

Office of the Health Ombudsman

Performance report October 2018



Office of the
**HEALTH
OMBUDSMAN**

Listen. Respond. Resolve.

Office of the Health Ombudsman—Performance report October 2018

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Introduction

This document reports on our performance during October 2018.

As Queensland's health service complaints agency, the Office of the Health Ombudsman (OHO) exists to protect the health and safety of the public by assessing, investigating and resolving complaints made about health services provided in Queensland.

Our vision is to be the cornerstone of a transparent, accountable and fair system for effectively and quickly dealing with complaints and other healthcare matters in Queensland. Our performance reports—which we update and publish monthly, quarterly and yearly—are a testament to this.

We are committed to ensuring that all decisions are well-informed, fair, impartial and timely.

Data in this report is correct as at 7 November 2018, but is subject to change.

Intake of complaints

Type of contacts

Type of contact	Number	Percentage
Complaint	730	63.04
Enquiry	425	36.70
Yet to be classified	3	0.26
Total	1158	100.00

'Yet to be classified' includes contacts in which not enough information was provided for a determination to be reached—but further information is being sought—or matters that were not able to be finalised prior to the end of the reporting period. Contacts deemed 'yet to be classified' will be allocated as complaints or enquiries once additional information is received and registered as such in the next reporting period.

The number of complaint contacts will not equal the number of decisions made in the table below.

Type of complaints

Type of complaints	Number	Percentage
Health consumer complaint	635	86.99
Mandatory notification*	22	3.01
Voluntary notification*	61	8.36
Self-notification*	6	0.82
Referral from another agency	6	0.82
Total	730	100.00

*Notifications are matters raised by health service providers which do not otherwise meet the definition of a health consumer complaint as required under the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Queensland)* (the National Law).

Complaint decisions

Decision timeframes—within seven days

Decision made within seven days of receiving a complaint	Number	Percentage
Yes	686	90.38
No	73	9.62
Total	759	100.00

Accepted vs not accepted

Number of decisions made	Number	Percentage
Accepted	511	64.44
Not accepted*	248	31.27
Decision pending**	34	4.29
Total	793	100.00

*'Not accepted' decisions relate to matters in which the Health Ombudsman has decided to take no further action under section 44 of the *Health Ombudsman Act 2013* (the Act).

**'Decision pending' relates to matters where more information is required before a decision on whether to accept or not accept can be made, or because the matter came in just before the end of the reporting period and is still being processed.

An additional 15 matters were determined to fall outside the jurisdiction of the Act.

Accepted decision outcomes

Type of relevant action	Number	Percentage
Assessment	201	37.50
Local resolution	136	25.37
Conciliation	2	0.37
Investigation	14	2.61
Referral to AHPRA and the national boards	183	34.14
Referral to another entity	0	0.00
Immediate registration action	0	0.00
Interim prohibition order	0	0.00
Total	536	100.00

Accepted decisions may result in multiple issues and/or practitioners being identified, each requiring its own action. The data in the above table includes all identified issues/practitioners requiring action that were identified in the accepted complaints (noted in the previous *Accepted vs not accepted* table).

Health service complaints profile

Main issues raised in complaints

Issue	Number	Percentage
Access	57	5.62
Code of conduct for healthcare workers	11	1.08
Communication/information	152	14.99
Consent	13	1.28
Discharge/transfer arrangements	14	1.38
Environment/management of facilities	23	2.27
Fees/cost	30	2.96
Grievance processes	19	1.87
<i>Health Ombudsman Act 2013 offence</i>	0	0.00
Medical records	26	2.56
Medication	136	13.41
Professional conduct	105	10.36
Professional health	25	2.47
Professional performance	373	36.79
Reports/certificates	30	2.96
Research/teaching/assessment	0	0.00
Total	1014	100.00

These figures are based on issues recorded during the reporting period. A single complaint can contain multiple issues. Reporting on all issues identified in complaints allows comprehensive monitoring of trends, which can in turn inform a range of health complaint management system functions, such as education and information provision.

