



National Health  
Practitioner  
Ombudsman

# Our work in December 2024

# Monthly approaches overview

1 December 2024 to 31 December 2024

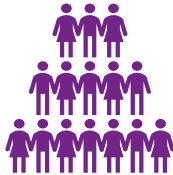


National Health  
Practitioner  
Ombudsman

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146

approaches  
received



Up from 137 in  
December 2023



49

Ombudsman  
complaints received



Down from 50 in  
December 2023



3

FOI matters  
received



Down from 4 in  
December 2023



1

privacy  
complaints received



Up from 0 in  
December 2023



93

enquiries  
received



Up from 83 in  
December 2023



Ombudsman complaints  
were made by 38  
individuals (down from  
40 in December 2023)



0

FOI review  
determinations  
(0 in December  
2023)



0

notifiable data  
breaches assessed  
(0 in December  
2023)

## Complaints to the Ombudsman

5

early resolution  
transfers made



Down from 11 in  
December 2023



3

preliminary  
inquiries made



Down from 5 in  
December 2023



1

investigations  
launched



Down from 3 in  
December 2023



60

Ombudsman  
complaints finalised

Up from 42 in  
December 2023



Stage complaint was finalised

54

assessment

1

preliminary  
inquiry

3

early resolution  
transfer

2

investigation

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# Notification-related complaints to the Ombudsman

1 December 2024 to 31 December 2024



National Health Practitioner Ombudsman

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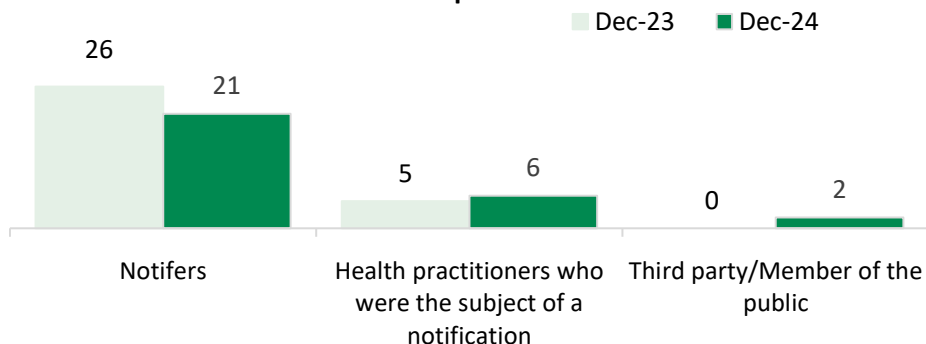
29

notification-related complaints received

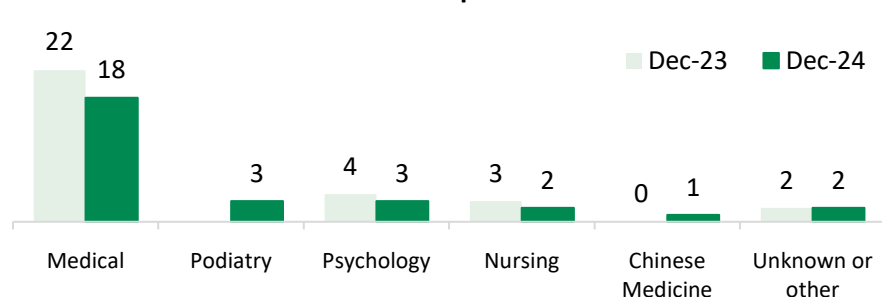


Down from 31 in December 2023

## Who made notification-related complaints



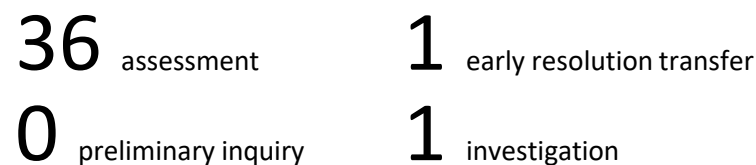
## Professions notification-related complaints were about



