

# Office of the Health Services Commissioner Report



**October - December 2007 Quarter**

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## COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

The number of complaints lodged in the last quarter of 2007 decreased by approximately 14% by comparison with the previous quarter last year. There was also a drop in the number of complaints received under the *Health Records Act*. We have no idea why this is the case.

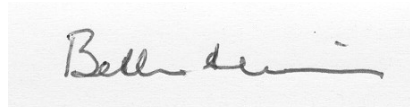
Complainants identified treatment issues as the predominant cause of complaint being 64% of all issues raised by them. Under the *Health Records Act* the most common reason for complaint is refusal of a service provider to give access to medical records. Most of these complaints can be resolved fairly quickly by explaining the law to the provider. Hospitals and doctors, not surprisingly, are the type of service most frequently complained about. Conciliation data this quarter shows an unusually high number of settlements involving compensation and/or refunds or waivers of fees.

The Registrar has been kept busy with a total of 248 complaints being discussed with the registration boards. These were predominantly about medical indemnity practitioners with psychologists and pharmacists the next most frequently complained about, and only 18 complaints pertaining to the remaining eight boards. The HSC received 68 medical practitioner complaints, seven of which were referred to the Medical Practitioners Board of Victoria following discussion. The Board also referred three notifications to the HSC.

Outreach work carried out by the Aboriginal Liaison Officer appears on page 14 of the report as does a brief section on health information privacy training.

In the quarter under review, work was done on a formal investigation into the use of lasers and intense pulsed light source equipment. The HSC has real concerns about the non-regulation in this area with people often having very little training using machines that are potentially dangerous. Complaints have involved burning, scarring, striping of the skin and de-pigmentation. These injuries can be permanent and can be very difficult to repair. The HSC will be presenting a de-identified copy of the final investigation report to the Minister for Health in February 2008. During this quarter HSC also completed an investigation of a counsellor who formed a sexual relationship with a client who subsequently committed suicide. The investigation revealed that the provider had very little idea of the ethics relevant to counsellors and made recommendations about training. The complainant, who was the ex-wife of the patient, later wrote a very warm letter to the HSC thanking us for dealing with her case with such compassion.

Plans are underway to celebrate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the HSC with a reception at the Sir Redmond Barry Room on 6 March 2008. The Commissioner is grateful to her staff and to the members of the Health Services Review Council who have assisted with the planning.



Beth Wilson  
**Health Services Commissioner**

## ANALYSIS OF COMPLAINTS TRENDS

### Complaints Lodged this Quarter

Table 1: New Complaints lodged with OHSC  
(Complaints received complaint forms sent out)

	Current Quarter					Previous Quarter		Previous Year	
	Oct 2007	Nov 2007	Dec 2007			July - Sep 2007		Oct - Dec 2006	
<b>HSC&amp;R</b>	160	133	105	398	93%	424	89%	458	91%
<b>HRA</b>	14	9	9	32	7%	54	11%	45	9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>430</b>		<b>478</b>		<b>503</b>	

New complaints lodged this quarter decreased by approximately 14% in comparison with the same quarter last year. There were 32 new HRA complaints in comparison with 45 in the same quarter the previous year

### Single Contact Complaints this Quarter

Table 2: Single Contact complaints  
(Complaints closed because no complaint form returned)

	Current Quarter					Previous Quarter		Previous Year	
	Oct 2007	Nov 2007	Dec 2007			July - Sep 2007		Oct - Dec 2006	
<b>HSC&amp;R</b>	70	63	68	201	92%	191	88%	234	90%
<b>HRA</b>	4	6	7	17	8%	28	12%	17	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>218</b>		<b>219</b>		<b>251</b>	

As for the same period last year, approximately 50% of all complaints were not confirmed by the return of a completed complaint form and authority.