Number and type of issues identified in complaints by health practitioner

Practitioner type	Access	Code of conduct for healthcare workers	Communication and information	Consent	Discharge/transfer arrangements	Environment/management of facility	Fees and costs	Grievance process	Health Ombudsman Act 2013 offence	Medical records	Medication	Professional conduct	Professional health	Professional performance	Reports/certificates	Research/teaching/assessment	Total
Alternative care	-	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	5
Chinese medicine	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Chiropractor	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Dentistry	-	-	2	-	-	-	2	-	-	1	1	9	1	22	2	-	40
Emergency care	1	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	6
General medical	6	-	51	1	1	1	1	1	-	8	32	31	5	74	16	-	228
Medical radiation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Medical specialty	1	-	7	1	1	1	2	-	-	1	10	3	-	18	1	-	46
Nursing	1	-	6	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	16	10	10	-	-	48
Occupational therapy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	2
Optometry	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	-	-	7
Osteopathy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	2
Other	-	2	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	13	5	2	1	-	26
Pathology service	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	2
Pharmacy	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	3	-	-	-	9
Physiotherapy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	5	-	-	7
Podiatry	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Psychology	-	-	5	1	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	6	-	5	1	-	20
Speech pathology	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Surgical	1	1	4	2	-	1	3	-	-	-	-	2	-	26	-	-	40
Total	10	6	82	6	2	4	10	1	0	12	48	88	24	174	23	0	490

These figures are based on issues recorded during the reporting period. A single complaint can contain multiple issues.

Number and type of issues identified in complaints by health service organisation

Organisation type	Access	Code of conduct for healthcare workers	Communication and information	Consent	Discharge/transfer arrangements	Environment/management of facility	Fees and costs	Grievance processes	Health Ombudsman Act 2013 Offence	Medical records	Medication	Professional conduct	Professional health	Professional performance	Reports/certificates	Research/Teaching/Assessment	Total
Aged care facility	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	-	6	-	-	9
Allied health service	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	2
Ambulance service	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	4
Community health service	1	1	2	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	1	1	-	2	-	-	10
Correctional facility	17	-	5	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	60	-	1	42	1	-	128
Dental service	3	-	-	-	-	2	1	1	-	2	-	1	-	8	-	-	18
Hospital and Health Service	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	3
Laboratory service	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Licensed private hospital	-	-	7	-	2	3	3	1	-	1	3	-	-	7	-	-	27
Medical centre	8	-	11	1	-	3	6	5	-	3	4	3	-	8	3	-	55
Mental health service	1	-	5	-	1	-	-	1	-	1	3	2	-	13	1	-	28
Other government department	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Other support service	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	-	-	5
Pharmaceutical service	-	-	2	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	6
Private organisation	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	2	-	-	8
Public health service	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	3
Public hospital	13	-	33	4	9	6	1	8	-	3	9	8	-	103	2	-	199
Residential care service	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	2
Specialised health service	2	-	3	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	1	-	-	2	-	-	13
Health promotion service	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Total	47	5	70	7	12	19	20	18	0	14	88	17	1	199	7	0	524

These figures are based on issues recorded during the reporting period. A single complaint can contain multiple issues.

Assessment

Assessments started and completed

Assessments this month	Number
Assessments started	223
Assessments completed	212

Completed assessment timeframes

Of the 212 assessments finalised in October, 210 were completed within 30 days or 60 days with an approved extension, representing a finalisation rate within statutory timeframes of 99.06 per cent.

Of the 37 assessments completed within 60 days, 36 matters were approved for extension. One additional matter was completed in greater than 60 days.

Assessment timeframes	Number	Percentage
Completed within 30 days	174	82.08
Completed within 60 days*	37	17.45
Completed in more than 60 days	1	0.47
Total	212	100.00

*Assessments are able to be completed within 60 days when granted an extension of 30 days as a result of legislated requirements being met.

