

Office of the Health Services Commissioner Report



October - December 2005 Quarter

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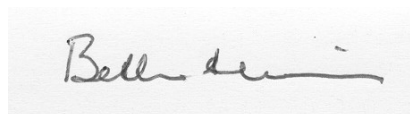
COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

This quarter's report reveals an increase in the number of inquiries by 6%, however, a decrease of 11% in actual complaints lodged. This is a similar trend to previous years as the October-December quarter tends to be quieter than the July-September quarter. It will be interesting to compare whether the downward trend continues or not. Other agencies have also reported a drop in the number of complaints they have received. None of the agencies are aware of the reasons for this. One would only be guessing by reflecting that perhaps the services are handling complaints better themselves.

The decrease of 14% in *Health Records Act* complaints may be because organisations are becoming more aware of their responsibilities under the legislation. There was also a drop in the number of complaints that the Registrar discussed with the twelve registration boards. Complaints about registered practitioners tend to be dominated by those about medical practitioners. Registered medical practitioners do supply a large number of services, however. Issues raised in complaints continued to be dominated by treatment issues, however, as previously mentioned in other reports, all complaints have components of failure of communication within them. The dominant *Health Records Act* issues are refusal of access and disclosure of information or inadequate consent.

The Commissioner was kept extremely busy in the October-December quarter with speaking engagements. This occurs every year because many health services hold their Annual General Meetings during October and November. Services visited this year included Horsham, Coleraine, Ballarat, Sale, Beaufort and Skipton, Dousta-Galla, Western District, North Western Mental Health and Mt. Eliza.

The quarter under review also saw the launch by the Health Services Review Council of the Guide to Complaint Handling. The launch was chaired by the Commissioner and addressed by the Minister for Health, The Hon. Bronwyn Pike and Robyne Schwarz, President of the Council. All staff and councillors who assisted with this somewhat delayed but very successful project are thanked.



Beth Wilson
Health Services Commissioner

ANALYSIS OF COMPLAINTS TRENDS

For the three months to December 2005 the OHSC received 1771 phone enquiries compared to 1676 for the previous quarter, an increase of six. The number of complaints received decreased in comparison to the previous quarter. Both HSC&R and HRA complaints fell by around 11%. This trend is similar to previous years as the October-December quarter is nearly always quieter than the July-September quarter.

Table 1: New Complaints and enquiries

	Current Quarter 2005-2006				Previous Quarter			
	Complaints				Complaints			
	Enquiries by Telephone	Single Contact	Accepted cases	Total	Enquiries by Telephone	Single Contact	Accepted cases	Total
HSC&R	1287	250	239	1776	1182	267	284	1733
HRA	484	31	33	548	494	38	37	567
Total	1771	281	272	2324	1676	303	321	2300

New Complaints & Telephone Enquiry Comparisons 1 October to 31 December, 2005

Figure 1
New Enquiries & Complaints
(n= 2324)