### Accepted Cases this Quarter

Table 3 Accepted cases  
(Complaint Forms received and approved for assessment)

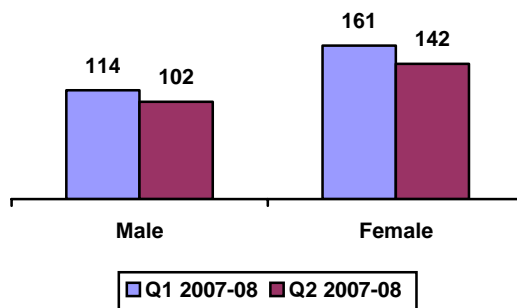
	Current Quarter					Previous Quarter		Previous Year	
	Oct 2007	Nov 2007	Dec 2007			July - Sep 2007		Oct - Dec 2006	
<b>HSC&amp;R</b>	103	74	54	231	95%	243	88%	254	92%
<b>HRA</b>	7	5	1	13	5%	33	12%	20	8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>244</b>		<b>276</b>		<b>274</b>	

The number of accepted cases for this quarter has declined by 12% compared to last quarter and 10% compared to the same period in 2006. While there was a marked increase in the number of HRA cases last quarter, the numbers are low again in this quarter.

Table 4 - Consumer Profile of accepted

Age Range	Female	Male	Total	%
0 To 01	0	2	2	1%
01 to 04	0	1	1	0%
05 to 14	2	3	5	2%
15 to 24	6	3	9	4%
25 to 34	17	8	25	10%
35 to 44	24	12	36	15%
45 to 54	15	12	27	11%
55 to 64	12	18	30	13%
65 to 74	13	5	18	7%
75 +	9	8	17	7%
Unknown	44	30	74	30%
<b>Total</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>100%</b>

Figure 1 Consumer Gender



There were similar ratios of male (42%) to female (58%) service users reported for this quarter as for the previous quarter.

### Primary Issues in Accepted Complaints

Figure 2: HSC Accepted Complaint Issues (n=231)

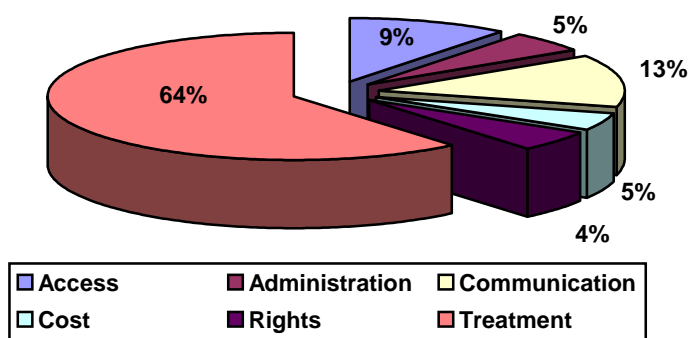


Table 5: HSC Issues

	2 <sup>nd</sup> Qtr 2007/8	1 <sup>st</sup> Qtr 2007/8		2 <sup>nd</sup> Qtr 2007/8	1 <sup>st</sup> Qtr 2007/8
Access			Cost		
Communication breakdown	0	1	Amount charged	6	2
Delay in admission	1	3	Billing practices	1	9
Delay in treatment	7	1	Information on costs	0	4
Discharge arrangements	5	4	Fraud	0	0
Discharge/Transfer	1	1	Over servicing	2	0
Transfer unsuitable	0	0	Over servicing - treatment	0	0
No/inadequate service	6	3	Public/Private election	0	0
Non attendance	0	0	Private health insurance	0	0
Non attendance - service busy	0	0	Public health insurance	1	1
Refused to refer	1	0	Unnecessary treatment	0	0
Other	1	1	Other	0	4
Refused admission	1	1			
Transport	0	0			
Waiting list	1	4			
9%	<b>24</b>	<b>19</b>	5%	<b>10</b>	<b>20</b>
Administration			Rights		
Management practices	0	0	Access to records	1	2
Administration	5	3	Accuracy of records	0	2
Advertising	0	0	Assault	0	1
Failure to provide certificate	2	1	Discrimination	1	0
Hygiene	1	3	No/insufficient consent	1	1
No/inadequate response	2	3	Other	1	4
Other	2	2	Privacy/confidentiality	0	0
Policy	0	1	Refusal to treat	2	0
Quackery/legality	0	0	Unprofessional conduct	6	1
Retaliation	0	0			
5%	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	4%	<b>12</b>	<b>11</b>
Communication			Treatment		
Absence of caring	2	5	Inadequate diagnosis	15	19
Failure to consult	7	7	Inadequate treatment	48	43
Inconsiderate/undignified service	3	4	Medication	11	15
Other	8	9	Negligent treatment	35	28
Poor attitude/discourtesy	8	8	Other	12	10
Wrong/misleading Information	2	5	Rough treatment	4	3
			Unskilful/incompetent treatment	6	9
			Wrong diagnosis	6	4
			Wrong treatment	2	3
13%	<b>30</b>	<b>38</b>	64%	<b>139</b>	<b>134</b>
			Not Specified		7
			Grand Total	<b>231</b>	<b>242</b>

Table 5 reflects the issues raised by complainants rather than those identified in the assessment of the complaint. Treatment issues constitute 64% of issues raised.