Assessment decisions

Type of relevant action	Number	Percentage
Local resolution	0	0.00
Conciliation	10	4.59
Investigation	7	3.21
Referral to AHPRA and the national boards	15	6.88
Referral to another entity	107	49.08
Immediate registration action*	0	0.00
Interim prohibition order*	0	0.00
No further action	79	36.24
Total	218	100.00

Total assessment decisions will not equal the total number of assessments (in previous tables) as a single assessment can result in multiple relevant actions.

The figures for the type of relevant action decided in the assessment stage may not correspond with totals for respective relevant actions (e.g. local resolution, conciliation, investigation) due to the time between a decision being made and an action being taken crossing over different reporting periods.

*Immediate action assessment decision figures may not align with the immediate action figures later in the report due to immediate action decisions being made outside of the assessment process.

Local resolution

Local resolutions started and completed

Local resolutions this month	Number
Local resolutions started	147
Local resolutions completed	104

The number of local resolutions started in the month may not directly match the number of assessment decisions to undertake local resolution due to the time between a decision being made and an action taken crossing over different reporting periods.

Completed local resolutions

Timeframes

Of the 104 local resolutions finalised in November, 101 were completed within 30 days or 60 days with an approved extension, representing a finalisation rate within statutory timeframes of 97.12 per cent.

Of the 9 local resolution matters completed within 60 days, 8 were approved for extension.

We strive to finalise all matters within legislated timeframes, however, some can take longer than others due to factors outside of our control, such as delays in receiving information and responses from individual parties.

Local resolution timeframes	Number	Percentage
Completed within 30 days	93	89.42
Completed within 60 days*	9	8.65
Completed in more than 60 days	2	1.92
Total	104	100.00

*Local resolutions are able to be completed within 60 days when granted an extension of 30 days as a result of legislated requirements being met.

Outcomes

Local resolution outcomes	Number	Percentage
Resolved	81	77.88
Not resolved	9	8.65
Complaint withdrawn*	9	8.65
Local resolution did not commence**	5	4.81
Total	104	100.00

*Complainants can choose to withdraw their complaint at any stage during local resolution.

**A local resolution may not commence where the complaint is resolved directly with the health care provider prior to the commencement of the process.

Decisions for matters that were not resolved

Type of relevant action	Number	Percentage
Assessment	1	11.11
Conciliation	0	0.00
Investigation	0	0.00
Referral to AHPRA and the national boards	0	0.00
Referral to another entity	0	0.00
Immediate action	0	0.00
No further action	8	88.89
Total	9	100.00

Conciliation

Conciliations started and closed

Conciliations this month	Number
Conciliations open at the start of the month	37
Conciliations started	7
Conciliations closed	9

The number of conciliations started in the reporting period may not match the number of decisions to refer for conciliation noted in other areas of the report due to the time between a decision being made and an action taken crossing over different reporting periods.

'Conciliations started' includes all matters—including matters where agreement to participate has or has not been reached or the decision is pending—that entered the conciliation workflow during the reporting period following the OHO assessing them as being suitable for conciliation. Similarly, 'conciliations closed' are all matters that were closed during the reporting period, whether due to parties not agreeing to participate or the matter being closed after completing the conciliation process. Closed conciliations differ from completed conciliations below, as completed conciliations only include matters where both parties agreed to participate and the conciliation process was completed.

Agreement to participate in conciliation

Agreement to participate in conciliation	Number
Parties agreed to conciliation	6
Party/ies did not agree to conciliation	5
Decisions pending at end of month	14

Once the decision is made to attempt conciliation, both parties must agree to participate in the process. If either one, or both, of the parties do not agree, the conciliation process does not commence and the matter is closed.

'Decisions pending' includes matters where parties are still deciding whether to participate in conciliation at the end of the reporting period. It also includes matters that have been referred to another relevant action, where conciliation may not commence until this relevant action has been finalised.

