

Office of the Health Ombudsman

Performance report June 2019



Office of the
**HEALTH
OMBUDSMAN**

Listen. Respond. Resolve.

Office of the Health Ombudsman—Performance report June 2019

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Introduction

This document reports on our performance during June 2019.

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 July 2019, but is subject to change.

Intake of complaints

Type of contacts

Type of contact	Number	Percentage
Complaint	817	82.94
Enquiry	167	16.95
Yet to be classified	1	0.10
Total	985	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.

Type of complaints

Type of complaints	Number	Percentage
Health consumer complaint	709	86.78
Mandatory notification*	15	1.84
Voluntary notification*	80	9.79
Self-notification*	6	0.73
Referral from another agency	7	0.86
Total	817	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

Decision made within seven days of receiving a complaint	Number	Percentage
Yes	777	95.81
No	34	4.19
Total	811	100.00

Accepted vs not accepted

Number of decisions made	Number	Percentage
Accepted	528	60.76
Not accepted*	283	32.57
Decision pending**	58	6.67
Total	869	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*.

**'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 30 matters were determined to fall outside the jurisdiction of the Act.

Accepted decision outcomes

Type of relevant action	Number	Percentage
Assessment	123	22.53
Local resolution	112	20.51
Conciliation	0	0.00
Investigation	8	1.47
Referral to AHPRA and the national boards	185	33.88
Referral to another entity	117	21.43
Referral to legal services	1	0.18
Immediate registration action	0	0.00
Interim prohibition order	0	0.00
Total	546	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	78	7.02
Code of conduct for healthcare workers	15	1.35
Communication/information	126	11.34
Consent	20	1.80
Discharge/transfer arrangements	16	1.44
Environment/management of facilities	29	2.61
Fees/cost	42	3.78
Grievance processes	16	1.44
<i>Health Ombudsman Act 2013 offence</i>	1	0.09
Medical records	35	3.15
Medication	142	12.78
Professional conduct	128	11.52
Professional health	27	2.43
Professional performance	405	36.45
Reports/certificates	31	2.79
Research/teaching/assessment	0	0.00
Total	1111	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	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4
Chinese medicine	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Chiropractor	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	3
Dentistry	-	-	1	1	-	1	2	-	-	1	-	2	-	24	-	-	32
Emergency care	-	3	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	1	3	-	-	11
General medical	13	1	35	3	-	2	2	1	-	9	43	30	9	69	10	-	227
Medical radiation	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Medical specialty	3	-	10	1	-	-	1	-	-	3	3	14	2	16	4	-	57
Nursing	-	3	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	6	25	6	10	-	-	53
Occupational therapy	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	3
Optometry	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Osteopathy	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	4
Other	-	4	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	17	7	2	-	-	34
Pathology service	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Pharmacy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	2	-	-	-	-	5
Physiotherapy	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	3
Podiatry	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	4
Psychology	1	-	3	-	-	-	4	-	-	1	-	15	-	6	4	-	34
Speech pathology	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Surgical	1	-	3	1	-	-	3	-	-	-	-	3	1	20	-	-	32
Total	18	15	59	8	0	3	15	1	1	17	58	113	27	156	18	0	509

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	-	-	1	-	1	-	1	2	-	-	2	-	-	8
Allied health service	1	-	1	-	-	-	5	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	8
Ambulance service	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	5
Community health service	-	-	2	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	6
Correctional facility	20	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	54	-	-	51	-	-	128
Dental service	6	-	2	-	-	-	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	8	-	-	20
Hospital and Health Service	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	3
Laboratory service	1	-	3	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	6
Licensed private hospital	1	-	1	1	2	1	3	1	-	2	2	1	-	14	-	-	29
Medical centre	6	-	12	1	-	1	9	5	-	6	4	3	-	8	2	-	57
Mental health service	2	-	7	4	1	5	-	1	-	1	7	1	-	21	2	-	52
Nursing service	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Other support service	-	-	2	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	5
Pharmaceutical service	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2	7	-	-	-	-	-	10
Private organisation	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	4
Public health service	-	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	4	1	-	9
Public hospital	22	-	30	4	11	13	2	4	-	4	7	6	-	130	5	-	238
Residential care service	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Specialised health service	-	-	2	-	-	1	3	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	10
Licensed day hospital	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	2
Total	60	0	67	12	16	26	27	15	0	18	84	15	0	249	13	0	602

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	149
Assessments completed	131

Completed assessment timeframes

Of the 131 assessments finalised in June, 119 were completed within 30 days or 60 days with an approved extension, representing a finalisation rate within statutory timeframes of 90.84 per cent.