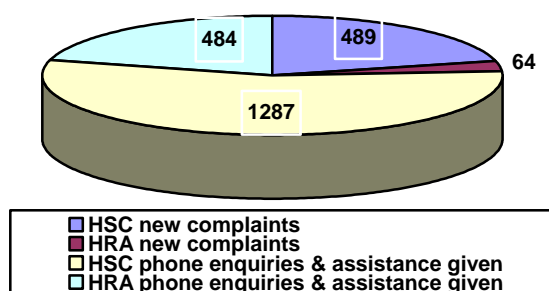


Figure 2 Monthly Trends

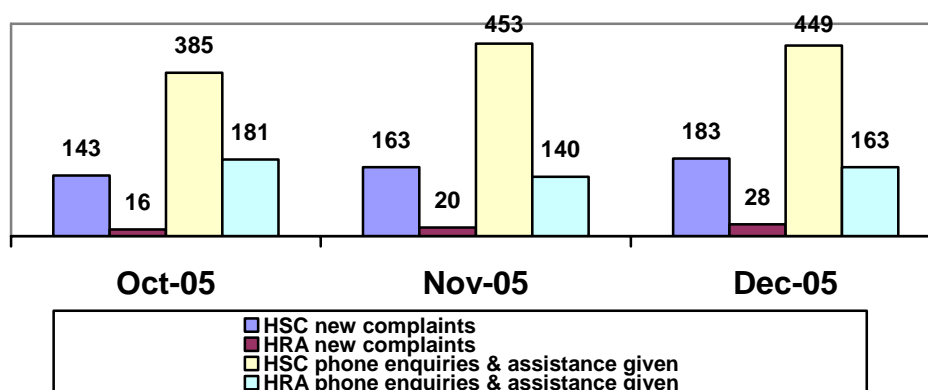


Table 2: Comparative analysis

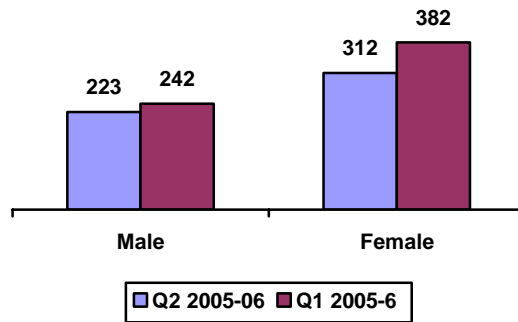
	Current Quarter					Previous Quarter	Previous Year	
	Oct 2005	Nov 2005	Dec 2005			Jul - Sept 2005	Oct - Dec 2004	
<i>Health Services (Conciliation & Review) Act 1987</i>								
Single Contact	66	70	114	250		267		
Accepted Cases	77	93	69	239		284		
New complaints lodged	143	163	183	489	21%	551	24%	490 24%
Enquiries & Assistance given								
Access to records	0	10	0	10		0		36
Brochure	23	10	14	47		28		24
Fees	32	35	41	108		129		125
Food & environmental health issues	40	38	63	141		162		175
Health insurance	18	9	18	45		81		59
Hospital waiting lists	10	9	7	26		30		2
Other	120	155	150	425		354		406
Referred elsewhere	142	187	156	485		398		402
	385	453	449	1287	55%	1182	51%	1229 61%
HSC Total	528	616	632	1776	76%	1733	75%	1719 85%
<i>Health Records Act 2001</i>								
Single Contact	7	10	14	31		38		
Accepted Cases	9	10	14	33		35		
New complaints lodged	16	20	28	64	3%	73	3%	69 3%
Enquiries & Assistance given								
Access to records	75	77	69	221		185		128
Brochure	19	7	11	37		7		2
Fees	16	5	21	42		37		42
Privacy Information	18	20	21	59		50		47
Referred to Federal Privacy Commissioner	1	0	4	5		17		2
Referred to FOI Act	0	0	0	0		5		32
Referred to State Privacy Commissioner	0	0	0	0		0		1
HRA Tel Inquiry	37	27	22	86		166		
HRA Response To Question	3	0	1	4		3		
HRA Consultation	0	0	3	3		2		
HRA Written Inquiry	12	4	11	27		22		
	181	140	163	484	21%	494	22%	254 12%
HRA Total	197	160	191	548	24%	567	25%	323 15%
Total complaints & enquiries	725	776	823	2324	100%	2300	100%	2042 100%

There was an 11% decrease in the number of HSC complaints from 551 in the previous quarter to 489 in this quarter. The numbers of HRA complaints decreased by 14% from 73 last quarter, to 64 this quarter.

Table 3 - Consumer Profile

Age Range	Female	Male	Unknown	Total
0 To 01	1	3	0	4
01 to 04	1	5	0	6
05 to 14	6	3	0	9
15 to 24	6	6	0	12
25 to 34	22	7	0	29
35 to 44	19	19	0	38
45 to 54	25	11	0	36
55 to 64	14	15	0	29
65 to 74	7	9	0	16
75 +	15	8	0	23
Unknown	196	137	18	351
Total	312	223	18	553

Figure 3 Consumer Gender



The patterns of consumer age and gender remain consistent with previous reports.

Primary Issues in Complaints

Figure 4: HSC Complaint Issues (n=489)

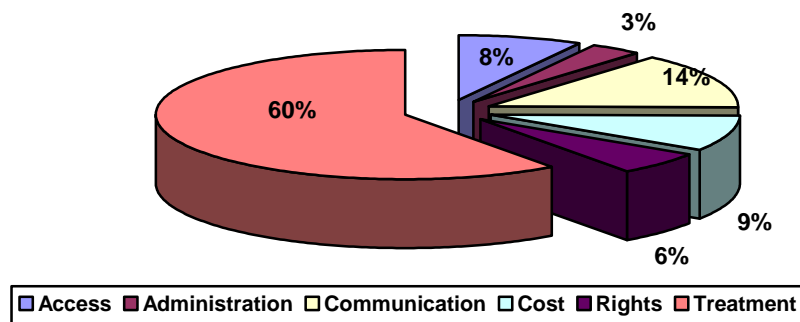


Table 4: HSC Issues

	2 nd Qtr 2005/6	1 st Qtr 2005/6		2 nd Qtr 2005/4	1 st Qtr 2005/4
Access			Cost		
Communication breakdown	2	5	Amount charged	17	8
Delay in admission	1	5	Billing practices	10	13
Delay in treatment	13	8	Information on costs	10	5
Discharge arrangements	0	2	Fraud	0	1
Discharge/Transfer	0	1	Over servicing	1	1
Transfer unsuitable	0	2	Over servicing - treatment	2	0
No/inadequate service	19	20	Public/Private election	0	1
Non attendance	0	0	Private health insurance	0	0
Non attendance - service busy	0	0	Public health insurance	0	0
Refused to refer	0	0	Unnecessary treatment	1	0
Other	3	0	Other	3	2
Refused admission	1	3			
Transport	1	1			
Waiting list	0	4			
	40	51		44	31
Administration			Rights		
Management practices	7	8	Access to records	0	1
Advertising	0	0	Accuracy of records	1	3
Failure to provide certificate	1	3	Assault	2	0
Hygiene	1	3	Discrimination	4	8
No/inadequate response	4	7	No/insufficient consent	1	3
Other	1	2	Other	7	2
Policy	1	2	Privacy/confidentiality	2	0
Quackery/legality	1	1	Refusal to treat	4	0
Retaliation	0	0	Unprofessional conduct	7	15
	16	26		28	32
Communication			Treatment		
Absence of caring	11	10	Inadequate diagnosis	35	45
Failure to consult	5	8	Inadequate treatment	122	132
Inconsiderate/undignified service	16	15	Medication	19	25
Other	1	3	Negligent treatment	65	59
Poor attitude/discourtesy	21	21	Other	7	14
Wrong/misleading Information	13	10	Rough treatment	19	15
			Unskilful/incompetent treatment	16	33
			Wrong diagnosis	6	14
			Wrong treatment	5	4
	67	67		294	341
			Not Specified	0	3
			Grand Total	489	551

This table reflects the issues raised by complainants rather than those identified in the assessment of the complaint. There are only minimal changes from one quarter to the next with treatment issues again prevalent at 60%.