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

1. No further action taken at the assessment stage
2. Action taken to refer a practitioner to a Tribunal
3. Action taken to require a health or performance assessment
4. An active notification
5. Matter was not processed as a notification

## Stage notification-related complaints were finalised



## Most common outcomes of notification-related complaints

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

# Registration-related complaints to the Ombudsman

1 December 2024 to 31 December 2024



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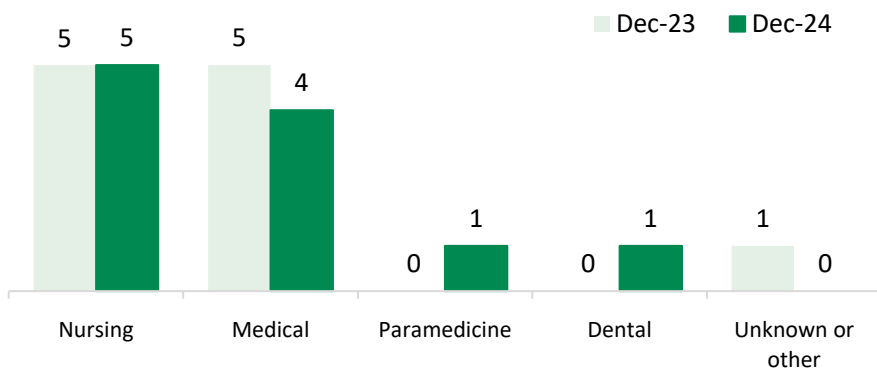
**11** registration-related complaints received

Consistent with 11 in December 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. Handling of an application for a renewal of registration
3. Application of the English Language Skills Registration Standard
4. Information recorded on the National Register about a practitioner
5. Unintended lapse in a practitioner's registration

## Stage registration-related complaints were finalised

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

## Most common outcomes of registration-related complaints

1. The complaint concerned the merits of the organisation's decision and we do not have the power to review the merits of a decision
2. The organisation is actively considering the complainant's concerns
3. An investigation was not warranted in the circumstances
4. The complaint could not be progressed because the complainant did not provide information that our office had requested
5. The complainant agreed that their concerns had been resolved

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# Accreditation-related complaints to the Ombudsman

1 December 2024 to 31 December 2024



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Practitioner  
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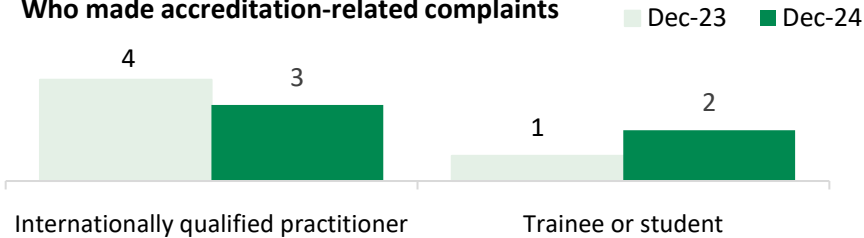


5

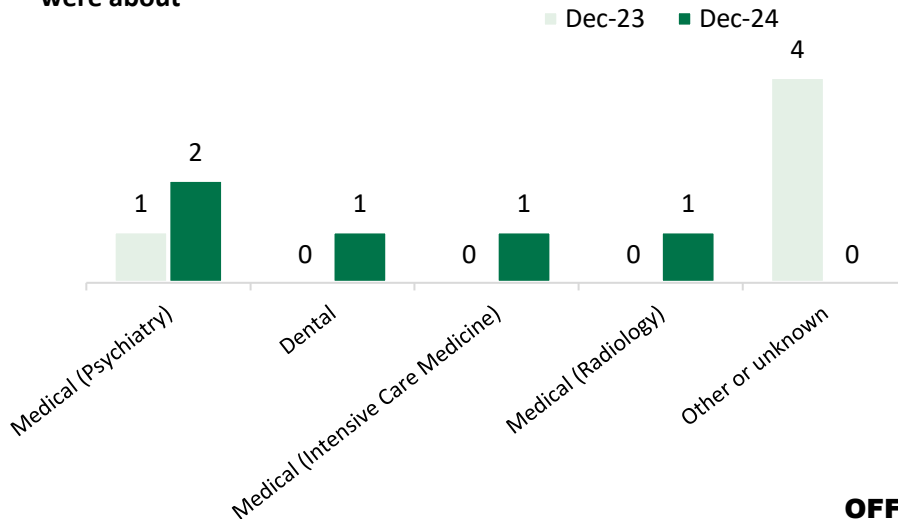
accreditation-related  
complaints received