Of the 62 assessments completed within 60 days, all were approved for extension.

Assessment timeframes	Number	Percentage
Completed within 30 days	57	43.51
Completed within 60 days*	62	47.33
Completed in more than 60 days	12	9.16
Total	131	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	1	0.72
Conciliation	3	2.16
Investigation	1	0.72
Referred to AHPRA and the national boards	14	10.07
Referral to another entity	17	12.23
Immediate registration action*	0	0.00
Interim prohibition order*	0	0.00
No further action	103	74.10
Total	139	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	125
Local resolutions completed	128

Completed local resolutions

Timeframes

Of the 128 local resolutions finalised in June, all were completed within 30 days or 60 days with an approved extension, representing a finalisation rate within statutory timeframes of 100 per cent.

Local resolution timeframes	Number	Percentage
Completed within 30 days	111	86.72
Completed within 60 days*	17	13.28
Completed in more than 60 days	0	0.00
Total	128	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	105	82.03
Not resolved	7	5.47
Complaint withdrawn*	16	12.50
Local resolution did not commence**	0	0.00
Total	128	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	0	0.00
Conciliation	0	0.00
Investigation	0	0.00
Referral to AHPRA and the national boards	2	28.57
Referral to another entity	0	0.00
Immediate action	0	0.00
No further action	5	71.43
Total	7	100.00

Conciliation

Conciliations started and closed

Conciliations this month	Number
Conciliations open at the start of the month	35*
Conciliations started	3
Conciliations closed	12

*One matter was referred for conciliation, and placed on hold pending the finalisation of another relevant action. This conciliation was recorded after the close of the prior reporting period and, as such, this figure has been adjusted accordingly.

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	1
Decision 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	5	45.45
3–6 months	5	45.45
6–9 months	1	9.09
9–12 months	0	0.00
More than 12 months	0	0.00
Total	11	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	6	54.55
Not successful	5	45.45
Ended by Health Ombudsman	0	0.00
Total	11	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	5	100.00
Total	5	100.00

Open conciliation timeframes

Open conciliation timeframes	Number	Percentage
Less than 3 months	14	53.85
3–6 months	1	3.85
6–9 months	3	11.54
9–12 months	2	7.69
More than 12 months	6	23.08
Total	26	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 2 matters that have been open for less than 3 months, 0 that have been open for 3–6 months, 2 that have been open for 6 – 9 months, 2 that have been open for 9–12 months, and 4 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	163
Investigations started	13
Investigations closed	25
Investigations amalgamated under s40(2)	0

In May 2019 one investigation, previously amalgamated under s40(2) of the Act, was separated.

Closed investigations

Timeframes

Of the investigations closed in June, 56.00 per cent were closed within twelve months of commencement.

Closed investigation timeframes	Number	Percentage
Less than 3 months	4	16.00
3–6 months	3	12.00
6–9 months	6	24.00
9–12 months	1	4.00
12–24 months	5	20.00
More than 2 years	6	24.00
Total	25	100.00

Investigation outcomes

Outcome	Number	Percentage
Recommended for referral to Director of Proceedings*	13	48.15
Referred to AHPRA	1	3.70
Referred to another agency	2	7.41
No further action	10	37.04
Referred to legal services**	0	0.00
Conciliation	1	3.70
Total	27	100

*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.

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.

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 Office of the State Coroner—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	35	30.43
3–6 months	27	23.48
6–9 months	21	18.26
9–12 months	13	11.30
12–24 months*	19	16.52
More than 2 years*	0	0.00
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	1	2.78
3–6 months	4	11.11
6–9 months	10	27.78
9–12 months	3	8.33
12–24 months	9	25.00
More than 2 years	9	25.00
Total	36	100.00

Certain matters may be referred to an external agency, such as the Queensland Police Service while criminal proceedings take place, or to the coroner if it relates to reportable deaths (under section 92 of the *Health Ombudsman Act 2013*). As a result, investigation of these matters will be put on pause until the external agency finalises its processes.

Total open investigation timeframes

Total open investigation timeframes	Number	Percentage
Less than 3 months	36	23.84
3–6 months	31	20.53
6–9 months	31	20.53
9–12 months	16	10.60
12–24 months	28	18.54
More than 2 years	9	5.96
Total	151	100.00

Total open investigation categories

Type of investigation	Number
Health service complaint	86
Systemic issue	7
Another matter*	56
Matters identified for further investigation**	2
Total	151

*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

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, the OHO puts in place a recommendations monitoring program to track the implementation of the recommendations.

