

Office of the Health Ombudsman

Performance report July 2017



Office of the
**HEALTH
OMBUDSMAN**

Listen. Respond. Resolve.

Office of the Health Ombudsman—Performance report July 2017

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Introduction

This document reports on our performance during July 2017.

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 are correct as at 7 August 2017, but are subject to change.

Intake of complaints

Type of contacts

Type of contact	Number	Percentage
Complaint	568	62.76
Enquiry	334	36.91
Yet to be classified	3	0.33
Total	905	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	493	86.80
Mandatory notification*	10	1.76
Voluntary notification*	51	8.98
Self-notification*	9	1.58
Referral from another agency	5	0.88
Total	568	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)*.

Complaint decisions

Decision timeframes—within seven days

July data shows a slight decrease in the proportion of decisions made within seven days— down to 89.30 per cent compared with 91.22 per cent in June.

For complaints about registered health practitioners, we depend on timely data from external agencies, including the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA), so that decisions can be made within seven days.

Decision made within seven days of receiving a complaint	Number	Percentage
Yes	459	89.30
No	55	10.70
Total	514	100.00

Accepted vs not accepted

Number of decisions made	Number	Percentage
Accepted	397	77.24
Not accepted	117	22.76
Decision pending	0	0.00
Total	514	100.00

'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.

Accepted decision outcomes

Type of relevant action	Number	Percentage
Assessment	169	38.58
Local resolution	126	28.77
Conciliation	0	0.00
Investigation	5	1.14
Referred to AHPRA and the national boards	134	30.59
Referral to another entity	4	0.91
Immediate registration action	0	0.00
Interim prohibition order	0	0.00
Total	438	100.00

Accepted decisions may result in multiple issues and/or practitioners being identified, each requiring its own action. The data in the above *Accepted decision outcomes* 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	30	3.79
Code of conduct for healthcare workers	7	0.88
Communication/information	99	12.52
Consent	11	1.39
Discharge/transfer arrangements	13	1.64
Environment/management of facilities	23	2.91
Enquiry service	0	0.00
Fees/cost	20	2.53
Grievance processes	17	2.15
<i>Health Ombudsman Act 2013 Offence</i>	2	0.25
Medical records	22	2.78
Medication	77	9.73
Professional conduct	98	12.39
Professional health	27	3.41
Professional performance	334	42.23
Reports/certificates	11	1.39
Research/teaching/assessment	0	0.00
Total	791	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 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	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Chinese medicine	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Chiropractor	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	1	-	5
Dentistry	-	-	1	1	-	1	3	-	-	1	-	10	-	28	-	-	45
Emergency care	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4	-	-	5
General medical	1	1	28	1	1	-	1	-	-	5	22	27	3	67	1	-	158
Medical radiation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Medical specialty	-	-	4	-	-	1	1	2	-	1	1	3	-	14	3	-	30
Nursing	-	2	3	-	1	-	-	-	-	2	-	14	11	9	-	-	42
Occupational therapy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Optometry	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	1	-	4
Osteopathy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	1	-	-	3
Other	-	4	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	14	8	1	-	-	32
Pathology service	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Pharmacy	-	-	3	-	-	2	-	1	-	-	15	1	-	1	-	-	23
Physiotherapy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	3	1	2	-	-	7
Podiatry	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	-	-	5
Psychology	-	-	4	-	-	-	3	-	-	2	-	5	1	7	1	-	23
Speech pathology	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Surgical	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	20	-	-	26
Total	1	7	48	6	2	4	8	3	0	13	41	82	27	161	7	0	410