Consistent with 5 in December 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. Bullying or harassment at a training site
4. Delivery of a training program
5. Fees charged by an accreditation organisation

## Stage accreditation-related complaints were finalised

6 assessment      0 early resolution transfer  
0 preliminary inquiry      1 investigation

## Most common outcomes of accreditation-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 organisation that the complaint relates to has not yet had an opportunity to respond to the complaint
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 agreed that their concerns had been resolved

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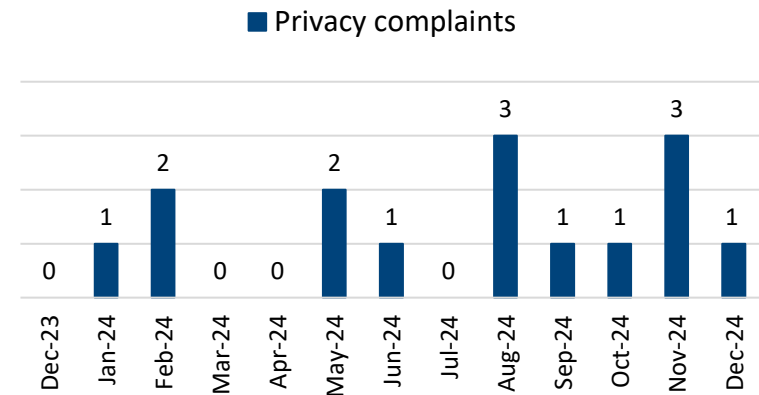
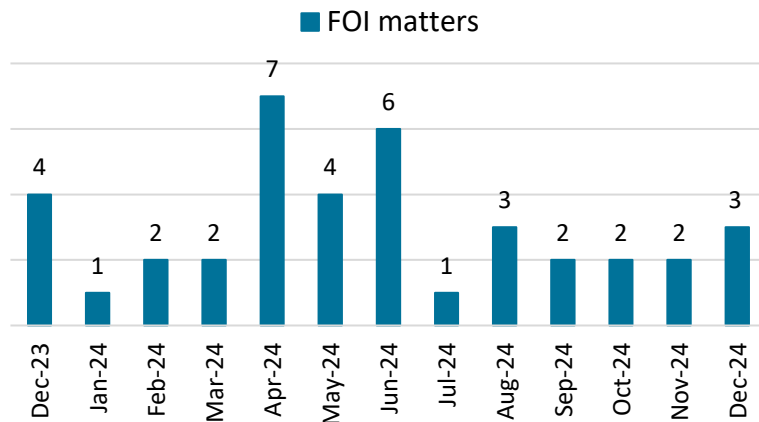
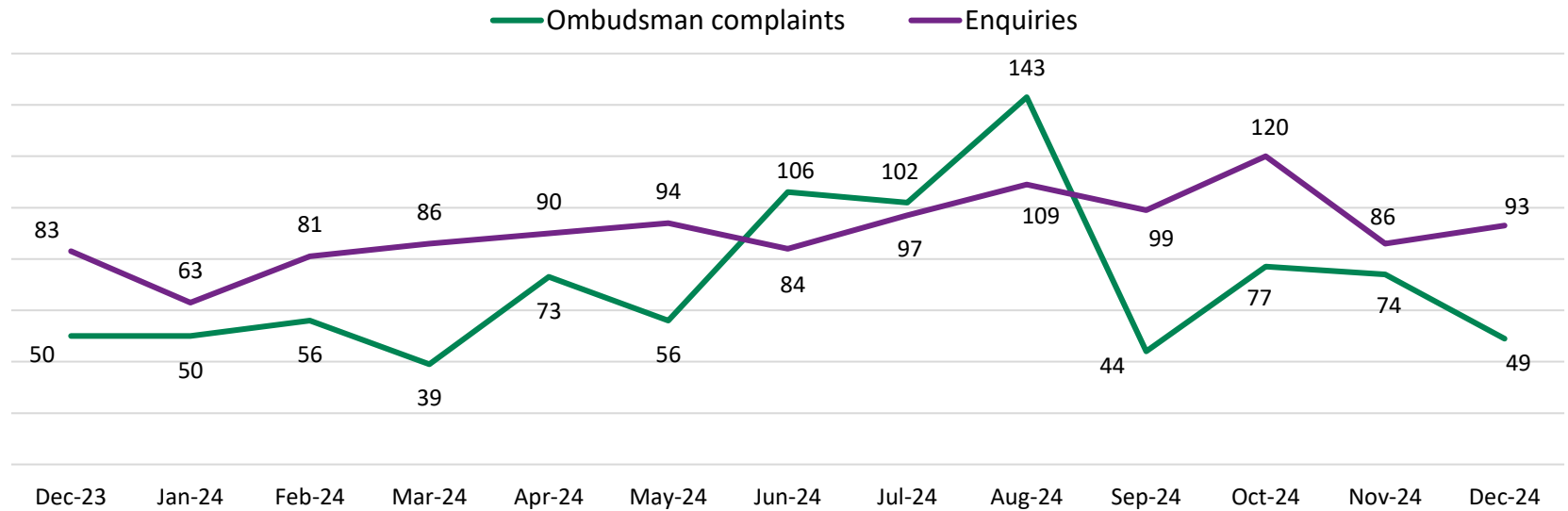
National Health  
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# Our year to date