Figure 3: HRA Accepted Complaint Issues (n=13)

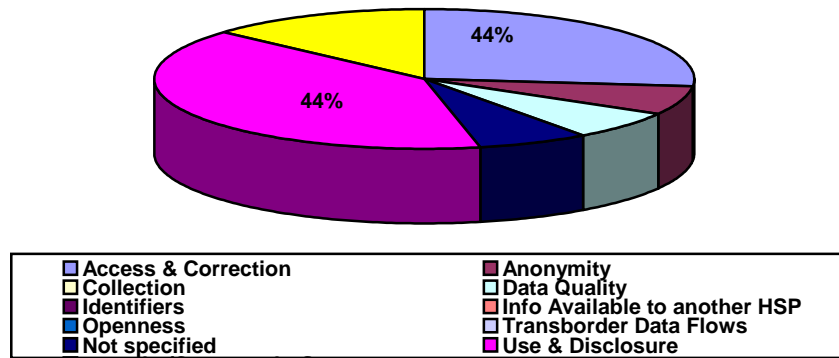


Table 6: HRA Issues

	2 <sup>nd</sup> Qtr 2007/8	1 <sup>st</sup> Qtr 2007/8		2 <sup>nd</sup> Qtr 2007/8	1 <sup>st</sup> Qtr 2007/8
<b>Access &amp; Correction</b>		<b>Info available to another HSP</b>			
Access refused	3	17	Information refused	0	1
Amended statement not appended	0	0	Unreasonable time in delivery	0	0
Correction refused	0	0	Excessive fee	0	1
Inaccurate information not concealed	0	0		<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>
No amendment advise	0	0	<b>Identifiers</b>		
No written reason for refusal	1	1	Misuse	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
	<b>4</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>Openness</b>		
<b>Anonymity</b>		Policies unavailable, unclear or inadequate		0	0
Refusal of anonymity	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	Insufficient details given	0	0
<b>Collection</b>				<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Breach of in-confidence details	0	1	<b>Transborder data flows</b>		
Unlawful/Intrusive collection	0	1	Unauthorised Transborder transfer	0	0
Third party collection	0	0	Transborder dataflow unreasonable	0	0
Third party collection - Notification	0	0		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Inadequate collection statement	0	0	<b>Transfer/Closure of HSP</b>		
Unnecessary collection	0	0	Inadequate notification	0	0
	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	Unsafe storage of records	0	0
<b>Data Quality</b>				<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Data inaccurate, incomplete or out of date	1	1	<b>Use &amp; Disclosure</b>		
Deleted without notation	0	0	Disclosure – Inadequate consent	5	9
Destruction of information of non HSP	0	0	Disclosure - Inadequate disclosure	1	0
Transferred without notation	0	0	Use - Insufficient information	0	0
Unlawful deletion	0	0		<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>
Unsatisfactory protection	0	0	Not specified	1	0
	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>33</b>

This quarter there were more HRA complaints about disclosure (6) than about refusal of access (4).