Completed conciliations

Timeframes

Completed conciliation timeframes	Number	Percentage
Less than 3 months	0	0.00
3–6 months	2	50.00
6–9 months	2	50.00
9–12 months	0	0.00
More than 12 months	0	0.00
Total	4	100.00

The data above relates to matters where parties agreed to participate in conciliation and the conciliation process was completed within the specified timeframes. 'Completed conciliations' differ from 'closed conciliations'—in the table on page 15—as they only relate to matters where parties agreed to participate and the conciliation process was completed.

Outcomes

Conciliation outcomes	Number	Percentage
Successful	3	75.00
Not successful	1	25.00
Ended by Health Ombudsman	0	0.00
Total	4	100.00

The data above relates to matters where parties agreed to participate in conciliation. After agreeing, the conciliation process was completed with the matter either being successful or not successful—or in rare instances, the Health Ombudsman ending it. 'Completed conciliations' differ from 'closed conciliations'—in the table on page 15—in that they only relate to matters where parties agreed to participate and the conciliation process was completed.

Decisions for conciliations that were not successful

Type of relevant action	Number	Percentage
Local resolution	0	0.00
Investigation	0	0.00
Referral to AHPRA and the national boards	0	0.00
Referral to another entity	0	0.00
Immediate action	0	0.00
No further action	1	100.00
Total	1	100.00

Open conciliation timeframes

Open conciliation timeframes	Number	Percentage
Less than 3 months	18	51.43
3–6 months	13	37.14
6–9 months	1	2.86
9–12 months	1	2.86
More than 12 months	2	5.71
Total	35	100.00

Matters can be referred simultaneously to conciliation and another relevant action. Conciliation may not commence until after the other relevant action has been finalised.

There are 10 matters on hold until the outcome of another process is finalised (e.g. the process of another agency such as AHPRA). This includes 4 matters that have been open for less than 3 months, 2 that have been open for 3–6 months, 1 that has been open for 6–9 months, 1 that has been open for 9–12 months, and 2 that have been open for more than 12 months.

To allow for continued transparency in the timeliness of conciliation processes, open conciliation timeframes include the time in which a matter was on hold whilst another process was finalised.

Investigation

Investigations started and closed

Investigations this month	Number
Investigations open at the beginning of the month	146
Investigations started	25
Investigations closed	13
Investigations amalgamated under section 40(2)*	2

The number of investigations started in the reporting period may not match the number of assessment decisions to undertake investigation due to the time between a decision being made and an action taken crossing over different reporting periods, or due to investigations being started via other processes (e.g. own-motion investigation).

*Matters that involve similar allegations against a health service provider may be combined and dealt with together under section 40(2) of the Act.

Closed investigations

In October, 69.23 percent of investigations were closed within twelve months of commencement.

Timeframes

Closed investigation timeframes	Number	Percentage
Less than 3 months	3	23.08
3–6 months	3	23.08
6–9 months	1	7.69
9–12 months	2	15.38
12–24 months	3	23.08
More than 2 years	1	7.69
Total	13	100.00

Outcomes

Closed investigation outcomes	Number	Percentage
Recommended for referral to Director of Proceedings*	7	53.85
Referral to AHPRA	2	15.38
Referral to another agency	0	0.00
No further action	4	30.77
Referral to conciliation	0	0.00
Total	13	100.00

*Matters determined suitable for referral to the Director of Proceedings at the conclusion of an investigation are sent to the Health Ombudsman for consideration and determination on whether referral to the Director of Proceedings is appropriate.

Open investigations

Open investigations consist of two categories—active investigations and paused investigations.

Active investigations are being currently investigated by the office, while paused investigations are not able to be investigated by the office until such time as another agency—such as the Queensland Police Service or the Coroners Court of Queensland—concludes their own processes. Despite the office being unable to progress paused investigations, they are still considered to be open investigations.

Active investigation timeframes

Active investigation timeframes	Number	Percentage
Less than 3 months	42	36.52
3–6 months	25	21.74
6–9 months	13	11.30
9–12 months	13	11.30
12–24 months*	13	11.30
More than 2 years*	9	7.83
Total	115	100.00

*All investigations that have been open for more than 12 months are published on the investigations register on the OHO website.

