

Annual performance report

2014–15



Office of the
**HEALTH
OMBUDSMAN**

Listen. Respond. Resolve.

Annual performance report—2014–15

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Introduction

This document contains our performance data for the 2014–15 financial year.

The Office of the Health Ombudsman (OHO) is committed to regular and transparent reporting—monthly, quarterly and annually. Over time, our regular performance reporting will identify trends, which will inform our work in promoting improved health service delivery by health service providers, and identifying systemic issues.

The OHO is committed to meeting timeframes, delivering high quality services and, as we continue to monitor our performance data, looking for areas of improvement, innovation and greater efficiency. In the period under review, OHO staff have continued to review processes and procedures to ensure efficiency. In addition, two business analysts have been employed on a contract basis to review existing processes and advise on additional efficiency gains.

It is also important to note that our performance reporting highlights our commitment to transparency and accountability, and our desire to ensure Queenslanders have confidence in the management of health service complaints.

The 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). All matters transitioned from the HQCC were entered in OHO's health service complaints management system and are integrated within this data.

In addition, during August 2014, the OHO began reviewing current Australian Health Practitioner Agency (AHPRA) matters to determine those that are most appropriately dealt with by the OHO, and those that will continue to be dealt with by AHPRA. This is in conjunction with the notification of new serious matters by AHPRA to the OHO for determination and action, as appropriate.

Data in this report are correct as at 20 July 2015. Figures within this report may differ from respective aggregate monthly totals published in previous reports due to necessary adjustments and alterations being made to historical data following the publication of previous reports. Any percentage totals that do not equal 100 are as a result of rounding.

A more detailed overview of the OHO's performance during the 2014–15 financial year can be found in the OHO Annual Report 2014–15.

Office contacts

Number of contacts

Type of contact	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		2014–15	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Complaint	1134	63.28	909	46.10	1150	50.57	1036	52.35	4229	52.75
Enquiry	644	35.94	1056	53.55	1123	49.38	850	42.95	3673	45.82
Yet to be classified	14	0.78	7	0.35	1	0.04	93	4.70	115	1.43
Total	1792	100.00	1972	100.00	2274	100.00	1979	100.00	8017	100.00

The figures in the table above were run on 20 July 2015. These quarterly figures will not match previous quarterly reports due to matters that were yet to be classified at the time, subsequently being classified as a complaint or enquiry.

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

Type of complaints

Type of complaints	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		2014–15	
					Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Health consumer					902	78.43	778	75.10	1680	76.85
Mandatory notification					110	9.57	153	14.77	263	12.03
Voluntary notification					54	4.70	51	4.92	105	4.80
Self-notification					19	1.65	12	1.16	31	1.42
Referral					65	5.65	42	4.05	107	4.90
Total					1150	100.00	1036	100.00	2186	100.00

The figures in the table above were run on 20 July 2015. These quarterly figures will not match previous quarterly reports due to matters that were yet to be classified at the time, subsequently being classified as a complaint.

Notifications are made by health service providers, as required in the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (Queensland). Referrals can be received from both government and non-government agencies.

Please note this dataset was not captured during Q1 and Q2. The above figures cover 12 January to 30 June 2015.

Decisions

Number of decisions made

Number of decisions made	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		2014–15	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Accepted	837	91.39	747	84.50	715	89.49	810	90.71	3109	90.17
Not accepted	50	5.45	122	13.80	84	10.51	83	9.29	339	9.83
Total	887	100.00	869	100.00	799	100.00	893	100.00	3448	100.00

The figures in the table above were run on 20 July 2015. As a result, these quarterly figures will vary slightly from previous quarterly reports due to matters that were 'decisions pending' at the time of running each quarterly report subsequently being either accepted or not accepted.

In addition, variances will also exist due to an update to the OHO case management system in January which allowed matters to be closed as 'out of jurisdiction' and excluded from our reporting data. Matters that were 'out of jurisdiction' for the OHO were reported as 'not accepted' during Q1 and Q2. Matters that are out of jurisdiction are excluded from OHO reporting as they are not 'health service complaints' (due to being out of jurisdiction) and the OHO is therefore unable to action or record them.

