

Office of the Health Ombudsman

Performance report July 2014

August 2014



Office of the
**HEALTH
OMBUDSMAN**

Listen. Respond. Resolve.

Office of the Health Ombudsman—Performance report July 2014

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Introduction

The Office of the Health Ombudsman (OHO) commenced operation on 1 July 2014 as Queensland’s health service complaints management agency. On commencement, the office not only started receiving enquiries and health service complaints, but assumed responsibility for 289 matters previously managed by the Health Quality and Complaints Commission (HQCC).

This document contains our performance data for July. Trends will become identifiable over time, which will inform our work in promoting improved health service delivery by health service providers, and identifying systemic issues. As we continue to monitor our performance data, we will also look for areas of improvement, innovation and greater efficiency.

Importantly, our monthly performance reporting highlights our commitment to transparency and accountability, and our desire to ensure Queenslanders have confidence in the management of health service complaints.

Unless otherwise stated, the following performance data includes both new matters received by the OHO from 1 July, and all matters that transitioned from the HQCC that have been reviewed, audited and processed within the OHO’s health service complaints management system. Data in this report is correct as at 8 August 2014, but is subject to change.

Number of contacts

Number of contacts

Type of contact	Number	Percentage
Complaint	350	58.82
Enquiry	187	31.43
Yet to be classified	58	9.75
Total	595	100.00

This data is based on contacts with the OHO from 1 July, and does not include matters transitioned from the HQCC. Matters that are ‘yet to be classified’ are contacts in which not enough information was provided in the first instance to allow for a determination, and additional information is being sought. They can also be matters that came in just before the end of the reporting period and were still being processed.

The number of complaint contacts for July will not equal the number of decisions made in the below table. Contacts that are ‘yet to be classified’ at the time of running this report will continue to be allocated as complaints (and enquiries), as additional information is received, however decisions on these complaints will be registered in next month’s reporting.

Decisions

Number of decisions made

Number of decisions made	Number	Percentage
Accepted	232	72.70
Not accepted	12	3.80
Decision pending	74	23.20
Total	319	100.00

Pending decisions relate to matters where more information is required before deciding whether to accept or not accept a complaint, or because a matter came in just before the end of the reporting period and is still be processed.

Decisions made within seven days

Decision made within seven days of receiving a complaint	Number	Percentage
Yes	229	93.85
No	15	6.15
Total	244	100.00

Reason for decisions being made outside of seven days

The first month of operation saw a higher than expected level of new health service complaints being made to the Office of Health Ombudsman. This meant that while almost 94 per cent of decisions were made within seven days, 6.15 per cent were decided outside this timeframe. As a result, the office has commenced recruitment for additional positions to ensure operational resources are adjusted in line with demand, and that legislative timeframes are met.

Health service complaints profile

Main issues raised in complaints

Issue	Number	Percentage
Treatment	4	17.39
Communication/information	2	8.70
Professional conduct	8	34.78
Medication	4	17.39
Fees/cost	1	4.35
Access	0	-
Environment/management of facilities	0	-
Reports/certificates	1	4.35
Consent	0	-
Medical records	0	-
Grievance processes	1	4.35
Professional health	1	4.35
Professional performance	0	-
Enquiry service only	0	-
Discharge/transfer arrangements	1	4.35
Total	23	100.00

These figures are based on complaints that completed the assessment process between 1 July and 31 July 2014. Basing figures on completed assessments produces accurate reporting of the type(s) of issues identified, as all relevant details of a matter have been identified at the time an assessment is completed. Please note, there can be multiple issues identified within a single complaint.

Number and type of complaints by health practitioner

	Access	Communication and information	Consent	Discharge/transfer arrangements	Environment/management of facility	Enquiry service	Fees and costs	Grievance process	Medication	Medical records	Professional conduct	Professional health	Professional performance	Reports/certificates	Treatment	Total
General medical	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	4	-	-	-	2	8
Medical specialty	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Dentistry	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2
Nursing	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	1	1	-	-	-	6
Physiotherapy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Total	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	4	-	8	1	-	-	4	19

These figures are based on complaints that completed the assessment process between 1 July and 31 July 2014. Basing figures on completed assessments produces accurate reporting of the type(s) of issues identified, as all relevant details of a matter have been identified at the time an assessment is completed. Please note, there can be multiple issues identified within a single complaint.

Number and type of complaints by health service organisation

	Access	Communication and information	Consent	Discharge/transfer arrangements	Environment/management of facility	Enquiry service	Fees and costs	Grievance process	Medication	Medical records	Professional conduct	Professional health	Professional performance	Reports/certificates	Treatment	Total
Medical centre	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Mental health service	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Specialised health service	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
Total	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	3

These figures are based on complaints that completed the assessment process between 1 July and 31 July 2014. Basing figures on completed assessments produces accurate reporting of the type(s) of issues identified, as all relevant details of a matter have been identified at the time an assessment is completed. Please note, there can be multiple issues identified within a single complaint.

Assessment

Matters transitioned from the HQCC that were reviewed and determined as assessment matters are included in the figures below.