Figure 5: HRA Complaint Issues (n=64)

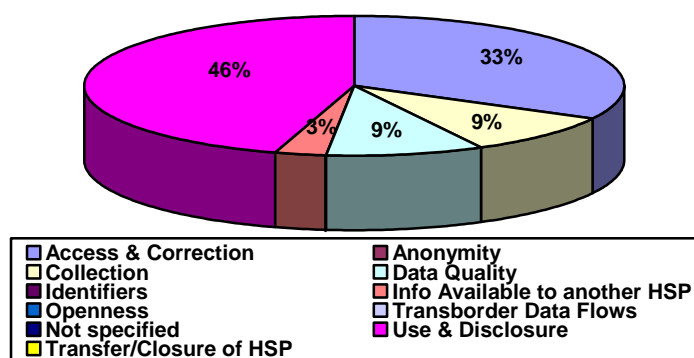


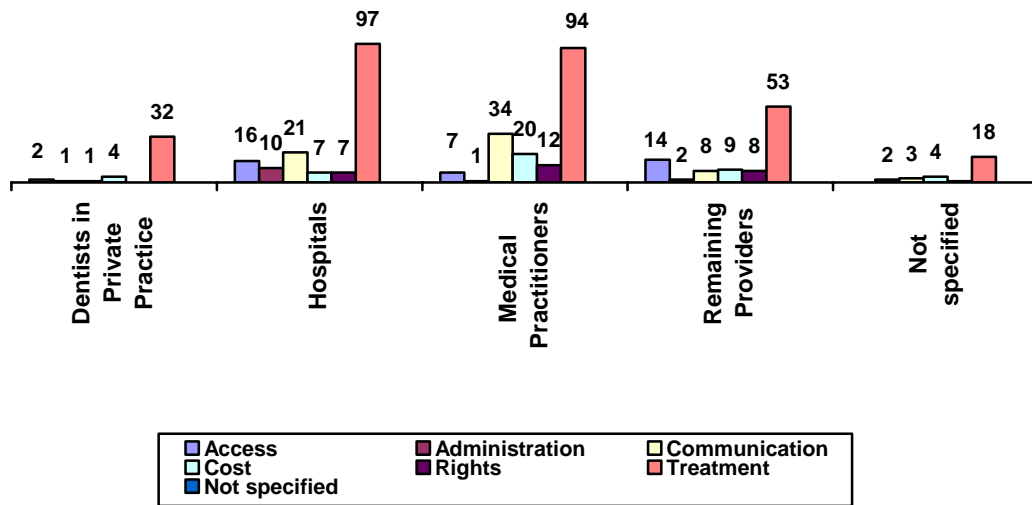
Table 5: HRA Issues

	2 nd Qtr 2005/6	1 st Qtr 2005/6		2 nd Qtr 2005/6	1 st Qtr 2005/6
Access & Correction			Info available to another HSP		
Access refused	17	16	Information refused	0	6
Amended statement not appended	0	0	Unreasonable time in delivery	2	0
Correction refused	0	3	Excessive fee	0	0
Inaccurate information not concealed	3	0		2	6
No amendment advise	0	0	Identifiers		
No written reason for refusal	1	2	Misuse	0	1
21	21	Openness			
Anonymity			Policies unavailable, unclear or inadequate	0	0
Refusal of anonymity	0	0	Insufficient details given	0	0
Collection				0	0
Breach of in-confidence details	1	0	Transborder data flows		
Unlawful/Intrusive collection	2	3	Unauthorised transborder transfer	0	0
Third party collection	0	0	Transborder dataflow unreasonable	0	0
Third party collection - Notification	0	0		0	0
Inadequate collection statement	0	0	Transfer/Closure of HSP		
Unnecessary collection	3	2	Inadequate notification	0	0
6	5		Unsafe storage of records	0	2
Data Quality				0	2
Data inaccurate, incomplete or out of date	3	4	Use & Disclosure		
Deleted without notation	1	0	Disclosure – Inadequate consent	21	20
Destruction of information of non HSP	0	0	Disclosure - Inadequate disclosure	6	6
Transferred without notation	0	1	Use - Insufficient information	2	2
Unlawful deletion	1	1		29	28
Unsatisfactory protection	1	4	Not specified	0	0
6	10		Total	64	73

The primary issues for HRA were refusal of access and disclosure of information - inadequate consent. This is similar to the previous quarter.