Paused investigation timeframes

Paused investigation timeframes	Number	Percentage
Less than 3 months	2	4.88
3–6 months	8	19.51
6–9 months	8	19.51
9–12 months	6	14.63
12–24 months	13	31.71
More than 2 years	4	9.76
Total	41	100.00

Total open investigation timeframes

Total open investigation timeframes	Number	Percentage
Less than 3 months	44	28.21
3–6 months	33	21.15
6–9 months	21	13.46
9–12 months	19	12.18
12–24 months	26	16.67
More than 2 years	13	8.33
Total	156	100.00

Total open investigation categories

Type of investigation	Number
Health service complaint	92
Systemic issue	12
Another matter*	52
Matters identified for further investigation**	0
Total	156

*Matters that are brought to the Health Ombudsman's attention by means other than through a health service complaint or notification.

**Matters referred for further investigation by the Health Ombudsman under section 105 of the Act following referral to Director of Proceedings.

Monitoring investigation recommendations

The OHO monitors the implementation of recommendations made as an outcome of two types of investigation processes—recommendations made as a result of an OHO investigation and recommendations made as a result of a health service provider investigation.

OHO recommendations

At the completion of certain investigations, the Health Ombudsman makes recommendations to health service providers for how they can improve service delivery and/or prevent the issues identified in the investigation from happening again. In these instances, the OHO puts in place a recommendations monitoring program to track the implementation of the recommendations.

Health service provider recommendations

In addition, a health service provider may conduct its own investigation, or engage another entity to conduct an independent investigation, resulting in recommendations for improvement. The Health Ombudsman may decide to monitor the implementation of these recommendations.

OHO recommendations monitoring

Cases this month	Number
Cases open at the beginning of the month	5
Recommendations monitoring cases started	0
Recommendations monitoring cases closed	0

Health service provider recommendations monitoring

Cases this month	Number
Cases open at the beginning of the month	0
Recommendations monitoring cases started	0
Recommendations monitoring cases closed	0

Open recommendations monitoring timeframes

Open case timeframes	Number	Percentage
Less than 6 months	2	40.00
6–12 months	1	20.00
More than 12 months	2	40.00
Total	5	100.00

Director of Proceedings

Matters referred to the Director of Proceedings by practitioner type

Practitioner type	Number	Percentage
Dentist	1	14.29
Podiatrist	1	14.29
Registered Nurse	2	28.57
Assistant in Nursing	2	28.57
Aged Care Health Worker	1	14.29
Total	7	100.00

Matters determined suitable for referral to the Director of Proceedings at the conclusion of an investigation are first sent to the Health Ombudsman for consideration and determination on whether referral to the Director of Proceedings is appropriate. As a result, these figures will differ from 'closed investigation outcomes' figures.

Matters currently with the Director of Proceedings by practitioner type

Practitioner type	Number	Percentage
Advanced care paramedic	2	1.14
Aged care health worker	1	0.57
Assistant in nursing	5	2.84
Audiologist	2	1.14
Chinese medicine practitioner	3	1.70
Dental assistant	1	0.57
Dentist	7	3.98
Holding out as a Psychologist	1	0.57
Holding out as a Registered Nurse	2	1.14
Massage therapist	2	1.14
Medical practitioner*	56	31.82
Medical radiation practitioner	2	1.14
Natural therapist	1	0.57
Pharmacist	11	6.25
Physiotherapist	1	0.57
Podiatrist	2	1.14
Psychologist	8	4.55
Registered nurse**	66	37.50
Social worker	1	0.57
Student nurse	1	0.57
Unregistered chiropractor	1	0.57
Total	176***	100.00

*One medical practitioner held dual registration as a dentist

**One registered nurse held dual registration as a midwife.

*** This figure includes one additional matter referred to the Director of Proceedings, but not recorded until after the close of the September reporting period.