OHO recommendations monitoring

Cases this month	Number
Cases open at the beginning of the month	3
Recommendations monitoring cases started	1
Recommendations monitoring cases closed	0

Open recommendations monitoring timeframes

Open case timeframes	Number	Percentage
Less than 6 months	1	25.00
6–12 months	0	0.00
More than 12 months	3	75.00
Total	4	100.00

Director of Proceedings

Matters referred to the Director of Proceedings by practitioner type

Practitioner type	Number	Percentage
Medical Practitioner	4	30.77
Psychologist	1	7.69
Registered Nurse	4	30.77
Assistant in Nursing	1	7.69
Massage Therapist	3	23.08
Total	13	100.00

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

Matters currently with the Director of Proceedings by practitioner type

Practitioner type	Number	Percentage
Chinese medicine practitioner	1	1.14
Dentist	4	4.55
Medical practitioner	33	37.50
Medical radiation practitioner	1	1.14
Osteopath	1	1.14
Pharmacist	3	3.41
Podiatrist	2	2.27
Psychologist	4	4.55
Registered nurse	21	23.86
Advanced care paramedic	2	2.27
Assistant in nursing	3	3.41
Audiologist	2	2.27
Counsellor	1	1.14
Holding out as a paramedic	1	1.14
Holding out as a psychologist	1	1.14
Holding out as a registered nurse	2	2.27
Massage therapist	2	2.27
Medical assistant	1	1.14
Natural therapist	1	1.14
Social worker	1	1.14
Unregistered chiropractor	1	1.14
Total	88*	100.00

These are matters that have been referred to the Director of Proceedings, but have not been filed in QCAT or referred back to the Health Ombudsman. This includes matters where there has been a decision to refer the matter to QCAT, but no referral has been filed in QCAT at this stage.

*This figure includes one matter where a decision has been made to refer to QCAT, but no referral has been filed in QCAT at this stage.

Outcomes of matters reviewed by Director of Proceedings

Matters filed in in the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal

Practitioner type	Number	Percentage
Chinese Medical Practitioner	1	5.00
Medical Practitioner	7	35.00
Medical Practitioner and Dentist	1	5.00
Pharmacist	2	10.00
Registered Nurse	6	30.00
Assistant in Nursing	1	5.00
Massage Therapist	1	5.00
Personal Carer	1	5.00
Total	20	100.00

*This figure includes three referrals where the Director of Proceedings decided to refer six matters regarding three practitioners to QCAT, and filed these as three separate referrals (one per practitioner).

Matters to be referred back to the Health Ombudsman

Practitioner type	Number	Percentage
Medical Practitioner	5	50.00
Psychologist	2*	20.00
Registered Nurse	3	30.00
Total	10	100.00

*The former Director of Proceedings previously made a decision to refer two matters relating to a psychologist to QCAT. In June 2019, the Director of Proceedings revoked the decisions to refer to QCAT, and decided to refer both matters back to the Health Ombudsman.

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 June, seven show cause notices were issued to:

- one medical practitioner for reasons relating to conduct.
- one medical practitioner for reasons relating to conduct and health.
- three register nurses for reasons relating to conduct.
- one assistant in nursing for reasons relating to health.
- one assistant in nursing for reasons relating to conduct and 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
Medical practitioner	2	Conditions		✓	
Dental 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
Massage therapist	1	Prohibition		✓		

The Health Ombudsman has powers to issue interim prohibitions 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.

The details for current prohibition orders can be found on the OHO website on the prohibition order register.

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	114
Practitioner monitoring cases started	4
Practitioner monitoring cases closed	3

Open monitoring cases

Timeframes

Open case timeframes	Number	Percentage
Less than 6 months	37	32.17
6–12 months	17	14.78
More than 12 months	61	53.04
Total	115	100.00

Immediate action types

Open cases by immediate action type	Number	Percentage
Interim prohibition order – restrictions	20	17.39
Interim prohibition order – prohibited	42	36.52
Immediate registration action - conditions	35	30.43
Immediate registration action - suspension	15	13.04
QCAT disciplinary decision	2	1.74