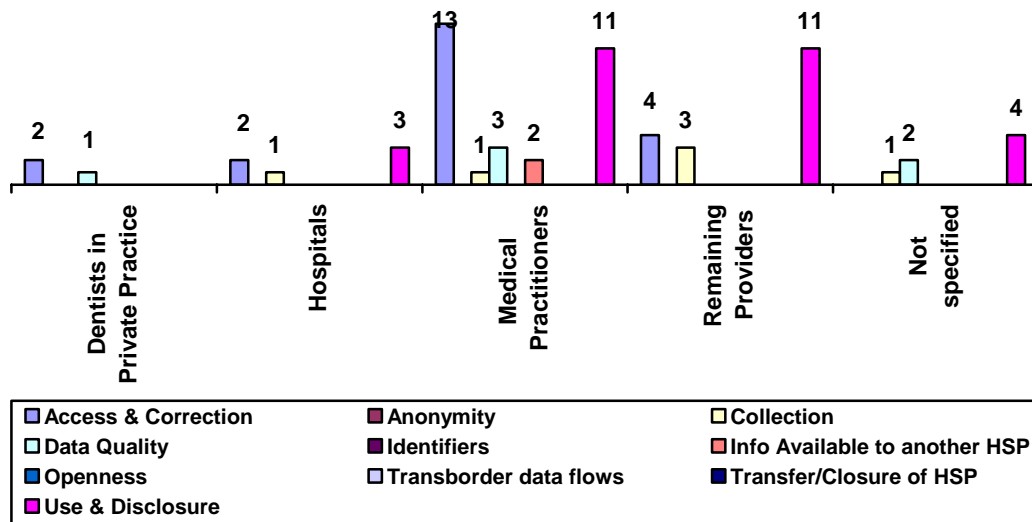
Respondent Analysis by Primary Issue

Figure 6: HSC Respondent by Issue Category (n=489)



Treatment is most common issues raised in complaints across all providers.

Figure 7: HRA Respondent by Issue Category (n = 64)



Access and disclosure continue to be the major issues in complaints under HRA.

Table 6 – Respondent Type by Issue Category

	2nd Qtr 2005-6							1st Qtr 2005-6						
	Dentists in Private Practice	Hospitals	Medical Practitioners	Remaining Providers	Not specified			Dentists in Private Practice	Hospitals	Medical Practitioners	Remaining Providers	Not specified		
HSC														
Access	2	15	7	16	0	40	7%	0	21	8	18	4	51	8%
Administration	1	10	1	2	2	16	3%	0	12	7	7	0	26	4%
Communication	1	21	34	8	3	67	12%	0	22	34	7	4	67	11%
Cost	4	7	20	9	4	44	8%	3	7	16	2	3	31	5%
Rights	0	7	12	8	1	28	5%	0	9	13	8	2	32	5%
Treatment	32	97	94	53	18	4	53%	27	141	105	54	14	341	55%
Not Specified	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0	3	0	0	0	3	0%
	4	15	16	96	28	48	88%	3	21	18	96	2	551	88%
	0	7	8	96	28	9		0	5	3	96	7	551	
HRA														
Access & Correction	2	2	13	4	0	21	4%	2	1	11	3	4	21	3%
Anonymity	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Collection	0	1	1	3	1	6	1%	0	0	1	4	0	5	1%
Data Quality	1	0	3	0	2	6	1%	0	5	3	2	0	10	2%
Identifiers Available to another HSP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0	0	1	0	0	1	0%
Openness	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Transborder data flows	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Transfer/Closure of HSP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0	1	0	1	0	2	0%
Use & Disclosure	0	3	11	11	4	29	5%	0	6	8	10	4	28	4%
Not specified	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
	3	6	30	18	7	64	12%	2	13	30	20	8	73	12%
Grand Total	4	16	19	11	35	55	100	3	22	21	11	3	624	100
	3	3	8	4	35	3	%	2	8	3	6	5	624	%
	8	29	36	21	6	100	%	5	37	34	19	6	100	%
	%	%	%	%	%	%		%	%	%	%	%	%	%

The apparent decrease in treatment issues raised against doctors and hospitals in this quarter is minimal when viewed in the context of the decrease in complaints overall. Treatment issues were 62% of all complaints about hospitals in the July - September quarter and 60% of all complaints about hospitals in this quarter.

HOW COMPLAINTS ARE MANAGED

Table 7: Comparison by Stage of Closure

Stage of Complaint Process	2nd Quarter 2005-6				1st Quarter 2005-6			
	HRA	HSC	Total	%	HRA	HSC	Total	%
Closed in Enquiry (Single Contact Complaints)	31	250	281	45%	38	265	303	48%
Closed in Assessment	24	235	259	42%	26	225	251	39%
Closed in Conciliation	7	72	79	13%	16	65	81	13%
Closed in Investigation	0	1	1	0%	0	0	0	0%
Complaints closed	62	558	620	100%	80	555	635	100%

Most complaints closed this quarter were either in enquiry or assessment stage (87%), with the remaining 13% closed in conciliation. This continues the pattern of the previous quarter.