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

Number and type of 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	-	-	3	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	2	3	-	9	-	-	23
Allied health service	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	2
Ambulance service	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	2
Community health service	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	3	-	-	7
Correctional facility	17	-	5	-	1	1	-	-	2	-	26	-	-	42	-	-	94
Dental service	-	-	4	-	-	1	3	-	-	1	-	-	-	6	-	-	15
Hospital and health service	2	-	2	-	1	-	-	2	-	1	-	-	-	7	-	-	15
Laboratory service	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Licensed private hospital	-	-	5	-	-	1	1	-	-	2	-	-	-	6	-	-	15
Medical centre	2	-	1	2	-	-	2	1	-	1	1	2	-	1	2	-	15
Mental health service	2	-	7	1	1	3	-	-	-	1	1	2	-	8	-	-	26
Nursing service	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Pharmaceutical service	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	1	-	-	-	-	6
Private organisation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Public health service	-	-	2	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	3	-	-	8
Public hospital	6	-	16	2	7	5	4	8	-	3	2	4	-	83	1	-	141
Residential care service	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	2
Specialised health service	-	-	2	-	-	-	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	9
Total	29	0	51	5	11	19	12	14	2	9	36	16	0	173	4	0	381

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	197
Assessments completed	172

Completed assessment timeframes

Of the 172 assessments finalised in July, 133 were completed within 30 days, or 60 days with an approved extension, representing a finalisation rate within statutory timeframes of 77.32 per cent.

Of the 56 assessments completed within 60 days, 37 matters were approved for extension.

The 20 matters completed outside of 60 days were due to the continuing high volume of matters that require additional assessment, the complexity of many of the matters in assessment, and delays in receiving information from parties or in obtaining the necessary independent clinical advice required to appropriately assess the matters.

Assessment timeframes	Number	Percentage
Completed within 30 days	96	55.81
Completed within 60 days*	56	32.56
Completed in more than 60 days	20	11.63
Total	172	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	2	1.10
Conciliation	4	2.21
Investigation	8	4.42
Referred to AHPRA and the national boards	25	13.81
Referral to another entity	45	24.86
Immediate registration action*	0	0.00
Interim prohibition order*	0	0.00
No further action	97	53.59
Total	181	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 etc.) 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	129
Local resolutions completed	99

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 99 local resolutions finalised in July, 95 were completed within 30 days, or 60 days with an approved extension, representing a finalisation rate within statutory timeframes of 95.95 per cent.

Of the 11 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	87	87.88
Completed within 60 days*	11	11.11
Completed in more than 60 days	1	1.01
Total	99	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	76	76.77
Not resolved	12	12.12
Complaint withdrawn*	11	11.11
Total	99	100.00

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

Decisions for matters that were not resolved

Type of relevant action	Number	Percentage
Assessment	1	8.33
Conciliation	0	0.00
Investigation	0	0.00
Referred to AHPRA and the national boards	0	0.00
Referral to another entity	0	0.00
Immediate action	0	0.00
No further action	11	91.67
Total	12	100.00

Conciliation

Conciliations started and closed

Conciliations this month	Number
Conciliations open at the start of the month	61
Conciliations started	8
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
Party/ies agreed to conciliation	4
Party/ies did not agree to conciliation	4
Decision pending at end of month	27

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	40.00
6–9 months	3	60.00
9–12 months	0	0.00
More than 12 months	0	0.00
Total	5	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 first conciliation data table above—as completed conciliations only relate to matters where parties agreed to participate and the conciliation process was completed.

Outcomes

Conciliation outcomes	Number	Percentage
Successful	4	80.00
Not successful	1	20.00
Ended by Health Ombudsman	0	0.00
Total	5	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 first conciliation data table above—as completed conciliations 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
Investigation	0	0
Referred to AHPRA and the national boards	0	0
Referral to another entity	0	0
Immediate action	0	0
No further action	1	100.00
Total	1	100.00

Open conciliation timeframes

Open conciliation timeframes	Number	Percentage
Less than 3 months	32	53.33
3–6 months	12	20.00
6–9 months	7	11.67
9–12 months	4	6.67
More than 12 months	5	8.33
Total	60	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 16 matters on hold until the outcome of another process is finalised (e.g. the process of another agency such as AHPRA). This includes 6 matters that have been open for less than 3 months, 3 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 5 that have been open for more than 12 months.