## Respondent Analysis by Primary Issue

Table 7 – Respondent Type by Issue Category

	2nd Qtr 2007-8						1st Qtr 2007-8							
	Dentists in Private Practice	Hospitals	Medical Practitioners	Remaining Providers	Not specified		Dentists in Private Practice	Hospitals	Medical Practitioners	Remaining Providers	Not specified			
<b>HSC</b>														
Access	0	10	3	9	2	<b>24</b>	10%	0	15	2	0	2	<b>19</b>	7%
Administration	0	5	3	3	1	<b>12</b>	5%	0	6	3	0	4	<b>13</b>	5%
Communication	1	16	5	6	2	<b>30</b>	12%	3	12	11	3	9	<b>38</b>	14%
Cost	4	0	1	4	1	<b>10</b>	4%	2	3	7	2	6	<b>20</b>	7%
Rights	1	3	4	1	3	<b>12</b>	5%	0	4	3	4	0	<b>11</b>	4%
Treatment	12	52	43	24	8	<b>139</b>	57%	6	55	42	5	26	<b>134</b>	49%
Not Specified	0	3	0	1	0	<b>4</b>	2%	0	3	1	1	2	<b>7</b>	2%
	<b>18</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>231</b>	95%	<b>11</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>242</b>	88%
<b>HRA</b>														
Access & Correction	0	0	3	1	0	<b>4</b>	2%	1	1	12	3	1	<b>18</b>	7%
Anonymity	0	0	0	0	1	<b>1</b>	0%	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	0%
Collection	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	0%	0	0	1	0	1	<b>2</b>	1%
Data Quality	1	0	0	0	0	<b>1</b>	0%	0	0	1	0	0	<b>1</b>	0%
Identifiers Info Available to another HSP	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	0%	0	0	1	0	0	<b>1</b>	0%
Openness	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	0%	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	0%
Transborder data flows	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	0%	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	0%
Transfer/Closure of HSP	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	0%	0	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>	0%
Use & Disclosure	0	0	3	3	0	<b>6</b>	3%	0	1	5	0	2	<b>9</b>	3%
Not specified	0	0	0	0	1	<b>1</b>	0%	0	0	0	1	0	<b>0</b>	0%
	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>13</b>	5%	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>33</b>	12%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>100 %</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>100 %</b>
	8%	36%	27%	21%	8%	100%		4%	36%	33%	7%	19%	100%	

The issues identified for each of the respondent types are similar to those raised in previous quarters. The largest proportion of complaints is about treatment provided by hospitals, medical practitioners and others.

## HOW COMPLAINTS ARE MANAGED

Table 8: Comparison by Stage of Closure

Stage of Complaint Process	2nd Qtr 2007-8				1st Qtr 2007-8			
	HRA	HSC	Total	%	HRA	HSC	Total	%
Closed in Assessment	16	180	196	79%	24	218	242	80%
Closed in Conciliation	1	52	53	21%	3	57	60	20%
Closed in Investigation	0	1	1	0%	0	0	0	0%
<b>Complaints closed</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>100%</b>

Most (79%) complaints were closed in assessment, with the remaining 21% of cases closed in conciliation.

### Primary Issue in Complaint by Seriousness Rating At Closure

Table 9: Issue by Seriousness

	2nd Qtr 2007-8				1st Qtr 2007-8					
	High	Medium	Low	Total	High	Medium	Low	Total		
<b>HSC</b>										
Access	1	8	17	26	10%	2	9	13	24	8%
Administration	0	4	12	16	6%	1	2	9	12	4%
Communication	4	9	15	28	11%	0	23	26	49	16%
Cost	1	1	10	12	5%	0	5	16	21	7%
Rights	1	0	13	14	6%	1	3	10	14	5%
Treatment	20	71	41	132	53%	31	77	46	154	51%
Not specified	0	0	1	1	0%	0	0	0	0	0%
	<b>27</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>91%</b>
All HSC	11%	38%	45%	93%	12%	39%	40%	100%		
<b>HRA</b>										
Access & Correction	0	3	3	6	2%	0	5	8	13	4%
Anonymity	0	0	0	0	0%	0	0	0	0	0%
Collection	0	0	1	1	0%	1	1	1	3	1%
Data Quality	0	1	0	1	0%	0	0	2	2	1%
Identifiers	0	1	0	4	1%	0	0	0	0	0%
Info Available to another HSP	0	0	0	0	0%	0	0	2	2	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	0	0	0%
Use & Disclosure	0	5	3	7	4%	1	4	2	7	2%
Not specified										
	<b>0</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>9%</b>
All HRA	0%	4%	3%	7%		0%	0%	0%	100%	
<b>Total Complaints Closed</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>All complaints</b>	10%	42%	48%	100%		12%	43%	45%	100%	

There was no significant variation in the proportion of cases reported as serious.