Primary Issue In Complaint By Seriousness Rating At Closure

Table 8: Issue by Seriousness

	2nd Quarter 2005-6					1st Quarter 2005-6				
	High	Medium	Low	Total	%	High	Medium	Low	Total	%
HSC										
Access	2	9	21	32	5%	2	18	40	60	9%
Administration	0	7	17	24	4%	0	5	19	24	4%
Communication	1	8	60	69	11%	0	16	58	74	12%
Cost	0	3	46	49	8%	0	5	27	32	5%
Rights	4	12	30	46	7%	3	6	18	27	4%
Treatment	26	130	182	338	55%	19	118	199	336	53%
Not specified	0	0	0	0	0%	0	2	0	2	0%
	33	169	356	558	90%	24	170	361	555	87%
HRA										
Access & Correction	0	7	14	21	3%	0	13	19	32	5%
Anonymity	0	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0%
Collection	0	3	3	6	1%	0	3	0	3	0%
Data Quality	0	2	6	8	1%	0	6	0	6	1%
Identifiers	0	0	0	0	0%	0	1	0	1	0%
Info Available to another HSP	0	1	1	2	0%	0	2	6	8	1%
Openness	0	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0%
Trans border data flow	0	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0%
Transfer/Closure of HSP	0	0	0	0	0%	0	0	2	2	0%
Use & Disclosure	1	9	15	25	4%	1	13	14	28	4%
Not specified				0	0%				0	0%
	1	22	39	62	10%	1	38	41	80	13%
Total Complaints Closed	34	191	395	620	100%	25	208	402	635	100%

There was only slight variation in the numbers of complaints classified as being low medium or high seriousness.

REGISTRAR

The December quarter saw a drop in the number of complaints discussed with the twelve Registration Boards. A total 229 complaints were discussed, a decrease of 87. Of the 229 complaints 129 were about medical practitioners, down by 58 from the last quarter. Forty complaints were about dental practitioners and 21 and 15 were about pharmacists and psychologists, respectively. Of the 91 HSC complaints 14 were referred to the boards, whilst three Boards referred six complaints to the HSC. There were four Freedom of Information requests processed during this period.

Table 9 Registration Board Contacts

Registration Boards	HSC Complaints discussed with Boards	Board Complaints discussed with HSC	HSC Complaints formally referred to Boards	Board Complaints formally referred to HSC
Chinese Medicine Registration Board	0	4	0	0
Chiropractors Registration Board of Victoria	0	1	0	0
Dental Practice Board of Victoria	21	19	0	0
Medical Practitioners Board of Victoria	58	71	11	4
Medical Radiation Technologists Board of Victoria	1	0	0	0
Nurses Board of Victoria	4	6	3	0
Optometrists Registration Board of Victoria	3	1	0	0
Osteopaths Registration Board of Victoria	0	1	0	0
Pharmacy Board of Victoria	2	19	0	1
Physiotherapists Registration Board of Victoria	0	1	0	0
Podiatrists Registration Board of Victoria	2	0	0	0
Psychologists Registration Board of Victoria	0	15	0	1
	91	138	14	6

ASSESSMENT & INVESTIGATION

Table 10 - Resolution in assessment

Type of Resolution	2nd Qtr 2005/06		1st Qtr 2005/06	
	Number	%	Number	%
Single Contact Complaints	273	50%	286	52%
Action/compliance order	1	0%	0	0%
Apology given	5	1%	2	0%
Costs refunded or reduced	15	3%	8	1%
Explanation/Information provided	74	14%	89	16%
Fee waived	0	0%	1	0%
Service/Objective obtained	21	4%	21	4%
Not specified	10	2%	1	0%
Total resolved	399	74%	408	74%
Declined	70	13%	17	3%
Referred to Board or VCAT or elsewhere	39	7%	61	11%
Objective not obtained	29	5%	10	2%
Withdrawn	4	1%	59	11%
	142	26%	147	26%
Total	541	100%	555	100%

There was a small (1%) decrease in the number of cases closed by the assessment team this quarter. As usually occurs, approximately half of these were closed in enquiry because they were not confirmed by the return of the complaint form. For the rest, almost all received a written explanation and some of these also obtained access to services, refunds of fees or apologies.

CONCILIATION

Table 11 - Resolution in Conciliation

Type of Resolution	2ndQtr 2005/06		1st Qtr 2005/06	
	No's	%	No's	%
Apology given	0	0	0	0
Change in procedure/policy	5	6%	0	0%
Compensation	1	1%	0	0%
Explanation/Information provided	12	15%	16	20%
Objective or Service obtained	22	28%	11	14%
Total resolved	21	27%	29	36%
	61	77%	56	70%
Referred to Board or VCAT				
Non-conciliable	2	3%	4	5%
	16	20%	20	25%
Total	18	23%	24	30%

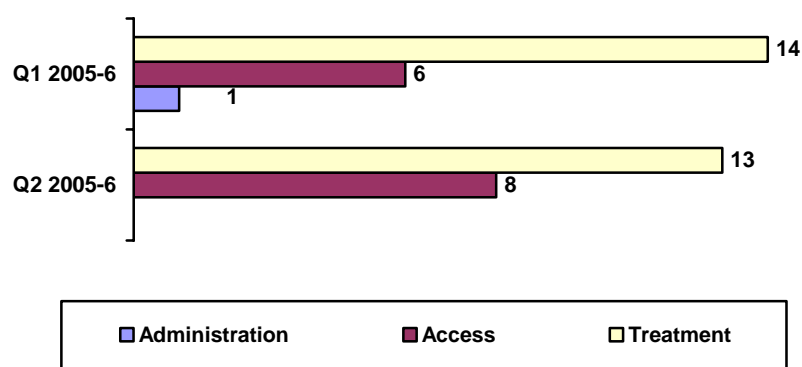
Of the 620 complaints closed this quarter 79 (13%) were in conciliation. The number of closures was similar to the previous quarter.

