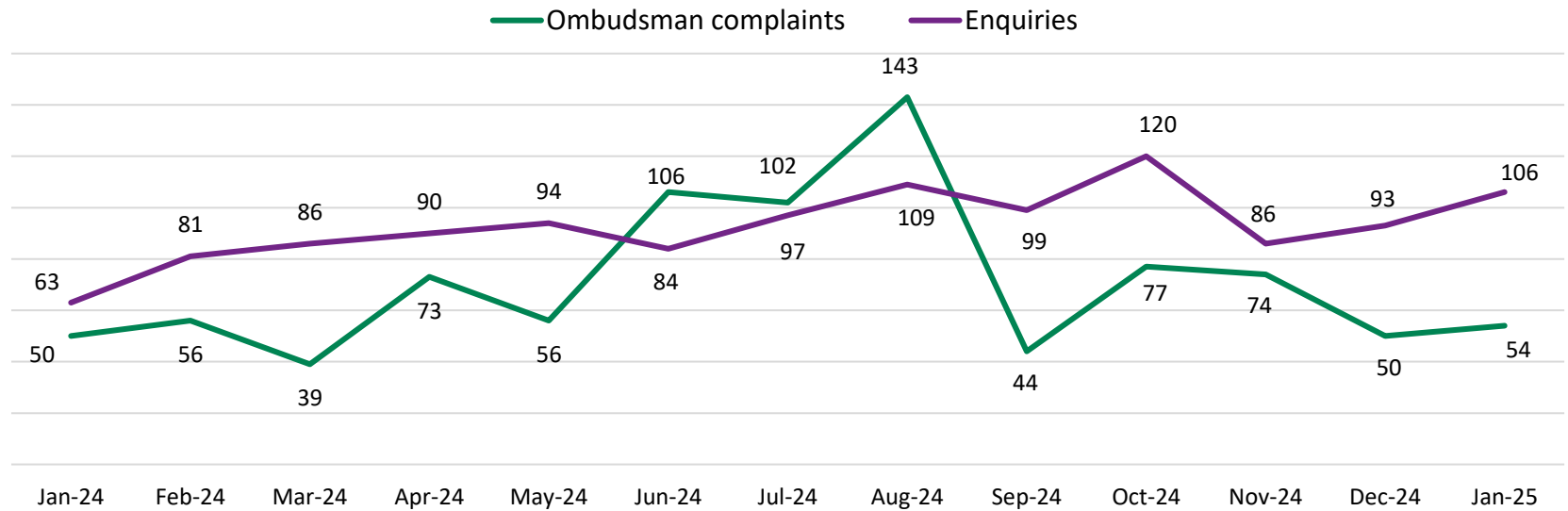
National Health
Practitioner
Ombudsman

Our year to date

1 July 2024 to 31 January 2025

Approach trends

1 January 2024 to 31 January 2025



Ombudsman complaints received from 1 July 2024 to 31 January 2025

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Types of complaints received

313 ↑ notification
Up from 236 in the same period last financial year

157 ↑ registration
Up from 60 in the same period last financial year

46 ↑ accreditation
Up from 32 in the same period last financial year

Who made complaints

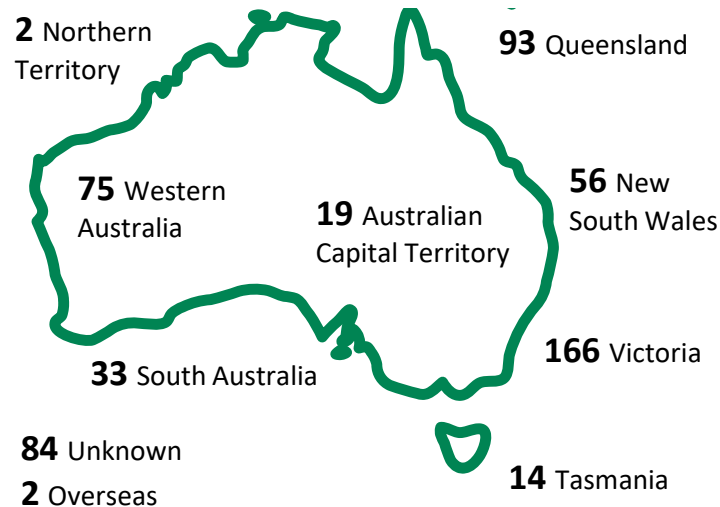
360 health practitioners
184 Non-practitioners

↑ Up from 201 in the same period last financial year
↑ Up from 160 in the same period last financial year

Professions most complaints were about

350 medical ↑ Up from 225 in the same period last financial year
75 nursing ↑ Up from 45 in the same period last financial year
48 psychology ↑ Up from 30 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 31 January 2025

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Early resolution mechanisms

410



complaints
finalised at the
assessment stage

Up from 217 in
the same
period last
financial year



76



complaints finalised
at the preliminary
inquiry stage

Up from 67 in
the same
period last
financial year



52



complaints finalised
at the early resolution
transfer stage

Down from 68
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 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 organisation's response to the complaint was fair and reasonable
5. The complaint could not be progressed because the complainant did not provide information that our office had requested

Investigations

8



complaints
finalised at the
investigation stage

Up from 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. The organisation provided the complainant with an apology or acknowledgement
5. Changes were made to the organisation's previous decision or reasons for decision

Ombudsman and Commissioner's observations

My office received 163 approaches during January 2025, up from 115 in January 2024. Much of this growth was driven by enquiries about concerns that we could not assist with (106, up from 63). Most commonly, these concerns related to the quality or safety of a health service, or the conduct or performance of a registered health practitioner. My staff provided information to complainants about how to contact the appropriate health complaints organisation on 62 occasions and information on how to submit a notification to the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (Ahpra) on 12 occasions.

We received a small increase in Ombudsman complaints when compared to last year (54, up from 50 in January 2024). Interestingly, we received a marked increase in registration-related complaints (18, up from 5), and fewer complaints related to the handling of notifications (30, down from 39). Accreditation-related complaints remained relatively consistent (4, down from 5).

The reduction in notification-related complaints can be attributed to fewer notifiers submitting new complaints (14, down from 23). Consistent with past trends, notification-related complaints were more likely to be about the medical profession. However, we received fewer notification-related complaints about the medical profession than we did in January 2024 (13, down from 19). Comparatively, complaints related to nursing profession increased and complaints related to the psychology profession remained relatively consistent.

The increase in registration-related complaints this month was predominantly associated with the medical (7, up from 0) and psychology (4, up from 1) professions. Complaint themes included the monitoring of compliance with restrictions, supervision requirements, and the application of the criminal history registration standard to registration applications.

My office finalised 58 Ombudsman complaints during January 2025, up from 50 in January 2024. In the course of progressing open matters, we facilitated 10 early resolution transfers, made preliminary inquiries 10 times, and commenced two formal investigations.

I also made a determination regarding a review of a Freedom of Information decision made by Ahpra. The determination can be accessed on our website.