Assessments started and competed

Assessments in July	Number
Assessments started in July	239
Assessments completed in July	16

Completed assessment timeframes

Assessment timeframes	Number	Percentage
Completed within 30 days	16	100.00
Completed within 60 days	0	-
Total	16	100.00

Assessment decisions (relevant action)

Type of relevant action	Number	Percentage
Local resolution	7	43.75
Conciliation	0	-
Investigation	8	50.00
Referred to AHPRA and the national boards	1	6.25
Referral to another entity	0	-
Immediate action	0	-
No further action	0	-
Total	16	100.00

Local resolution

Matters transitioned from the HQCC that were reviewed and determined as local resolution matters are included in the figures below.

Local resolutions started and completed

Local resolution in July	Number
Local resolutions started in July	7
Local resolutions completed in July	3

Completed local resolution timeframes

Local resolution timeframes	Number	Percentage
Completed within 30 days	3	100.00
Completed within 60 days	0	-
Total	3	100.00

Local resolution outcomes

Local resolution outcomes	Number	Percentage
Resolution reached	3	100.00
No resolution reached	0	-
Total	3	100.00

Conciliation

All matters currently in the conciliation stage of the complaints management process are matters that were commenced by the HQCC and transitioned to the OHO on 1 July 2014.

Conciliations started and closed

Conciliations in July	Number
Conciliations transitioned from the HQCC	31
Conciliations started in July	0
Conciliations closed in July	1

Closed conciliation timeframes

Conciliations closed	Number	Percentage
Less than 3 months	0	-
3–6 months	1	100.00
6–9 months	0	-
9–12 months	0	-
Total	1	100.00

Open conciliation timeframes

Conciliations open	Number	Percentage
Less than 3 months	10	33.33
3–6 months	13	43.33
6–9 months	0	-
9–12 months	1	3.33
More than 12 months	6	20.00
Total	30	100.00

Investigation

Investigations started and completed

Investigations in July	Number
Investigations transitioned from HQCC	12
Investigations started in July	10
Investigations completed in July	0

Open investigation timeframes

Investigations open	Number	Percentage
Less than 3 months	13	59.10
3–6 months	7	31.82
6–9 months	0	-
9–12 months	2	9.09
More than 12 months	0	-
Total	22	100.00

All investigations that have been open for more than 12 months are published on our investigations register, available on our website www.oho.qld.gov.au

Demographics

The following demographic data is based on matters that have completed the assessment process. Basing figures on completed assessments produces accurate reporting, as all relevant details of a matter have been identified.

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	11	78.57
Male	3	21.43

Age

Age	Number	Percentage
18–24 years	0	-
25–34 years	2	14.29
35–44 years	0	-
45–54 years	1	7.14
55–64 years	4	28.57
65–74 years	0	-
Over 75 years	2	14.29
Unknown*	5	35.71

*Age not recorded for a particular matter.

Location of healthcare consumers

Location of healthcare consumers	Number	Percentage
Cairns	1	7.14
Darling Downs	0	-
Gold Coast	0	-
Greater Brisbane	5	35.7
Ipswich	0	-
Mackay	1	7.14
Outback Queensland	0	-
Rockhampton	1	7.14
Sunshine Coast	3	21.42
Toowoomba	0	-
Townsville	0	-
Wide Bay	1	7.14
Unknown	2	14.32
Total	14	100.00

Location of health service providers

Location of health service providers	Number	Percentage
Cairns	1	6.25
Darling Downs	0	-
Gold Coast	2	12.50
Greater Brisbane	4	25
Ipswich	0	-
Mackay	0	-
Outback Queensland	0	-
Rockhampton	0	-
Sunshine Coast	1	6.25
Toowoomba	0	-
Townsville	0	-
Wide Bay	0	-
Unknown	8	50.00
Total	16	100.00

The above data is based on health service provider location.

Health Quality and Complaints Commission

The OHO assumed responsibility for existing Health Quality and Complaints Commission (HQCC) matters on 1 July 2014. A total of 289 matters were transitioned to the OHO from the HQCC.

The OHO reviewed these 289 matters and identified the relevant part of the complaints management process to which each matter related and the numbers of matters in each:

- Triage (69)—these are complaints received by HQCC for which further information had been requested and received just prior to 1 July. These matters had not progressed to assessment or resolution by 30 June. These matters were processed as new complaints received by the OHO.
- Assessment (155)
- Local resolution (7)
- Conciliations (31)
- Investigations (12)
- Applications for review (15)—these are applications requesting a review of HQCC complaint management decisions made prior to 1 July 2014. These matters are being dealt with as new complaints.

HQCC matters post-1 July

Of the 289 matters transitioned to the OHO on 1 July, 156 have been processed and are being actioned appropriately within the relevant stages of the OHO health service complaints management process. These matters are reported in the performance data within this document.

133 of the 289 matters are being reviewed and assessed in a staged approach to ensure all required information is present and available for determination of appropriate action. These matters have not been reported in the performance data within this document.

Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency

At 1 July 2014, the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) had a period of 28 days in which provide the OHO with detailed information relating to all current serious matters, in accordance with the Section 310 of the *Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Queensland)*.

The OHO received a detailed overview of current AHPRA matters on 29 July 2014. A review and audit of these matters is now underway to determine the most appropriate action, including identifying those matters that are most appropriately dealt with by the OHO, and those that will continue to be dealt with by AHPRA.