PRISONER COMPLAINTS

Table 12 – breakdown of prisoner complaints

	Oct-05	Nov-05	Dec-05	Total	
Access	3	4	1	8	38%
Administration	0	0	0	0	0%
Communication	0	0	0	0	0%
Cost	0	0	0	0	0%
Rights	0	0	0	0	0%
Treatment	6	2	5	13	62%
Total	9	6	6	21	100%
	42%	29%	29%	100%	

Figure 8 – Prisoner Complaints



The number of prisoner complaints was the same as last quarter with 21 complaints. Issues this quarter were mainly around access and treatment.

PSYCHIATRIC SERVICES

Figure 9: Psychiatric Services Complaints

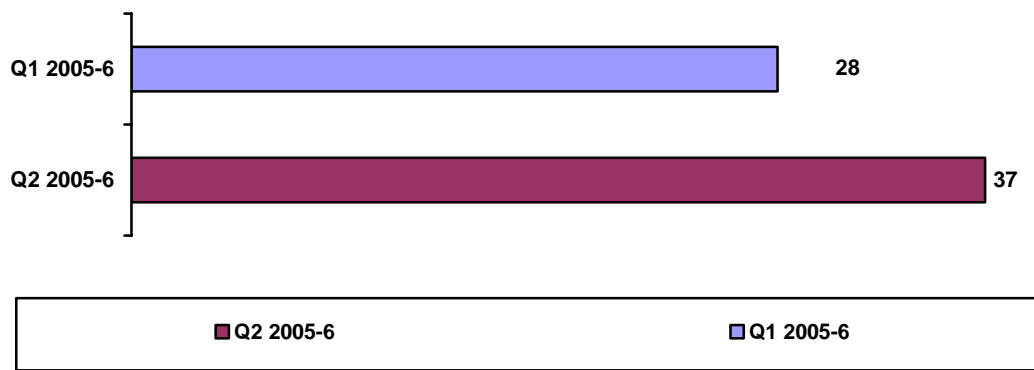


Table 11: Psychiatric Services

	Oct-05	Nov-05	Dec-05	Total	
Hospitals	7	5	3	15	41%
Medical Practitioner	4	5	5	14	38%
Psychiatric Health Service	3	1	2	6	16%
Psychologist	2	0	0	2	5%
Total	16	11	10	37	100%
	43%	30%	27%	100%	

Figure 10: Types of Service

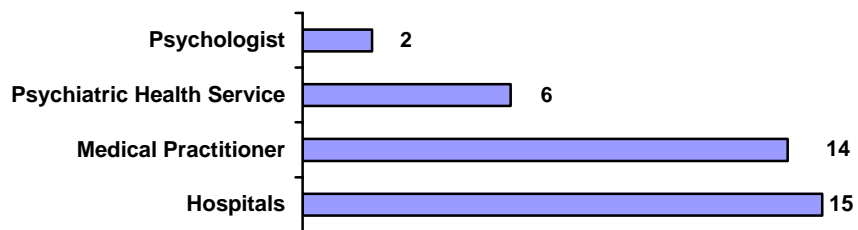
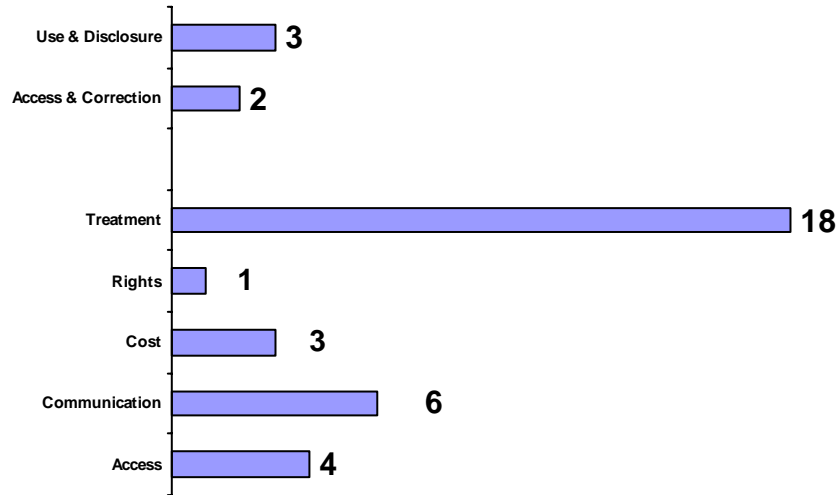


Figure 11: Issues in Psychiatric Complaints



There were 37 complaints about psychiatric services this quarter compared to 28 last quarter, an increase of approximately 32%. Again this quarter they were mostly against hospitals and medical practitioners. Treatment with 18 complaints (49%) was again the dominant issue.