Investigation

Investigations started and closed

Investigations this month	Number
Investigations open at the beginning of the month	394
Investigations started	16
Investigations closed	31

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).

Closed investigations

Timeframes

Closed investigation timeframes	Number	Percentage
Less than 3 months	1	3.23
3–6 months	3	9.68
6–9 months	1	3.23
9–12 months	2	6.45
12–24 months	12	38.71
More than 2 years	12	38.71
Total	31	100.00

Investigation outcomes

Outcome	Number	Percentage
Recommended for referral to Director of Proceedings*	16	50.00
Referred to AHPRA	4	12.50
Referred to another agency	2	6.25
Referred to legal services**	0	0.00
No further action	10	31.25
Total	32	100.00

Total investigation outcomes may not equal the total number of investigations completed (in previous tables) as a single investigation may result in multiple outcomes. In certain circumstances it may also be appropriate for the office to take action prior to the investigation being completed. For example, a matter of criminal conduct identified in the course of an investigation being referred to the Queensland Police Service.

*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.

**These matters are referred to the Executive Director, Legal Services Division within the office for consideration as to whether there is evidence of a breach of the Act that constitutes an offence that should be prosecuted in the courts. These matters differ to those referred to the Director of Proceedings which require an independent determination of whether the matter should be put before the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

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	43	13.15
3–6 months	32	9.79
6–9 months	50	15.29
9–12 months	45	13.76
12–24 months*	112	34.25
More than 2 years*	45	13.76
Total	327	100.00

* All investigations that have been open for more than 12 months are published on the investigations register at www.oho.qld.gov.au.

Paused investigation timeframes

Paused investigation timeframes	Number	Percentage
Less than 3 months	6	11.54
3–6 months	6	11.54
6–9 months	7	13.46
9–12 months	6	11.54
12–24 months	24	46.15
More than 2 years	3	5.77
Total	52	100.00

Total open investigation timeframes

Total open investigation timeframes	Number	Percentage
Less than 3 months	49	12.93
3–6 months	38	10.03
6–9 months	57	15.04
9–12 months	51	13.46
12–24 months	136	35.88
More than 2 years	48	12.66
Total	379	100.00

Total open investigation categories

Type of investigation	Number
Health service complaint	273
Systemic issue	34
Another matter*	72
Total	379

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

Monitoring investigation recommendations

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

OHO recommendations monitoring

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

Monitoring cases started and closed

OHO monitoring cases	Number
Cases open at the beginning of the month	4
Recommendations monitoring cases started	0
Recommendations monitoring cases closed	0

Health service provider recommendations monitoring

A health service provider may also 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.

Monitoring cases started and closed

Health service provider monitoring cases	Number
Cases open at the beginning of the month	4
Recommendations monitoring cases started	0
Recommendations monitoring cases closed	1

Open recommendations monitoring case timeframes

Monitoring case timeframes*	Number	Percentage
Less than 6 months	3	42.86
6–12 months	3	42.86
More than 12 months	1	14.29
Total	7	100.00

* *Open recommendations monitoring cases* include those resulting from recommendations by the Health Ombudsman and those resulting from an investigation conducted by a health service provider.

Director of Proceedings

Matters referred to the Director of Proceedings by practitioner type

Practitioner type	Number	Percentage
Registered nurse	3	33.33
Medical practitioner	2	22.22
Dentist	2	22.22
Massage therapist	2	22.22
Total	9	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. 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
Medical practitioner	24	41.38
Registered nurse	19*	32.76
Psychologist	2	3.45
Pharmacist	2	3.45
Dentist	4	6.90
Student nurse	1	1.72
Podiatrist	1	1.72
Chiropractor	1	1.72
Unregistered chiropractor	1	1.72
Massage therapist	3	5.17
Total	58	100.00

*One practitioner held dual registration as a nurse and a midwife.