There were 90 decisions pending at the end of the 2014–15 financial year. 'Decisions pending' 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 to be processed.

Decisions made within seven days of receiving a complaint

Decisions made	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		2014–15	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Yes	664	74.89	737	84.81	542	67.83	366	40.99	2309	66.97
No	223	25.14	132	15.19	257	32.17	527	59.01	1139	33.03
Total	887	100.00	869	100.00	799	100.00	893	100.00	3448	100.00

The figures in the table above were run on 20 July 2015. As a result, these quarterly figures will vary slightly from previous quarterly reports due to matters that were 'decisions pending' at the time of running each quarterly report subsequently being either accepted or not accepted.

In addition, variances will also exist due to an update to the OHO case management system in January which allowed matters to be closed as 'out of jurisdiction' and excluded from our reporting data. Matters that were 'out of jurisdiction' for the OHO were reported as 'not accepted' during Q1 and Q2. Matters that are out of jurisdiction are excluded from OHO reporting as they are not 'health service complaints' (due to being out of jurisdiction) and the OHO is therefore unable to action or record them.

In addition to the matters transitioned to the OHO on 1 July 2014, the office has consistently received high volumes of contacts, and of those matters determined to be complaints, 90 per cent have been accepted by the OHO. This volume, coupled with the complexity of certain matters, has resulted in the OHO needing to find a balance between the timeliness and quality of decision-making. While there is always a focus on making decisions as quickly as possible, the office is committed to ensuring that all decisions are well-informed and impartial.

To address this, recruitment commenced for additional staff to increase capacity and allow the OHO to manage increasing levels of contacts into the future. The effects of this recruitment should be seen in future reporting periods.

In addition, the OHO is continuing to refine existing, and implement new, operational processes to improve the processing of complaints, in line with our commitment to continually look for ways of improving our service delivery to meet the needs of Queenslanders. It is expected these strategies will continue to see the office making decisions as efficiently as possible.

Health service complaints profile

Main issues raised in complaints

Issue	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		2014–15*	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Access	20	2.12	43	4.56	14	2.18	12	2.18	91	2.72
Communication / information	116	12.28	142	15.07	84	13.08	106	13.08	466	13.92
Consent	21	2.22	14	1.49	12	1.87	19	1.87	66	1.97
Discharge/transfer arrangements	13	1.38	17	1.80	7	1.09	9	1.09	47	1.40
Environment / management of facilities	7	0.74	12	1.27	9	1.40	13	1.74	46	1.37
Fees/cost	36	3.81	20	2.12	12	1.87	6	0.80	79	2.36
Grievance processes	9	0.95	19	2.02	6	0.93	7	0.94	42	1.25
Medical records	22	2.33	41	4.35	25	3.89	14	1.88	102	3.05
Medication	87	9.21	89	9.45	54	8.41	68	9.12	302	9.02
Professional conduct	113	11.96	133	14.12	82	12.77	109	14.61	438	13.08
Professional health	39	4.13	48	5.10	22	3.43	9	1.21	117	3.49
Professional performance	327	34.60	312	33.12	298	46.42	370	49.60	1350	40.32
Reports / certificates	10	1.06	10	1.06	5	0.78	3	0.40	29	0.87
Treatment	124	13.12	40	4.25	12	1.87	1	0.13	173	5.17
Total	945	100.00	942	100.00	642	100.00	746	100.00	3348	100.00

*The total for the year differs from the aggregate total of the quarters due to the annual figures being run on 20 July 2015

These figures are based on complaints that completed the assessment process during the year. 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