## Assessment & Investigation

Table 10 - Resolution in assessment

	HSC	HRA	Total	%
Apology	20	0	<b>20</b>	9%
Compensation	0	0	<b>0</b>	0%
Declined	75	8	<b>83</b>	39%
Explanation	75	4	<b>79</b>	37%
Fees/Cost waived or reduced	11	0	<b>11</b>	5%
HRA - Access to records		3	<b>3</b>	1%
HRA - Dismissed		0	<b>0</b>	0%
Non-conciliable	0	0	<b>0</b>	0%
Quality change	1	1	<b>2</b>	1%
Referred Out	10	1	<b>11</b>	5%
Service obtained	5	0	<b>5</b>	2%
Withdrawn	3	0	<b>5</b>	1%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>100%</b>
	92%	8%		

As in previous reports most complaints resolved in assessment received an apology and or an explanation. There were two quality change outcomes recorded and 5% of complainants received a refund or cost reduction.

Table 11 – Reason for decline in assessment

	HSC	HRA	Total	%
19 (1) The complaint is frivolous, vexatious or trivial	10		<b>10</b>	12%
19 (2) The complaint has been determined elsewhere	14		<b>14</b>	17%
19 (3) The incident occurred more than 12 months ago	1		<b>1</b>	1%
19 (4) (a) The complaint was not confirmed in writing	4		<b>4</b>	5%
19 (4) (b) The complaint contains insufficient detail	30		<b>30</b>	36%
19 (5) Reasonable steps not taken	6		<b>6</b>	7%
19 (6) The complaint has been referred to a registration board	1		<b>1</b>	1%
19 (7) The complaint has been referred to an external person, organisation or agency	2		<b>2</b>	2%
19 (8) (a) The complaint was rejected (Outside of jurisdiction)	7	2	<b>9</b>	12%
45 (4) Complaint not confirmed in writing		0	<b>0</b>	0%
51 1(a) Not an interference with the privacy of an individual		1	<b>1</b>	1%
51 1(h) Respondent dealing/dealt with or hasn't had opportunity to deal with complaint		4	<b>4</b>	5%
51 1(f) Complaint is subject to another enactment, court or tribunal		0	<b>0</b>	0%
52 (1) Complaint referred to Registration Board		1	<b>1</b>	1%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>100%</b>
	90%	10%		

The largest group of complaints declined in assessment were due to insufficient detail being provided. When this happens, HSC telephones or writes to the complainant seeking further information but occasionally this is not provided.

## Conciliation

This Quarter there was an unusually high number of settlements involving compensation and/or refunds or waivers of fees, along with an unusually low number of 'service obtained' outcomes.

Table 12 - Resolution in Conciliation

	<b>HSC</b>	<b>HRA</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>%</b>
Apology	18	0	<b>18</b>	25%
Compensation	15	0	<b>15</b>	21%
Explanation	20	1	<b>20</b>	27%
Fees/Cost waived or reduced	4	0	<b>4</b>	5%
HRA - Access to records	0	0	<b>0</b>	0%
HRA - Dismissed	0	0	<b>0</b>	0%
Non-conciliable	4	0	<b>5</b>	7%
Quality change	3	0	<b>3</b>	4%
Referred Out	0	0	<b>0</b>	0%
Service obtained	1	0	<b>1</b>	1%
Withdrawn	6	1	<b>7</b>	9%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>100%</b>
	97%	3%		

## Registrar

During the three month period a total of 248 complaints were discussed between the HSC and the Registration Boards. Of this 194 were about medical and dental practitioners, 157 and 37 respectively. There were 19 complaints about psychologists and 17 concerning pharmacists, leaving 18 complaints pertaining to the eight remaining Boards. Of the 68 medical practitioner complaints received by the HSC 7 were formally referred to the Medical Board following discussion. And the Medical Board formally referred 3 notifications for attention by the HSC, of the 89 Board notifications discussed. As the chart below outlines, the total number of notifications formally referred to the HSC by the Boards was 4 in comparison with 13 referred out by the HSC, for attention by the Boards. Two Freedom of Information requests were processed during the period.

Table 14 Registration Board Contacts

Registration Boards	Board Complaints discussed With HSC	HSC Complaints discussed with Boards	HSC Complaints formally referred to Boards	Board Complaints formally referred to HSC
Chinese Medicine Registration Board	4	0	0	0
Chiropractors Registration Board of Victoria	4	1	1	0
Dental Practice Board of Victoria	23	14	2	0
Medical Practitioners Board of Victoria	89	68	7	3
Medical Radiation Technologists Board of Victoria	0	0	0	0
Nurses Board of Victoria	4	0	0	0
Optometrists Registration Board of Victoria	2	1	0	0
Osteopaths Registration Board of Victoria	0	0	0	0
Pharmacy Board of Victoria	15	2	1	1
Physiotherapists Registration Board of Victoria	0	1	0	0
Podiatrists Registration Board of Victoria	0	1	1	0
Psychologists Registration Board of Victoria	17	2	1	0
	<b>158</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>4</b>