ABORIGINAL OUTREACH PROGRAM

Provision of information (ATSI)

This quarter largely focused on [paragraph to be completed]

Table 14 Provision of information (ATSI)

Enquiries & Referrals	
Request for brochures & reports	500
Speaking engagements	21
Food, environmental health enquiries	0
Health Insurance enquiries	0
Referral to Federal Privacy Commissioner	0
Referral to State Privacy Commissioner	0
Referral to Aboriginal Legal Service	0
Referral to other dispute settlement service	0
Referred elsewhere	0
Other enquiries	0
	521

Table 15 Complaints (ATSI)

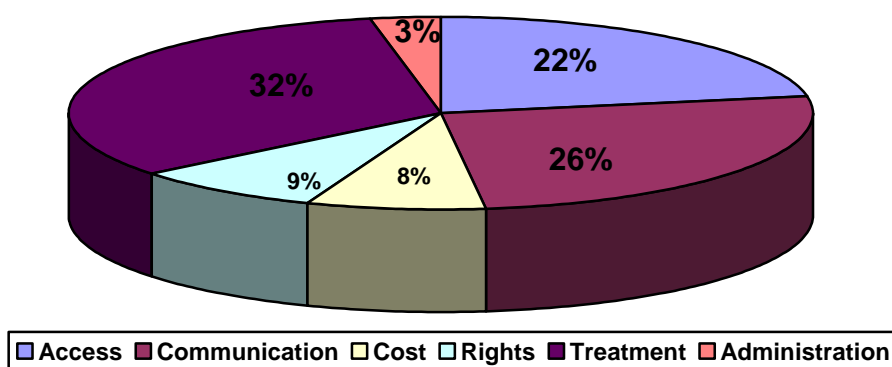
HSC Complaints		HRA Complaints	
Access	0	Access & Correction	0
Administration	0	Anonymity	0
Communication	1	Collection	0
Cost	0	Data Quality	0
Rights	0	Identifiers	0
Treatment	3	Info Available to another HSP	0
None	0	Openness	0
		Transborder data flows	0
		Transfer/Closure of HSP	0
		Use & Disclosure	0
	4		0

HOSPITAL HEALTH COMPLAINTS DATA

During this quarter 30 hospitals/community centres provided complaints data which showed they received 969 complaints. The major area of concern to people was treatment making up 32% (316) of all complaints.

Issues in Complaints

Figure 11: Issues in HCIP Complaints (n=969)



Primary Issue in Complaint by Seriousness Rating

Table 16: Issue by Seriousness

	Access	Admin	Communication	Cost	Rights	Treatment	Total	
Trivial	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Minor	76	15	73	62	60	75	361	38%
Routine	98	12	132	12	10	162	426	44%
Substantial	20	2	26	0	3	41	92	9%
Serious	22	1	19	0	10	38	90	9%
Total	216	30	250	74	83	316	969	100%
	22%	3%	26%	8%	9%	32%	100%	

Most complaints (82%) were of a minor nature or considered routine.

Table 17: Site by Issue

	Access	Admin	Communication	Cost	Rights	Treatment	Total	
Admissions	11	1	0	0	0	0	12	1%
Aged Care	2	2	2	0	3	4	13	1%
Day Procedure Unit	1	1	1	0	0	5	8	1%
Emergency department	18	0	19	0	3	29	69	7%
Hospital grounds	4	2	11	52	24	0	93	10%
Intensive care unit	1	0	2	0	1	1	5	1%
Operating theatre	2	0	1	0	0	2	5	1%
Other	157	19	178	19	28	230	631	65%
Outpatient clinic	8	2	10	0	2	4	26	3%
Ward	12	3	26	3	22	41	107	10%
Total	216	30	250	74	83	316	969	100%
	22%	3%	26%	8%	9%	32%	100%	

In over 65% of complaints the site was not specified.

Table 18: Outcome by Issue

	Access	Admin	Communication	Cost	Rights	Treatment	Total	
CHANGE IN POLICY	2	1	10	0	2	6	21	2%
LAPSED	67	3	50	34	21	70	245	20%
NOT UPHELD	1	2	6	0	5	2	16	1%
REFERRED	1	0	0	11	2	2	16	1%
REMEDIAL	2	1	10	1	3	11	28	2%
RESOLVED	192	31	253	31	74	311	892	74%
Total	265	38	329	77	107	402	1218	100%
	22%	3%	27%	6%	9%	33%	100%	

74% of all complaints were resolved while another 20% lapsed.

EXECUTIVE SERVICES

The Executive Services Unit comprises two staffing streams and provides corporate support services for the office including Finance, Human Resources, Information Technology, Purchasing, Vehicle Management, Building Services and Reception Services. It is also responsible for the operation of the *Health Records Act 2001*(Vic) (HRA) and the provision of legal advice to the Commissioner and staff.

Health Records Act 2001

The office continues to offer training, education and support to holders of health information and consumers on their respective responsibilities and rights under the legislation. These organisations include health services providers, government departments and agencies, local government, employers and many other holders of health information. Over 20 presentations were provided in the October-December quarter.