Outcomes of matters reviewed by Director of Proceedings

Matters filed in in the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal

Practitioner type	Number	Percentage
Medical Practitioner	2	28.57
Psychologist	1	14.28
Registered Nurse	4	57.14
Total	7	100.00

Matters to be referred back to the Health Ombudsman

Practitioner type	Number	Percentage
Medical Practitioner	1	33.33
Pharmacist	1	33.33
Podiatrist	1	33.33
Total	3	100.00

Offences against the Health Ombudsman Act 2013

The *Health Ombudsman Act 2013* (the Act) specifies a number of breaches of the Act which constitute either a summary or indictable offence.

Where there is evidence of such a breach, a matter may be referred to the Executive Director, Legal Services, to commence prosecution within the courts.

No matters were referred for summary prosecution in October.

Immediate action

The Act allows for immediate action to be taken against a registered or unregistered health practitioner if the Health Ombudsman reasonably believes:

- that a practitioner's health, conduct or performance poses a serious risk to the health and safety of the public

or

- that action is in the public interest.

Show cause notices

In October, eight show cause notices were issued to six medical practitioners, one registered nurse and one health support worker.

As outlined in the Act, upon receipt of a show cause notice, a health service provider is invited to make a submission within a stated period of time. The Health Ombudsman will then consider the submission before deciding whether to take immediate action against the provider.

Immediate registration actions

Practitioner type	Number	Action taken	Reasons/s for taking action		
			Health	Conduct	Performance
Dentist	1	Conditions		✓	
Medical practitioner	2	Conditions		✓	
Medical practitioner	1	Conditions		✓	✓

Immediate registration actions apply only to registered practitioners and may result in the Health Ombudsman issuing a suspension—or imposing conditions upon—a registered practitioner's registration.

Interim prohibition orders

Practitioner type	Number	Action taken	Reasons/s for taking action			
			Health	Conduct	Performance	Interstate
Assistant in nursing	1	Prohibition		✓		
Unregistered practitioner performing acupuncture	1	Restrictions		✓		
Holding out as a medical practitioner	1	Prohibition		✓	✓	

The Health Ombudsman has powers to issue interim prohibition orders to unregistered practitioners and registered practitioners practicing outside their field of registration. An interim prohibition order can prohibit or restrict the practitioner from providing any health service, or a specific health service.

The Health Ombudsman can also enforce a prohibition order or an interim prohibition order issued in another state or territory where that interstate prohibition order corresponds—or substantially corresponds—to the type of prohibition order that can be made in Queensland.

Monitoring practitioner compliance

When the Health Ombudsman takes immediate action against a health practitioner, the office monitors the practitioner's compliance with the conditions of the order.

For interim prohibition orders, this means monitoring compliance with the restriction(s) on or prohibition of service. For immediate registration actions, this means monitoring compliance with condition(s) on or suspension of a practitioner's registration.

The Health Ombudsman may take immediate action against a single practitioner with both immediate registration action and an interim prohibition order. This can occur, for example, in instances where there is a risk that a registered practitioner may also practice in an unregistered capacity.

Practitioner monitoring cases

Cases this month	Number
Cases open at the beginning of the month	93
Practitioner monitoring cases started	6
Practitioner monitoring cases closed	2

Open monitoring cases

Timeframes

Open case timeframes	Number	Percentage
Less than 6 months	21	21.65
6–12 months	18	18.56
More than 12 months	58	59.79
Total	99	100.00

Immediate action types

Open cases by immediate action type	Number	Percentage
Interim prohibition order—restrictions	18	18.56
Interim prohibition order—prohibition	41	42.27
Immediate registration action—conditions	19	19.59
Immediate registration action—suspension	18	18.56
QCAT issued prohibition/restrictions	1	1.03

Open cases by immediate action type	Number	Percentage
Total	97	100.00

Registered practitioners under monitoring by practitioner type

Open cases by practitioner type	Number	Percentage
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health worker	0	0.00
Chinese medicine practitioner	1	1.96
Chiropractor	1	1.96
Dental practitioner	4	7.84
Medical practitioner	10	19.61
Medical radiation practitioner	0	0.00
Nursing and midwifery practitioner	31	60.78
Occupational therapist	0	0.00
Optometrist	0	0.00
Osteopath	0	0.00
Pharmacist	0	0.00
Physiotherapist	2	3.92
Podiatrist	0	0.00
Psychologist	2	3.92
Total	51	100.00

These figures are based on the number of individual registered practitioners being monitored by the OHO during the reporting period. As a single practitioner may be monitored in relation to more than one immediate action, these figures may not match the total number of open monitoring cases.