## Prisoner Complaints

Table 15– breakdown of prisoner complaints

	Oct-07	Nov-07	Dec-07	Total	
Access	2	2	1	5	42%
Administration	0	0	1	1	8%
Communication	0	0	0	0	0%
Cost	0	0	0	0	0%
Rights	0	0	0	0	0%
Treatment	1	3	2	6	50%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100%</b>
	25%	42%	33%	100%	

The number of prisoner complaints was the same as last month. Treatment (50%) and access to treatment (42%) were the most frequent issues.

## Psychiatric Services

Table16 Psychiatric Services

	Oct-07	Nov-07	Dec-07	Total	
Hospitals	0	0	0	0	0%
Medical Practitioner	0	0	0	0	0%
Psychiatric Health Service	3	3	1	7	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>100%</b>
	43%	43%	14%	100%	

Figure 4: Types of Service

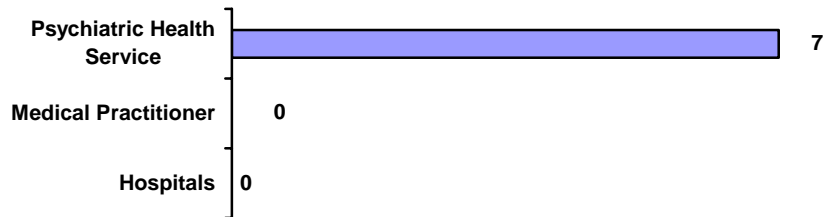
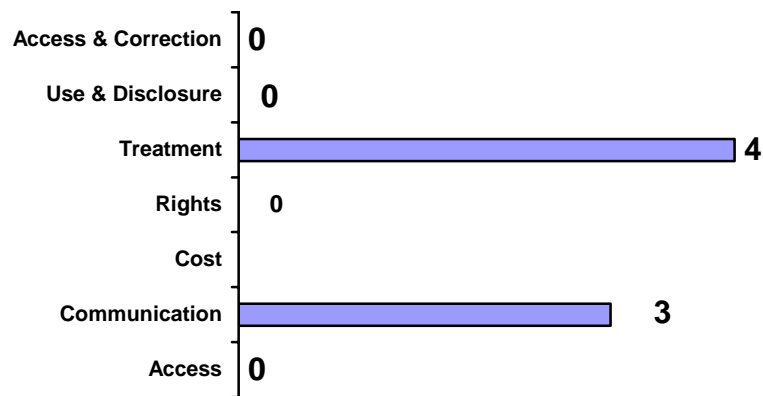


Figure 5: Issues in Psychiatric Complaints



There were 7 complaints about psychiatric services this quarter and they were all against Psychiatric Health services.

## **Koories, Know Your Rights**

This quarter involved numerous Outreach activities for the Aboriginal Liaison Officer, resulting in a number of enquiries and some complaints.

### **Festivals**

The ALO attended and participated in Crocfest in Shepparton in October as part of the Koories Know Your Rights initiative with a number of other agencies. Crocfest is an annual event for indigenous students across the country with a focus on promoting health, education and self-development amongst students. There were over 2400 students in attendance.

Information on the OHSC's services was distributed and enquiries also taken at the following events:

- VAYSAR Football & Netball Carnival – Shepparton (October)
- Various indigenous agencies liaised and consulted with for outreach activities in the Albury-Wodonga region, including Albury Wodonga Aboriginal Health Service and Mungabareena Aboriginal Corporation (November).
- 2007 Yan Yean Gathering - Thornbury (December)
- ATSI Family Day, Kangan Batman TAFE, Broadmeadows (December)

### **Health Information Privacy Training**

A health information privacy session was conducted for all staff at the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service (VAHS) in December. Information was provided on storage and access to health records, use and disclosure, health privacy policies amongst other privacy issues in Aboriginal communities. All staff were given a copy of the OHSC publication "Health Privacy – It's Our Business. A Guide for people working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities in Victoria". Further targeted training will be provided to VAHS staff in the New Year.