1 July 2024 to 31 December 2024

# Approach trends

1 December 2023 to 31 December 2024



# Ombudsman complaints received from 1 July 2024 to 31 December 2024

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## Types of complaints received

**283** ↑ notification  
Up from 197 in the same period last financial year

**139** ↑ registration  
Up from 55 in the same period last financial year

**42** ↑ accreditation  
Up from 27 in the same period last financial year

## Who made complaints

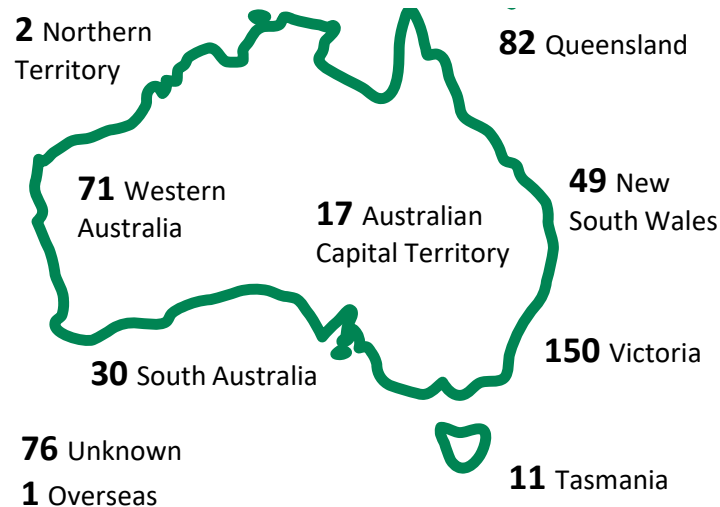
**319** health practitioners  
**170** Non-practitioners

↑ Up from 173 in the same period last financial year  
↑ Up from 138 in the same period last financial year

## Professions most complaints were about

**326** medical ↑ Up from 200 in the same period last financial year  
**65** nursing ↑ Up from 40 in the same period last financial year  
**34** psychology ↑ Up from 21 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