Unregistered practitioners under monitoring by type

Open cases by practitioner type	Number	Percentage
Aboriginal and Torres strait islander health worker	1	2.33
Aged care worker	1	2.33
Assistant in nursing	9	20.93
Audiologist	2	4.65
Counsellor	1	2.33
Dental assistant	1	2.33
Dental nurse	1	2.33
Former nurse	1	2.33
Holding out*	4	9.30
Kinesiologist	1	2.33
Massage therapist	13	30.23
Medical assistant	1	2.33
Naturopath	1	2.33
Natural therapist	1	2.33
Other health provider	0	0.00
Paramedic	4	9.30
Personal carer	1	2.33
Social worker	1	2.33
Unregistered chiropractor	0	0.00
Total	43	100.00

These figures are based on the number of individual unregistered practitioners being monitored by the OHO during the reporting period. As a single practitioner may be monitored in relation to more than one immediate action, these figures may not match the total number of open monitoring cases.

*Certain titles of registered health professions are protected under the National Law. Anyone who uses a protected title (e.g. medical practitioner), without being registered for that profession, are classified as 'holding out' as a practitioner of that profession.

Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA)

Notifications from AHPRA

In October no new notifications were received by the OHO (under section 193 of the Act) in relation to possible serious matters.

Consultation on matters

The office consults with AHPRA on matters that are considered to be appropriate for AHPRA to manage. For matters the office is considering referring to AHPRA under section 91 of the Act, the office provides AHPRA with all necessary information in order for AHPRA to form a view as to whether they need to discuss or accept and progress the referral.

For complex cases or where a pattern of conduct may be present the office may hold case conferences with AHPRA, either in person or electronically, which can sometimes delay the consultation process. By encouraging robust conversations during this process productive and consistent decisions between the core regulatory agencies is achieved.

Consultation matters	Number
Matters consulted on*	230
Matters referred	227
Matters retained by the office**	6
Decision pending	13

*The number of matters consulted on may not equal the total number of matters referred, withdrawn and pending as a matter may have commenced consultation prior to the start of the reporting period.

**Under certain circumstances additional information may be received in the course of consultation resulting in the office retaining carriage of the matter and/or taking other relevant action.

Relevant action proposing referral

Relevant action	Number	Percentage
Intake and triage	193	83.91
Assessment	31	13.48
Conciliation	0	0.00
Local resolution	1	0.43
Internal review	1	0.43
Investigation	4	1.74
Total	230	100.00

Age of matters on commencement of consultation

In order to prevent duplication of work, the office aims to ensure that matters are referred to AHPRA as early as possible in the complaint management process.

Due to the type of matters in which investigation or conciliation is deemed appropriate, and the more time intensive nature of these processes, these matters are usually older when consultation commences.

Relevant action	0–7 days	8–14 days	15–30 days	31–60 days	More than 60 days
Intake and triage	192	1	0	0	0
Assessment	2	4	11	13	1
Local resolution	0	0	1	0	0
Conciliation	0	0	0	0	0
Internal review	0	0	0	0	1
Investigation	1	0	0	0	3
Total	195	5	12	13	5

'Age of matters' is calculated from the date on which a matter was accepted by the office.