Practitioner type	Access	Communication and information	Consent	Discharge/transfer arrangements	Environment/management of facility	Enquiry service	Fees and costs	Grievance process	Medical records	Medication	Professional conduct	Professional health	Professional performance	Reports/certificates	Treatment	Total
Alternative care	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	6	-	3	-	2	14
Chinese medicine	1	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	-	-	7
Chiropractor	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	1	-	-	5
Dentistry	1	23	4	-	5	-	14	1	10	1	31	5	117	-	15	227
Emergency care	-	6	-	2	-	-	1	-	3	1	8	3	18	-	5	47
General medical	10	121	12	7	2	-	7	5	22	105	112	32	342	10	33	820
Medical radiation	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	4	4	-	-	13
Medical specialty	4	40	11	3	1	-	3	3	5	30	30	8	124	4	8	274
Nursing	-	23	-	1	-	-	4	-	8	28	97	37	52	3	-	253
Occupational therapy	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	3
Optometry	-	3	2	-	-	-	3	1	1	1	2	-	11	-	-	24
Osteopathy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Other	-	10	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	6	40	8	18	1	-	85
Pathology	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	3
Pharmacy	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	23	10	2	1	-	-	42
Physiotherapy	1	3	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	3	3	4	-	-	15
Podiatry	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	-	-	4
Psychology	-	14	1	-	-	-	1	-	4	2	19	11	15	3	-	70
Speech pathology	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	2
Surgical	2	36	10	2	1	-	7	1	6	2	16	1	113	1	25	223
Not yet known	-	4	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	1	7	2	1	-	-	18
Total	19	293	41	15	10	-	46	11	63	201	393	117	831	22	88	2150

These figures are based on complaints that completed the assessment process during the year. 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

Organisation type	Access	Communication and information	Consent	Discharge/transfer arrangements	Environment/management of facility	Enquiry service	Fees and costs	Grievance process	Medical records	Medication	Professional conduct	Professional health	Professional performance	Reports/certificates	Treatment	Total
Aged care facility	-	6	2	1	5	-	-	1	2	7	-	-	41	-	1	66
Allied health service	-	3	1	-	1	-	3	1	1	1	2	-	10	-	-	23
Ambulance service	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	1	-	4	-	-	11
Community health service	2	5	1	1	-	-	1	-	-	2	3	-	10	-	-	25
Correctional facility	25	8	-	-	2	-	1	2	4	35	1	-	71	-	10	159
Dental service	2	5	-	-	-	-	5	2	2	-	1	-	5	-	-	22
Health information service	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
Health Service District	2	7	3	2	4	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	19	-	1	41
Laboratory service	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	-	1	5
Licensed private hospital	3	16	1	4	3	-	4	6	3	8	3	-	32	-	10	93
Medical centre	5	11	1	-	1	-	9	-	4	2	2	-	14	1	1	51
Mental health service	-	10	3	2	1	-	1	3	1	8	4	-	23	1	4	61
Other government department	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Other support service	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	2	-	-	5
Pharmaceutical service	1	2	-	-	-	-	2	3	-	11	-	-	1	-	-	20
Public health service	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	7	-	-	10
Public hospital	30	88	10	22	16	-	4	10	15	24	18	-	264	1	57	559
Residential care service	-	2	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	5
Specialised health service	2	2	1	-	1	-	2	-	3	-	3	-	5	3	-	22
Not yet known	-	2	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	3	2	-	7	-	-	16
Total	72	173	25	32	36	-	33	31	39	101	45	-	520	6	85	1198

These figures are based on complaints that completed the assessment process during the year. 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

Assessments started and completed

Assessments this year	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2014–15*
Assessments started	850	747	479	381	2446
Assessments completed	577	566	372	373	1886

*The total for the year differs from the aggregate total of the quarters due to the annual figures being run on 20 July 2015.

Completed assessment timeframes

Assessment timeframes	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		2014–15*	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Within 30 days	503	87.18	357	63.07	93	25.00	78	20.91	1030	54.61
Within 60 days**	72	12.48	141	24.91	84	22.58	80	21.45	379	20.09
Greater than 60 days	2	0.35	68	12.01	195	52.42	215	57.64	477	25.30
Total	577	100.00	566	100.00	372	100.00	373	100.00	1886	100.00

*The total for the year differs from the aggregate total of the quarters due to the annual figures being run on 20 July 2015.

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

Of the 379 assessments completed within 60 days, 114 matters were eligible for and received an approved extension, while the remaining 265 matters ran over due to a higher than expected level of complaints.

477 matters were completed outside of 60 days due to high levels of assessment matters, the complexity of certain matters, and delays in receiving information from parties and in sourcing the necessary independent clinical advice required to appropriately assess the matters.