Matters referred to the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal

Practitioner type	Number	Percentage
Medical practitioner	1	50.00
Psychologist	1	50.00
Total	2	100.00

The Director of Proceedings considers all relevant aspects of each matter to determine whether to refer the matter to the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

Offences against the *Health Ombudsman Act 2013*

The *Health Ombudsman Act 2013* 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 July.

Immediate action

The *Health Ombudsman Act 2013* allows for the Health Ombudsman to take immediate action against registered and unregistered health practitioners in instances where the Health Ombudsman reasonably believes the practitioner's health, conduct or performance poses a serious risk to the health and safety of the public.

Show cause notices

In July 2017, one show cause notice was issued to:

- a medical practitioner for reasons relating to performance.

As outlined in the *Health Ombudsman Act 2013*, 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
Chinese medicine practitioner	1	Conditions			✓
Enrolled nurse	1	Suspension		✓	
Pharmacist	1	Conditions		✓	
Pharmacist	1	Suspension		✓	

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

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.

Details of current prohibition orders can be found on the register www.oho.qld.gov.au.

No interim prohibition orders were issued in July.

Monitoring practitioner compliance

When the Health Ombudsman takes immediate action against a health practitioner, we monitor 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	100
Practitioner monitoring cases started	4
Practitioner monitoring cases closed	0

Open monitoring cases

Timeframes

Open case timeframes	Number	Percentage
Less than 6 months	30	28.85
6–12 months	36	34.62
More than 12 months	38	36.54
Total	104	100.00

Immediate action types

Open cases by immediate action type	Number	Percentage
Interim prohibition order—restrictions	22	21.15
Interim prohibition order—prohibited	27	25.96
Immediate registration action—conditions	32	30.77
Immediate registration action—suspension	23	22.12
Total	104*	100.00

*This data includes nine practitioners who are under monitoring for both an immediate registration action and an interim prohibition order.

Registered practitioners under monitoring by practitioner type

Open cases by practitioner type	Number	Percentage
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health worker	1	1.54
Chinese medicine	3	4.62
Chiropractic	1	1.54
Dental	3	4.62
Medical	11	16.92
Medical student	0	0.00
Medical radiation	0	0.00
Nursing and midwifery	38	58.46
Occupational therapy	0	0.00
Optometry	0	0.00
Osteopathy	0	0.00
Pharmacy	3	4.62
Physiotherapy	2	3.08
Podiatry	0	0.00
Psychology	3	4.62
Total	65	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

Practitioner type	Number	Percentage
Assistant in nursing	3	10.00
Audiologist	2	6.67
Counsellor	2	6.67
Holding out*	4	13.33
Massage therapist	9	30.00
Natural therapist	3	10.00
Paramedic	4	13.33
Social worker	1	3.33
Support worker	2	6.67
Total	30	100.00

*Certain titles of registered health professions are protected under the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Queensland)*. 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.

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.

Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency

Consultation on matters

The office consults with AHPRA on whether matters being considered for referral are appropriate for AHPRA to manage. For matters we are considering referring to AHPRA under s91 of the *Health Ombudsman Act 2013*, we provide all necessary information in order for AHPRA to form a view as to whether referral is or is not appropriate.

For complex cases or where a pattern of conduct may be present, we 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 co-regulatory agencies is achieved.

Consultation matters	Number
Matters consulted on*	191
Matters referred	180
Matters retained by the office**	3
Decision pending	14

*The number of matters consulted on may not equal the total number of matters referred, retained 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	154	80.69
Assessment	32	16.74
Conciliation	0	0.00
Local resolution	2	1.03
Investigations	3	1.54
Total	191	100.00

Age of matters on commencement of consultation

In order to prevent duplication of work, we aim 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	30–60 days	>60 days
Intake	145	1	4	2	2
Assessment	4	3	9	9	7
Local resolution	0	0	0	2	0
Conciliation	0	0	0	0	0
Investigation	0	0	0	0	3
Total	149	4	13	13	12