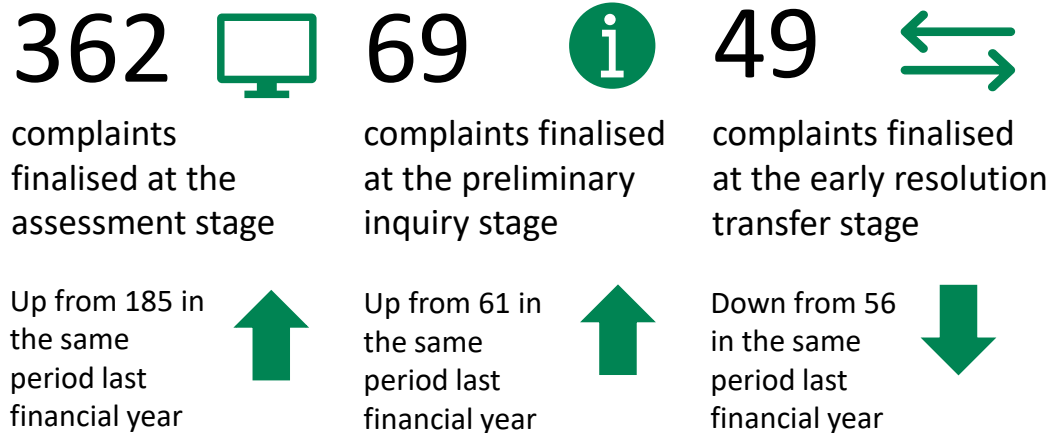
1. Practitioner believes the fees they were charged for general registration are unfair or unreasonable
2. Member of the public believes that they or their community are without adequate access to a preferred health practitioner as a result of a practitioner's registration being restricted
3. Practitioner 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 December 2024

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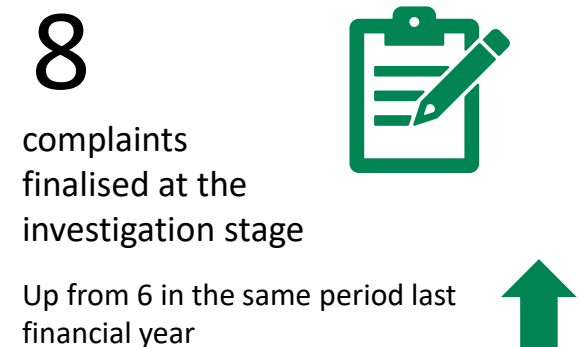
## Early resolution mechanisms



### 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 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 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

## Investigations



### 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 146 approaches during December 2024. Both the number of approaches and the types of matters received were largely consistent with December 2023.

We received slightly fewer notification-related complaints compared with December 2023 (29, down from 31). The same number of registration-related complaints were received in December 2023 and December 2024 (11). The number of accreditation-related complaints received also remained consistent (5 each in both December 2023 and December 2024).

My office finalised 60 Ombudsman complaints during December 2024, including 2 formal investigations. One of the finalised investigations concerned the management of a notification and culminated in feedback to Ahpra, the revision of a policy or process, and an apology to the complainant. The second investigation was concluded because an accreditation organisation agreed to reassess a specialist medical practitioner's international qualification.

While the number of approaches received in the month of December 2024 was not dissimilar to the number received in December 2023, my office has been considerably busier during the first half of 2024–25 than the same period in the previous financial year. My office has recorded a 27% increase in the number of approaches received when compared with the first half of 2023–24 (1117 approaches, up from 879). This increase can mostly be attributed to an increase in Ombudsman complaints (489, up from 311).

Ombudsman complaints relating to the handling of a notification (283, up from 197), a registration matter (139, up from 55) and accreditation processes (42, up from 27) have all increased over the first half of 2024–25. While a significant portion of the increase in complaints concerned the medical profession (326, up from 200), complaints related to professions such as nursing (65, up from 40) and psychology (34, up from 21) have also increased. More practitioners have made complaints when compared to the same period last year (319, up from 173), and practitioners have also been considerably more likely to submit their concerns anonymously (55 anonymous complaints, up from 5). My office will continue to monitor these trends closely in the second half of 2024–25.