It became apparent during Q2 that the volume of complaints being received and the extra work required for more complex matters, was having an adverse outcomes on assessment timeframes. The OHO implemented various strategies to address this. During Q3 and Q4, staff were reallocated internally to the assessment team, additional staff were recruited and a review of internal systems and processes was conducted to identify and implement improvements and efficiencies. Additional staff commenced with the OHO in Q4, with the full effects of these additional resources expected in the coming months.

While additional staff and process and system improvements are expected to yield positive results with regards to assessment timeframes, the need to balance timeliness with quality decision-making does at times result in matters taking longer to assess, but results in well-informed, impartial decisions that are fair to both complainants and health service providers.

Assessment decisions

Type of relevant action	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		2014–15*	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Local resolution	201	33.44	168	27.27	29	7.07	44	10.76	436	21.38
Conciliation	19	3.16	8	1.30	17	4.15	12	2.93	56	2.75
Investigation	35	5.82	64	10.39	21	5.12	21	5.13	145	7.11
Referred to AHPRA and the national boards	222	36.94	184	29.87	176	42.93	134	32.76	720	35.31
Referred to another entity	1	0.17	24	3.90	13	3.17	13	3.18	52	2.55
Immediate action**	0	0.00	10	1.62	4	0.98	3	0.74	15	0.74
No further action	123	20.47	158	25.65	150	36.59	182	44.50	615	30.16
Total	601	100.00	616	100.00	410	100.00	409	100.00	2039	100.00

*The total for the year differs from the aggregate total of the quarters due to the annual figures being run on 20 July 2015.

The quarterly figures above will vary slightly from previous quarterly reports due to changes in relevant actions taken and reporting discrepancies experienced during the year due to refinements in the complaints management system.

**Immediate action assessment decision figures may not align with the immediate action figures later in this report due to immediate action decisions being made outside of the assessment process or decisions to assess a matter for immediate action not ultimately resulting in an immediate action being taken.

Total assessment decisions won't 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 will 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 taken crossing over different reporting periods or because of relevant actions commencing directly from intake without having passed through the assessment stage.

Local resolution

Local resolutions started and completed

Local resolutions this year	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2014–15*
Local resolutions started	205	169	143	268	781
Local resolutions completed	143	176	128	246	691

*The total for the year differs from the aggregate total of the quarters due to the annual figures being run on 20 July 2015.

The number of local resolutions started in the reporting period may not 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 resolution timeframes

Local resolution timeframes	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		2014–15*	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Within 30 days	136	95.10	157	89.20	116	90.63	215	87.40	623	90.16
Within 60 days*	7	4.90	18	10.23	11	8.59	30	12.20	65	9.41
Greater than 60 days**	0	0.00	1	0.57	1	0.78	1	0.41	3	0.43
Total	143	100.00	176	100.00	128	100.00	246	100.00	691	100.00

*The total for the year differs from the aggregate total of the quarters due to the annual figures being run on 20 July 2015.

**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.

Of the 65 local resolutions completed within 60 days, 47 matters were eligible for and received an approved extension, while the remaining 18 matters ran over early in the year due to delays in electronically recording the completion of matters.

The three matters that were completed over 60 days were due to delays in receiving clinical advice or other information required to complete local resolution.

Local resolution outcomes

Local resolution outcomes	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		2014–15*	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Resolution reached	133	93.01	145	82.39	112	87.50	220	89.43	608	87.99
No resolution reached	10	6.99	30	17.05	16	12.50	26	10.57	83	12.01
Complaint withdrawn**	0	0.00	1	0.57	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Total	143	100.00	176	100.00	128	100.00	246	100.00	691	100.00

*The total for the year differs from the aggregate total of the quarters due to the annual figures being run on 20 July 2015.

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

Decisions for matters where resolution wasn't reached

Type of relevant action	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		2014–15*	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Conciliation	0	0.00	2	6.67	0	0.00	1	3.85	3	3.61
Investigation	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Referred to AHPRA and the national boards	5	50.00	1	3.33	2	12.50	2	7.69	10	12.05
Referral to another entity	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Immediate action	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
No further action	5	50.00	27	90.00	14	87.50	23	88.46	70	84.34
Total	10	100.00	30	100.00	16	100.00	26	100.00	83	100.00

*The total for the year differs from the aggregate total of the quarters due to the annual figures being run on 20 July 2015.