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

Consultation duration

Consultation duration	Number	Percentage
0–3 days	185	96.86
4–7 days	4	2.09
8–11 days	0	0.00
More than 12 days	2	1.05
Total	191	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	4	2.22
Dental practitioner	19	10.56
Medical practitioner	83	46.11
Medical radiation practitioner	1	0.56
Nursing and midwifery practitioner	38	21.11
Occupational therapist	0	0.00
Optometrist	1	0.56
Osteopath	1	0.56
Pharmacist	15	8.33
Physiotherapist	4	2.22
Podiatrist	3	1.67
Psychologist	8	4.44
Student practitioner*	3	1.67
Total	180	100.00

*In July 2017 2 student nurses and 1 student podiatrist were referred to AHPRA.

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	Total
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioner	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Chinese medicine practitioner	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Chiropractor	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	3	-	6
Dental practitioner	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	1	18	-	25
Medical practitioner	-	9	3	-	1	-	-	2	9	9	5	75	1	114
Medical radiation practitioner	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Nursing and midwifery practitioner	-	2	2	-	-	-	-	1	6	13	15	9	-	48
Occupational therapist	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Optometrist	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Osteopath	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	1	-	3
Pharmacist	-	2	-	-	2	-	1	-	11	1	-	1	-	18
Physiotherapist	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	4	-	7
Podiatrist	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	-	4
Psychologist	-	2	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	5	1	5	-	14
Student practitioner	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	-	3
Total	0	16	6	0	3	1	1	5	26	38	28	119	1	244

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

Reporting parameters for demographics data were updated as of June 2017. Previously, demographics contained within the office's reporting related to complaints that had completed the assessment process during the reporting period.

Refinements to systems and processes now allow for reporting on the demographics of complainants, consumers and practitioners who have made, or were identified in, a complaint during the reporting period. This change will result in higher numbers in the following four tables from June 2017.

This update is an example of the office's commitment to continual improvement as it matures as an agency and the importance it places on transparent, robust data.

Unless otherwise specified, data is based on healthcare consumers, not the complainant, as the complainant in a matter may not be the consumer of the health service. Matters where the healthcare consumer is an organisation are not included in these figures.

Gender

Gender	Number	Percentage
Female	203	46.56
Male	210	48.17
Unknown	22	5.05
Prefer not to specify	1	0.23
Total	436	100.00

Age

Age	Number	Percentage
Less than 18	19	4.36
18–24 years	24	5.50
25–34 years	74	16.97
35–44 years	96	22.02
45–54 years	74	16.97
55–64 years	63	14.45
65–74 years	35	8.03
More than 75 years	21	4.82
Unknown*	30	6.88
Total	436	100.00

*Not recorded or not provided for a particular matter.

Location of healthcare consumers

Location of healthcare consumers	Number	Percentage
Brisbane	167	38.30
Central West	1	0.23
Darling Downs	12	2.75
Far North	30	6.88
Fitzroy	13	2.98
Gold Coast	53	12.16
Mackay	9	2.06
North West	3	0.69
Northern	24	5.50
South West	2	0.46
Sunshine Coast	21	4.82
West Moreton	10	2.29
Wide Bay–Burnett	43	9.86
Outside Queensland	13	2.98
Unknown	35	8.03
Total	436	100.00

Location of health service providers

Location of health service providers	Number	Percentage
Brisbane	245	42.91
Central West	1	0.18
Darling Downs	15	2.63
Far North	39	6.83
Fitzroy	13	2.28
Gold Coast	69	12.08
Mackay	13	2.28
North West	4	0.70
Northern	29	5.08
South West	2	0.35
Sunshine Coast	28	4.90
West Moreton	7	1.23
Wide Bay-Burnett	53	9.28
Outside Queensland*	5	0.88
Unknown	48	8.41
Total	571	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.



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