Open cases by immediate action type	Number	Percentage
QCAT interim decision	1	0.87
Total	115	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	3	5.88
Chiropractor	0	0.00
Dental practitioner	3	5.88
Medical practitioner	24	47.06
Medical radiation practitioner	0	0.00
Nursing and midwifery practitioner	21	41.18
Occupational therapist	0	0.00
Optometrist	0	0.00
Osteopath	0	0.00
Pharmacist	0	0.00
Physiotherapist	0	0.00
Podiatrist	0	0.00
Psychologist	0	0.00
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	1.72
Aged care worker	1	1.72
Assistant in nursing	9	15.52
Audiologist	2	3.45
Counsellor	1	1.72
Dental nurse	1	1.72
Former registered health practitioner	11	18.97
Health support worker	1	1.72
Holding out*	4	6.90
Kinesiologist	2	3.45
Massage therapist	14	24.14
Medical assistant	2	3.45
Naturopath	1	1.72
Natural therapist	1	1.72
Paramedic	5	8.62
Personal carer	1	1.72
Social worker	1	1.72
Total	58	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

Notifications from AHPRA

One new notification and no new requests (s193 of the Act) relating to possible serious matters were made in June 2019.

Consultation on matters

The office consults with AHPRA on matters that are considered to be appropriate for AHPRA to manage. For matters that we are considering referring to AHPRA under section 91 of the *Health Ombudsman Act 2013*, we provide 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 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*	247
Matters referred	229
Matters retained by the office**	9
Decision pending	40

*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	198	80.16
Assessment	40	16.19
Conciliation	0	0.00
Local resolution	3	1.21
Internal review	3	1.21
Investigations	2	0.81
Director of Proceedings	1	0.40
Total	247	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	More than 60 days
Intake and triage	195	2	0	1	0
Assessment	5	4	18	12	1
Local resolution	0	0	1	2	0
Conciliation	0	0	0	0	0
Internal review	0	0	0	0	3
Investigation	0	0	0	0	2
Director of Proceedings	0	0	0	0	1
Total	200	6	19	15	7

'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	245	99.19
4–7 days	0	0.00
8–11 days	1	0.40
More than 12 days	1	0.40
Total	247	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	16	6.99
Medical practitioner	141	61.57
Medical radiation practitioner	0	0.00
Nursing and midwifery practitioner	43	18.78
Occupational therapist	1	0.44
Optometrist	1	0.44
Osteopathy	1	0.44
Paramedic	0	0.00
Pharmacist	7	3.06
Physiotherapy	1	0.44
Podiatrist	3	1.31
Psychologist	11	4.80
Student practitioner	3	1.31
Total	229	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	Total
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioner	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Chinese medicine practitioner	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Chiropractor	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Dental practitioner	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	1	13	-	18
Medical practitioner	1	23	5	-	-	1	1	11	30	21	10	86	6	195
Medical radiation practitioner	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nursing and midwifery practitioner	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	5	21	12	9	-	48
Occupational therapist	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	2
Optometrist	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Osteopath	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Paramedic	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pharmacist	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	3	-	-	-	8
Physiotherapist	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Podiatrist	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2	-	1	-	4
Psychologist	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	-	1	1	13
Student practitioner	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	1	-	-	4
Total	1	26	5	0	0	2	1	13	40	63	26	112	7	296

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	328	46.92
Male	347	49.64
Prefer not to specify	20	2.86
Unknown*	4	0.57
Total	699	100.00

*Not recorded or not provided for a particular matter.

Age

Age	Number	Percentage
Less than 18 years	49	7.01
18–24 years	37	5.29
25–34 years	128	18.31
35–44 years	146	20.89
45–54 years	142	20.31
55–64 years	69	9.87
65–74 years	49	7.01
More than 75 years	42	6.01
Unknown*	37	5.29
Total	699	100.00

*Not recorded or not provided for a particular matter.

Location of healthcare consumers

Location of healthcare consumers	Number	Percentage
Brisbane	310	44.35
Central West	2	0.29
Darling Downs	16	2.29
Far North	35	5.01
Fitzroy	22	3.15
Gold Coast	65	9.30
Mackay	21	3.00
North West	7	1.00
Northern	37	5.29
South West	2	0.29
Sunshine Coast	44	6.29
West Moreton	25	3.58
Wide Bay–Burnett	46	6.58
Outside Queensland	52	7.44
Unknown*	15	2.15
Total	699	100.00

*Not recorded or not provided for a particular matter.

Location of health service providers

Location of health service providers	Number	Percentage
Brisbane	373	47.16
Central West	2	0.25
Darling Downs	17	2.15
Far North	43	5.44
Fitzroy	19	2.40
Gold Coast	84	10.62
Mackay	21	2.65
North West	5	0.63
Northern	39	4.93
South West	1	0.13
Sunshine Coast	55	6.95
West Moreton	22	2.78
Wide Bay-Burnett	45	5.69
Outside Queensland*	5	0.63
Unknown**	60	7.59
Total	791	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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