Conciliation

Conciliations started and closed

Conciliations this year	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2014–15
Conciliations started	51*	11	10	13	85
Conciliations closed	3	31	19	12	65

The number of conciliations started in the reporting period may not match the number of assessment decisions to undertake conciliation, 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.

*This figure includes the 31 conciliations transitioned to the OHO from the HQCC on 1 July 2014.

Agreement to participate in conciliation

Agreement to participate	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2014–15
Party/ies agreed to participate	31	15	5	11	62
Party/ies did not agree to participate	4	5	2	3	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.

These figures were run on 20 July 2015. A change made in reporting parameters in Q4 has been applied to the above figures. As a result, these quarterly figures will not match previous quarterly reports.

Completed conciliation timeframes

Conciliations completed	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		2014–15	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
0–3 months	1	100.00	1	4.17	1	5.88	2	22.22	5	9.80
3–6 months	0	0.00	8	33.33	5	29.41	0	0.00	13	25.49
6–9 months	0	0.00	7	29.17	5	29.41	3	33.33	15	29.41
9–12 months	0	0.00	1	4.17	5	29.41	4	44.44	10	19.61
12+ months	0	0.00	7	29.17	1	5.88	0	0.00	8	15.69
Total	1	100.00	24	100.00	17	100.00	9	100.00	51	100.00

The above data relates to matters where parties agreed to participate in conciliation. After agreeing, the conciliation process was completed within the above timeframes.

These figures were run on 20 July 2015. A change made in reporting parameters in Q4 has been applied to the above figures. As a result, these quarterly figures will not match previous quarterly reports.

Completed conciliation outcome

Conciliation outcomes	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		2014–15	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Agreement reached	1	100.00	17	70.83	13	76.47	8	88.89	39	76.47
No agreement reached	0	0.00	7	29.17	4	23.53	1	11.11	12	23.53
Ended by the Health Ombudsman	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Total	1	100.00	24	100.00	17	100.00	9	100.00	51	100.00

The above data relates to matters where parties agreed to participate in conciliation. After agreeing, the conciliation process was completed with parties either reaching or not reaching agreement (or in rare instances, the Health Ombudsman ending it).

Decisions for matters where agreement wasn't reached

Type of relevant action	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		2014–15	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Local resolution	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Investigation	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Referred to AHPRA and the national boards	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Referral to another entity	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Immediate action	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
No further action	0	0.00	7	0.00	4	0.00	1	0.00	12	100.00
Total	0	100.00	7	100.00	4	100.00	1	100.00	12	100.00

Open conciliation timeframes

Conciliations open	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
0–3 months	15	31.25%	5	17.86%	10	52.63%	12	60.00%
3–6 months	23	47.92%	8	28.57%	1	5.26%	7	35.00%
6–9 months	2	4.17%	14	50.00%	4	21.05%	0	0.00%
9–12 months	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	4	21.05%	1	5.00%
12+ months	8	16.67%	1	3.57%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Total	48	100.00	28	100.00	19	100.00	20	100.00

Investigation

Investigations started and completed

Investigations this year	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2014–15
Investigations started	125	97	58	77	357
Investigations completed	0	13	32	20	65
Referred to the QPS and awaiting outcome*	7	17	6	11	41

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 as a result of investigations being started via other processes (e.g. own-motion investigation).

*Matters that involve criminal aspects may be referred to the Queensland Police Service (QPS) while criminal proceedings take place (under s92 of the Act). From an OHO perspective, these matters are not closed but effectively paused within the OHO's complaints management system as it is not appropriate for the OHO to conduct any investigations that may impede QPS investigations. As a result, investigation of these matters must be put on hold until the QPS finalises the criminal proceedings and matters are referred back to the OHO.

Closed investigation timeframes

Investigation closed	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4		2014–15	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
0–3 months	0	0.00	4	30.77	5	15.63	7	35.00	16	24.62
3–6 months	0	0.00	3	23.08	9	28.13	0	0.00	12	18.46
6–9 months	0	0.00	0	0.00	8	25.00	3	15.00	11	16.92
9–12 months	0	0.00	3	23.08	1	3.13	4	20.00	8	12.31
12+ months	0	0.00	3	23.08	9	28.13	6	30.00	18	27.70
Total	0	100.00	13	100.00	32	100.00	20	100.00	65	100.00

The figures in the table above will not match previous quarterly reports due to the 41 matters referred to the QPS being excluded from the above data. During the year these matters were reported as closed investigations due to the QPS having taken carriage of them and the OHO being unable to action the matters until the QPS finalised criminal proceedings and referred the investigation back to the OHO.