Consultation duration

Consultation duration	Number	Percentage
0–3 days	219	95.22
4–7 days	10	4.35
8–11 days	1	0.43
More than 12 days	0	0.00
Total	230	100.00

Number of practitioners referred to AHPRA by practitioner type

Practitioner type	Number	Percentage
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioner	0	0.00
Chinese medicine practitioner	0	0.00
Chiropractor	1	0.44
Dental practitioner	28	12.33
Medical practitioner	138	60.79
Medical radiation practitioner	0	0.00
Nursing and midwifery practitioner	39	17.18
Occupational therapist	1	0.44
Optometrist	2	0.88
Osteopathy	1	0.44
Pharmacist	3	1.32
Physiotherapy	3	1.32
Podiatrist	1	0.44
Psychologist	8	3.52
Unregistered practitioner	2	0.88
Total	227	100.00

Number of issues referred to AHPRA by practitioner type

Registered practitioner type	Access	Communication and information	Consent	Discharge/ transfer arrangements	Environment/ management of facility	Fees and costs	Grievance process	Medical records	Medication	Professional conduct	Professional health	Professional performance	Reports/ certificates	Research / Teaching / Assessment	Total
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioner	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Chinese medicine practitioner	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Chiropractor	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Dental practitioner	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	8	1	22	1	-	34
Medical practitioner	1	21	4	-	-	1	-	3	30	14	3	93	13	1	184
Medical student	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Medical radiation practitioner	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Nursing and midwifery practitioner	-	6	1	-	-	-	-	1	4	15	9	11	-	-	47
Nursing student	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Occupational therapist	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Optometrist	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	4
Osteopath	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	2
Pharmacist	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	-	-	-	3
Physiotherapist	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	-	-	3
Podiatrist	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Psychologist	-	2	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	3	-	4	-	-	11
Unregistered practitioner	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Total	1	29	6	0	0	2	0	5	36	44	16	139	14	1	293

The figures above represent the number of issues referred to AHPRA, not the number of practitioners. The referral of a single practitioner may include multiple issues relating to that practitioner, with each issue requiring its own action.

Demographics

Gender

Gender	Number	Percentage
Female	298	47.91
Male	302	48.55
Prefer not to specify	21	3.38
Unknown*	1	0.16
Total	622	100.00

*Not recorded or not provided for a particular matter.

Age

Age	Number	Percentage
Less than 18 years	30	4.82
19–24 years	27	4.34
25–34 years	143	22.99
35–44 years	124	19.94
45–54 years	81	13.02
55–64 years	80	12.86
65–74 years	53	8.52
More than 75 years	38	6.11
Unknown*	46	7.40
Total	622	100.00

*Not recorded or not provided for a particular matter.

Location of healthcare consumers

Location of healthcare consumers	Number	Percentage
Brisbane	269	43.25
Central West	0	0.00
Darling Downs	16	2.57
Far North	23	3.70
Fitzroy	18	2.89
Gold Coast	78	12.54
Mackay	14	2.25
North West	1	0.16
Northern	34	5.47
South West	2	0.32
Sunshine Coast	35	5.63
West Moreton	9	1.45
Wide Bay–Burnett	54	8.68
Outside Queensland	15	2.41
Unknown*	54	8.68
Total	622	100.00

*Not recorded or not provided for a particular matter.

Location of health service providers

Location of health service providers	Number	Percentage
Brisbane	365	49.86
Central West	0	0.00
Darling Downs	20	2.73
Far North	25	3.42
Fitzroy	29	3.96
Gold Coast	89	12.16
Mackay	12	1.64
North West	0	0.00
Northern	35	4.78
South West	1	0.14
Sunshine Coast	37	5.05
West Moreton	7	0.96
Wide Bay-Burnett	55	7.51
Outside Queensland*	6	0.82
Unknown**	51	6.97
Total	732	100.00

*Health service provider location is taken from the primary address of the provider recorded in the OHO complaints management system. Complaints can be made about health service providers from other states who have provided health services in Queensland. This could include locums travelling to Queensland from interstate or providers who previously lived in Queensland providing services but have since moved interstate—as the OHO can deal with complaints up to two years old.

**Not recorded or not provided for a particular matter.



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