### **Conferences**

Trauma Symposium – Injury in Indigenous Populations, Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (November)

### **Provision of information (ATSI)**

Table 18 - Complaints (ATSI)

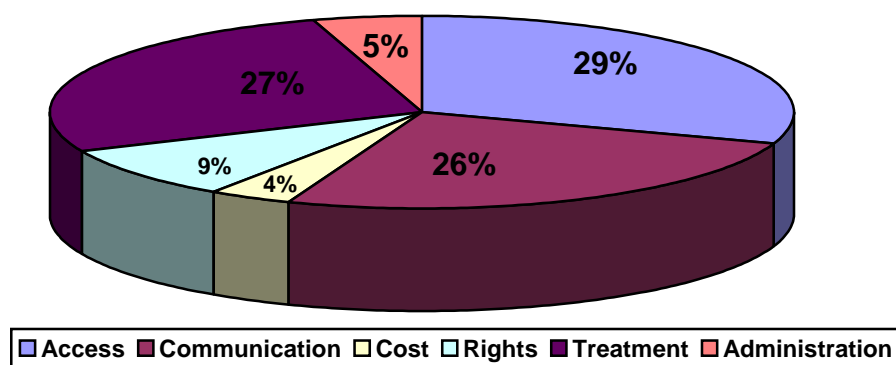
<b>HSC Complaints</b>		<b>HRA Complaints</b>	
Access	0	Access & Correction	0
Administration	0	Anonymity	0
Communication	1	Collection	0
Cost	0	Data Quality	0
Rights	1	Identifiers	0
Treatment	3	Info Available to another HSP	0
None	0	Openness	0
		Transborder data flows	0
		Transfer/Closure of HSP	0
		Use & Disclosure	0
	<b>5</b>		<b>0</b>

## HOSPITAL HEALTH COMPLAINTS DATA

During this quarter 21 hospitals/community centres provided complaints data, which showed they received 776 complaints. The major area of concern to people was access making up 29% (234), treatment 26% (209) and communication 27% (199).

### Issues in Complaints

Figure 6: Issues in HCIP Complaints (n=776)



### Primary Issue in Complaint by Seriousness Rating

Table 19: Issue by Seriousness

	Access	Admin	Communication	Cost	Rights	Treatment	Total	
Trivial	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Minor	170	27	155	17	53	119	541	70%
Routine	54	7	42	10	15	76	204	26%
Substantial	7	2	2	1	2	13	27	3%
Serious	3	0	0	0	0	1	4	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>776</b>	<b>100%</b>
	30%	5%	26%	4%	9%	26%	100%	

Most complaints (96%) were of a minor nature or considered routine.

Table 20: Site by Issue

	Access	Admin	Communication	Cost	Rights	Treatment	Total	
Admissions	43	2	3	0	1	0	49	6%
Aged Care	1	0	4	0	6	9	20	3%
Day Procedure Unit	3	0	3	0	0	0	6	1%
Emergency department	37	5	46	4	14	68	174	22%
Hospital grounds	2	4	2	3	2	2	15	2%
Intensive care unit	1	0	7	0	0	0	8	1%
Operating theatre	1	1	1	0	0	7	10	1%
Other	76	13	50	14	20	42	215	28%
Outpatient clinic	29	6	25	0	1	11	72	9%
Ward	41	5	58	7	26	70	207	27%
<b>Total</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>776</b>	<b>100%</b>
	29%	5%	26%	4%	9%	27%	100%	

Nearly 1/2 of all complaint happens in the wards or in other (not specified) location. Emergency department and the outpatient clinic accounted for another ¼ of all complaints.

Table 21: Outcome by Issue

	Access	Admin	Communication	Cost	Rights	Treatment	Total	
CHANGE IN POLICY	14	3	3	5	2	6	33	3%
LAPSED	41	6	33	2	19	33	134	12%
NOT UPHELD	18	4	8	4	10	6	50	5%
REFERRED	5	1	5	2	6	6	25	2%
REMEDIAL	14	1	21	1	5	21	63	6%
RESOLVED	257	40	223	24	38	222	804	72%
<b>Total</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>1109</b>	<b>100%</b>
	32%	5%	26%	3%	7%	27%	100%	

## 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. Holding joint training sessions with Privacy Victoria and also a 'train the trainer' session held at the OHSC office provided education. Ten presentations were provided in the October - December quarter.