Table 19: HRA Requests

Requests	
Published articles	0
Consultation in office	3
Presentation to a group	17
Response to question	4
Telephone inquiries	86
Review policy documents	27

Table 20: HRA Contacts

HRA Team Contacts	
HRA brochures sent out	1281
HSC brochures sent out	4071
Access to records brochures sent out	166
No of posters sent	31
Amount of people attending presentations	304

Website

The office website (www.health.vic.gov.au/hsc) is featured prominently in all of the office promotional material. It is a source of information for the community on the role of the OHSC and includes publications produced by the office, appropriate links and the latest information.

The following table is for the period 1 October to 31 December 2005.

Table 21: Website Statistics

Month	Pages Viewed
Oct	4022
Nov	3725
Dec	2604
Average	3450
Totals	10351

Staff Training and Development

During the quarter 10 OHSC staff attended the Administrative Law & Human Rights-Delegations & Appointments under legislation seminar run by the Law Institute of Victoria. In house training sessions were held on Clinical Governance and complaints resolution and another staff member attended a management-training course.

Conferences

Two members of the Executive Services team attended the National Health Information Summit held on the 6 & 7 December in Melbourne.

This summit was co hosted by Professor Andrew Coats Chair, Australian Health Information Council and Ms Patricia Faulkner Chair, National Health Information Group and Secretary, Department of Human Services.

The intent was to inform about new developments across the health Information Management and Information and Communications Technology (IM&ICT) landscape.

Four staff attended the 4th National Complaints Conference held in Sydney in October. Two staff attended a compliance and research skills workshop conducted by the Law Institute of Victoria.

Guide to help health services handle complaints

The Hon Bronwyn Pike MP Minister for Health launched the *Guide to Complaint Handling in Health Care Services* on 15 December 2005 at the Royal Melbourne Hospital. The guide targets hospitals' Complaints Liaison Officers (patient representatives), Quality Managers and Chief Executive Officers.

The guide designed to help health services providers develop and implement effective complaint-handling practices was funded by the Department of Human Services and produced by the Health Services Review Council (HSRC) and has been distributed to all hospitals in Victoria.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 - Providers by Type and Specialities

Grouping	Type of organisation	Speciality	Sub speciality		
Dentists in Private Practice	43	Dental Surgery	6		
		Dentist	37		
Hospitals	163	Hospitals	151		
			<i>Dental</i>	4	
			<i>General</i>	104	
			<i>Not specified</i>	24	
			<i>Psychiatric</i>	15	
			<i>Specialist</i>	4	
			<i>Womens</i>	5	
	Private Hospital	12			
Medical Practitioners	198	Medical Clinic	33		
			<i>24 Hour Clinic</i>	1	
			<i>Group Practice</i>	2	
		<i>Mens Health</i>	7		
		<i>Not specified</i>	23		
		Medical Practitioner	165	<i>Anaesthetist</i>	2
				<i>Cardiologist</i>	6
				<i>Dermatologist</i>	2
				<i>Ear, Nose and Throat</i>	3
				<i>Gastroenterologist</i>	1
				<i>General Practitioner</i>	64
				<i>Locum</i>	2
				<i>Medico-legal Examiner</i>	1
				<i>Neurologist</i>	2
				<i>Not specified</i>	37
				<i>Obstetrician/Gynaecologist</i>	3
				<i>Oncologist</i>	2
				<i>Ophthalmologist</i>	3
				<i>Paediatrician</i>	1
				<i>Psychiatrist</i>	14
				<i>Radiologist</i>	2
				<i>Rehabilitation medicine</i>	1
				<i>Respiratory Medicine</i>	1
				<i>Rheumatologist</i>	2
		<i>Surgeon</i>	16		
			General	2	
			Neurological	2	
	Not specified	4			
	Orthopaedic	2			
	Plastic	5			
	Vascular	1			
Not specified	37				
Remaining Providers	112	Age Care	1		
		Alcohol & Drug Service	1		
		Allied Health	2		

Alternative therapist	6	Acupuncture	1
		Masseur	1
		Naturopath	3
		Other	1
Alternative Therapist Clinic	4		
Ambulance Service	2		
Audiologist	1		
Beauty Therapy Clinic	6		
Chiropractic Service	1		
Community Health Centre	6		
Complementary Health	1		
Corrections Health	21	Not specified	14
		Private	1
		Public	6
Counsellor	2		
Dental Prosthetist	2		
Diagnostic Service	5	Diagnostic Imaging	1
		Not specified	2
		Pathology	2
Education	1		
Infant Welfare Centre	3		
Law Firms	1		
Locum Service	3	Emergency medicine	
Mental Health	1		
Not a health service provider (individual)	1		
Not a health service provider (organisation)	4	Employer	1
		Not specified	2
		Other	1
Nurse	1		
Nursing Home	3	Not specified	2
		Private	1
Nursing service	1		
Occupational therapist	1		
Optical dispenser	9		
Optometrist	3		
Pharmacists	1		
Pharmaceutical supplier	1		
Pharmacist	2		
Podiatrist	2		
Podiatry Service	1		
Police	1		
Psychiatric Health Service	6		
Psychologist	2		
Radiographer	1		
Rehabilitation Service	1		
Statutory Authority	1		

Grand Total	553						
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Health Services Commissioner

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