Closed investigation outcome

Closed investigation outcome	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2014–15
Referred to Director of Proceedings	0	0	0	3	3
Report	0	1	1	0	2
Referred to AHPRA	0	6	12	9	27
Referred to another agency	0	2	0	0	2
No further action	0	3	19	8	30
Other*	0	1	0	0	1

As above, these figures do not include the 41 QPS matters and will not match previous quarterly reports.

*The OHO took carriage of an investigation from AHPRA, but repealed this decision.

Open investigation categories

Investigation category	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Health service complaint	116	173	188	232
Systemic issue	0	0	0	0
Another matter*	3	12	17	19

Please note the above figures do not include the 41 matters referred to the QPS for action.

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

Open investigation timeframes

Open investigations	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
0–3 months	59	49.58	61	32.97	42	20.49	67	26.69
3–6 months	12	10.08	55	29.73	46	22.44	34	13.55
6–9 months	21	17.65	14	7.57	47	22.93	44	17.53
9–12 months	11	9.24	19	10.27	19	9.27	45	17.93
12+ months*	16	13.45	36	19.46	51	24.88	61	24.30
Total	119	100.00	185	100.00	205	100.00	251	100.00

Please note the above figures do not include the 41 matters referred to the QPS for action.

*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

Immediate action

The Health Ombudsman can take immediate action against both registered and unregistered health practitioners if the Health Ombudsman reasonably believes the practitioner poses a serious risk to the health and safety of the public.

Show cause notices

There were nine show cause notices issued during the year.

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

The Health Ombudsman can take immediate registration action if a registered health practitioner's health, conduct or performance means they pose a serious risk to people, and immediate action is necessary to protect public health and safety.

The Health Ombudsman can temporarily suspend or impose conditions on the registration of registered health practitioners.

The Health Ombudsman took immediate registration action 10 times this year.

Practitioner type	Month	Action	Issue type		
			Health	Conduct	Performance
Medical practitioner	September	Conditions		✓	✓
Medical practitioner	October	Conditions		✓	✓
Medical practitioner	December	Suspended		✓	
Registered nurse	January	Suspended		✓	✓
Registered nurse	January	Conditions		✓	✓
Medical practitioner	January	Suspended		✓	✓
Registered nurse	March	Suspended		✓	✓
Registered nurse	April	Suspended		✓	
Registered nurse	April	Suspended		✓	
Medical practitioner	June	Conditions		✓	

Prohibition orders

The Health Ombudsman can issue an interim prohibition order if an unregistered health practitioner's health, conduct or performance means they pose a serious risk to people, and immediate action is necessary to protect public health and safety.

An interim prohibition order can **prohibit** or **restrict** a health 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 Health Ombudsman issued eight prohibition orders during the year (including the issue of an updated interstate prohibition order in March).

The details for current prohibition orders can be found on the OHO website (www.oho.qld.gov.au) on the prohibition order register.

Practitioner type	Month	Action	Issue type		
			Health	Conduct	Performance
Massage therapist	November	Interim prohibition order		✓	✓
Massage therapist	December	Interim prohibition order		✓	✓
Cosmetic therapist	December March*	Interstate prohibition order	✓	✓	✓
Aboriginal health worker	January	Interim prohibition order		✓	✓
Registered nurse	April	Interim prohibition order		✓	
Registered nurse	April	Interim prohibition order		✓	
Holding out as a registered nurse	April	Interim prohibition order		✓	✓

*The original interstate prohibition order was issued in December. An updated interstate prohibition order was issued against the same practitioner in March to reflect changes to the conditions imposed on the practitioner by the Health Care Complaints Commission in New South Wales (the original issuing state).

Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency

Transitional matters

Following the OHO's commencement, a review and audit of current AHPRA matters was carried out to identify those serious matters most appropriately dealt with by the OHO, and those that would continue to be dealt with by AHPRA.