Table 22: HRA Requests

Requests	
Published articles	0
Consultation in office	1
Presentation to a group	17
Response to question	0
Telephone inquiries	69
Written inquiries	21
Review policy documents	1

Table23: HRA Contacts

HRA Team Contacts	
HRA brochures sent out	621
HSC brochures sent out	1233
Access to records brochures sent out	587
No of posters sent	55
Amount of people attending presentations	300

## Website

The office website ([www.health.vic.gov.au/hsc](http://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 2007.

Table 24: Website Statistics

Month	Pages Viewed	Sessions	Visitors
Oct	6602	2075	1790
Nov	5615	1702	1462
Dec	3920	1802	1525
Average	5379	1860	1592
Totals	16137	5579	4777

## Staff Training and Development

During the quarter staff received training on the Charter of Human Rights, Statute of Limitations Post Tort Law reform and the Executive received refresher training in the PPD system.

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1 - Providers by Type and Specialities

Grouping	Type of organisation	Speciality	Sub speciality			
<b>Dentists in Private Practice</b>	19	Dental Surgery	0			
		Dentist	0			
<b>Hospitals</b>	89	Hospitals	89 <i>Dental</i>	0		
			<i>Private</i>	0		
			<i>Public</i>	89		
			<i>Not specified</i>	0		
			<i>Psychiatric</i>	0		
			<i>Specialist</i>	0		
<b>Medical Practitioners</b>	65	Medical Clinic	6 <i>24 Hour Clinic</i>	0		
			<i>Group Practice</i>	2		
			<i>Laser Eye Clinic</i>	0		
			<i>Mens Health</i>	3		
			<i>Not specified</i>	1		
			Medical Practitioner	59	<i>Anaesthetist</i>	1
	<i>Cardiologist</i>	0				
	<i>Dermatologist</i>	0				
	<i>Ear, Nose and Throat</i>	3				
	<i>Gastroenterologist</i>	1				
	<i>General Practitioner</i>	26				
	<i>Locum</i>	0				
	<i>Medico-legal Examiner</i>	0				
	<i>Neurologist</i>	1				
	<i>Not specified</i>	2				
	<i>Obstetrician/Gynaecologist</i>	5				
	<i>Oncologist</i>	2				
	<i>Ophthalmologist</i>	0				
	<i>Paediatrician</i>	0				
	<i>Psychiatrist</i>	5				
	<i>Radiologist</i>	0				
	<i>Rehabilitation medicine</i>	0				
	<i>Respiratory Medicine</i>	0				
	<i>Rheumatologist</i>	0				
	<i>Urologist</i>	0				
	<i>Surgeon</i>	9				
					General	1
					Neurological	0
					Not specified	3
			Orthopaedic	0		
			Plastic	3		
		Vascular	2			
<b>Not specified</b>	19					

Remaining Providers	52		
Age Care	0		
Aboriginal Health	0		
Alcohol & Drug Service	0		
Allied Health	1		
Alternative therapist	1	Acupuncture	0
		Masseur	0
		Magnetic therapy	0
		Naturopath	1
		Other	0
Ambulance Service	4		
Audiologist	0		
Beauticians/ laser therapists	1		
Beauty Therapy Clinic	3		
Chiropractic Service	1		
Community Health Centre	2		
Complementary Health	0		
Corrections Health	12	Not specified	0
		Private	12
		Public	0
Counsellor	1		
Dental Prosthetist	0		
Diagnostic Service	8	Diagnostic Imaging	4
		Not specified	1
		Pathology	3
Dep't of Human Services	2		
Education	0		
Health/Insurance	0		
Infant Welfare Centre	0		
Law Firms	0		
Locum Service	0		
Not a health service provider (individual)	0		
Not a health service provider (organisation)	1	Educational institution	0
		Employer	0
		Govt Dept/Agency	0
		Not specified	1
		Other	0
Nurse	0		
Nursing Home	0	Not specified	0
		Private	0
Nursing service	0		
Occupational therapist	0		
Optical dispenser	3		
Optometrist	0		
Osteopath	0		
Pharmaceutical supplier	1		
Pharmacist	1		
Podiatrist	1		
Podiatry Service	0		
Police	0		
Psychiatric Health Service	7		
Psychologist	2		
Radiographer	0		
Rehabilitation Service	0		
Statutory Authority	0		
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>244</b>		

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