In total, 65 matters were transitioned to the OHO during 2014–15.

The transitional process of serious matters was concluded in February 2015.

Notifications from AHPRA

In addition to the transitional matters above, AHPRA notified the Health Ombudsman of 86 serious matters, as prescribed under s193 of the National Law, during the year.

Of these matters, the Health Ombudsman:

- requested 37 be referred to the OHO—s193(2)(a) National Law
- asked the National Board to continue to deal with 48 matters—s193(2)(b) National Law
- is still considering 1 matter.

A further 21 matters have been requested from AHPRA and have been referred by agreement under s193A(4) of the National Law.

Number of practitioners referred to AHPRA

Practitioner type	Number
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health	-
Chinese medicine	3
Chiropractic	16
Dental	96
Medical	458
Medical radiation	8
Nursing and midwifery	277
Occupational therapy	7
Optometry	7
Osteopathy	1
Other	-
Pathology	1
Pharmacy	29
Physiotherapy	11
Podiatry	1
Psychology	26
Unregistered practitioner	7
Total	948

The figures above show the number of practitioners referred to AHPRA.

Number of issues referred to AHPRA by practitioner type

Practitioner type	Access	Communication and information	Consent	Discharge/transfer arrangements	Environment/management of facility	Enquiry service	Fees and costs	Grievance process	Medical records	Medication	Professional conduct	Professional health	Professional performance	Reports/certificates	Treatment	Total
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Chinese medicine	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	-	-	6
Chiropractic	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11	-	1	-	-	17
Dental	-	8	1	-	5	-	4	-	8	-	36	6	67	-	2	137
Medical	1	76	15	6	4	-	3	1	21	62	91	58	321	9	29	697
Medical student	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Medical radiation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	2	3	-	-	8
Nursing and midwifery	1	17	-	2	1	-	4	-	9	55	136	97	67	3	-	392
Nursing student	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Occupational therapy	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	6	1	-	-	-	8
Optometry	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	4	-	5	-	-	10
Osteopathy	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	-	4
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pathology	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Pharmacy	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	24	7	4	1	-	-	40
Physiotherapy	-	2	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	7	2	4	-	-	17
Podiatry	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	2
Psychology	-	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	11	9	2	-	37
Unregistered practitioner	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	6	-	-	-	11
Total	2	119	18	8	11	-	14	1	40	141	317	189	482	14	31	1387

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

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	970	53.33
Male	756	41.56
Unknown	93	5.11
Total	1819	100.00

Age

Age	Number	Percentage
Less than 18	75	4.12
18–24 years	66	3.63
25–34 years	247	13.58
35–44 years	315	17.32
45–54 years	286	15.72
55–64 years	270	14.84
65–74 years	157	8.63
Over 75 years	117	6.43
Unknown*	286	15.72

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

Location of healthcare consumers

Location of healthcare consumers	Number	Percentage
Brisbane	755	41.51
Central West	2	0.11
Darling Downs	70	3.85
Far North	78	4.29
Fitzroy	70	3.85
Gold Coast	257	14.13
Mackay	51	2.80
North West	10	0.55
Northern	89	4.89
South West	8	0.44
Sunshine Coast	132	7.26
West Moreton	26	1.43
Wide Bay-Burnett	110	6.05
Outside Queensland	84	4.62
Unknown	77	4.23

The above data is based on health consumer location

Location of health service providers

Location of health service providers	Number	Percentage
Brisbane	1078	48.21
Central West	3	0.13
Darling Downs	76	3.40
Far North	122	5.46
Fitzroy	83	3.71
Gold Coast	326	14.58
Mackay	69	3.09
North West	17	0.76
Northern	111	4.96
South West	4	0.18
Sunshine Coast	164	7.33
West Moreton	20	0.89
Wide Bay-Burnett	106	4.74
Outside Queensland*	57	2.55
Unknown	0	0.00

The above data is based on health service provider location.

*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 used to live in Queensland providing services but have since moved interstate (as the OHO can deal with complaints up to two years old).



Office of the
**HEALTH
OMBUDSMAN**

Listen. Respond. Resolve.