

## **Supplementary material for**

### **Profile of the most common complaints for five health professions in Australia**

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**Table S1.** Classification of the types and categories of complaints across the three healthcare complaint authorities.

Complaint category	Type of complaints		
	AHPRA	HPCA	HCCC
Behaviour	Aggressive behaviour	Aggressive behaviour	
	Rough, or painful examination, or treatment	Rough, or painful examination, or treatment	Rough and painful treatment
	Threats, bullying, harassment, reprisals, or intimidation	Threats, bullying, harassment, reprisals, or intimidation	
Billing	Inappropriate fees, or billing practices	Inappropriate fees, or billing practices	Billing practices
	Over-charging	Over-charging	Cost of treatment
Boundary Violation	Inappropriate sexual comments	Inappropriate sexual comments	} Sexual misconduct
	Inappropriate sexual contact	Inappropriate sexual contact	
	Inappropriate sexual relationship	Inappropriate sexual relationship	
	Inappropriate use of social media	Inappropriate use of social media	
	Other inappropriate relationship (non-sexual)	Other inappropriate relationship (non-sexual)	Boundary violation
Clinical Care	Delayed, or inadequate, or inappropriate referral	Delayed, or inadequate, or inappropriate referral	No/inappropriate referral
	Inadequate, or inappropriate follow up, or review	Inadequate, or inappropriate follow up, or review	
	Inadequate, or inappropriate history, or examination	Inadequate, or inappropriate history, or examination	Inadequate/inappropriate consultation
	Inadequate, or inappropriate monitoring	Inadequate, or inappropriate monitoring	
	Inadequate, or inappropriate procedure	Inadequate, or inappropriate procedure	
	Inadequate, or inappropriate testing, or investigation	Inadequate, or inappropriate testing, or investigation	
	Inadequate, or inappropriate treatment	Inadequate, or inappropriate treatment	Inadequate treatment
			Wrong/inappropriate treatment
	Inappropriate admission (e.g. mental health grounds)	Inappropriate admission (e.g. mental health grounds)	Involuntary admission, or treatment
Inappropriate delay in care	Inappropriate delay in care	Delay in treatment	

	<p>Missed, incorrect, or delayed diagnosis</p> <p>Refusal to assist, or attend, or admit</p> <p>Unnecessary treatment/over-servicing</p> <p>Other clinical care issue</p> <p>Failure to ensure physical privacy</p> <p>Competence</p> <p>Unexpected treatment outcome/complication</p>	<p>Missed, incorrect, or delayed diagnosis</p> <p>Refusal to assist, or attend, or admit</p> <p>Unnecessary treatment/over-servicing</p> <p>Other clinical care issue</p> <p>Failure to ensure physical privacy</p> <p>Incompetent/unskillful treatment</p>	<p>Service availability</p> <p>Waiting lists</p> <p>Diagnosis</p> <p>Refusal to admit, or treat</p> <p>Excessive treatment</p> <p>Competence</p> <p>Unexpected treatment outcome/complication</p> <p>Discharge/transfer arrangements (Delay)</p> <p>Discharge/transfer arrangements (Inadequate discharge)</p> <p>Discharge/transfer arrangements (Mode of transport)</p> <p>Inadequate care</p> <p>Inadequate prosthetic equipment</p> <p>Withdrawal of treatment</p>
	<p>Inappropriate discharge, or transfer</p>	<p>Inappropriate discharge, or transfer</p>	
Communication	<p>Disrespectful manner</p> <p>Failure to accommodate cultural needs</p> <p>Failure to communicate openly, honestly and effectively</p> <p>Failure to record/convey/respond to messages</p> <p>Insensitive, or inappropriate comments (not sexual)</p>	<p>Disrespectful manner</p> <p>Failure to accommodate cultural needs</p> <p>Failure to communicate openly, honestly and effectively</p> <p>Failure to record/convey/respond to messages</p> <p>Insensitive, or inappropriate comments (not sexual)</p>	<p>Attitude/manner</p> <p>Incorrect/misleading information provide</p> <p>Inadequate information provided</p> <p>Special needs not accommodated</p>

Confidentiality	Inappropriate collection, or use of patient information Inappropriate disclosure of patient information (includes inadvertent disclosure of information)	Inappropriate collection, or use of patient information Inappropriate disclosure of patient information (includes inadvertent disclosure of information)	Inappropriate disclosure of information
Conflict of Interest	Failure to disclose, or properly manage a conflict of interest	Failure to disclose, or properly manage a conflict of interest	
Discrimination	Discrimination	Discrimination	Discriminatory conduct
Documentation	Health record - delay, or failure to transfer Health record - inadequate, or inaccurate, or misleading Health record – inappropriate maintenance, or disposal Health report – delay, or failure to provide Health report - inadequate, or inaccurate, or misleading Medical Certificate - inaccurate, backdated, invalid, or improper	Health record - delay, or failure to transfer Health record - inadequate, or inaccurate Health Record - misleading Health record – inappropriate maintenance, or disposal Health report – delay, or failure to provide Health Report - inadequate, or inaccurate Health Report - misleading Medical Certificate - inaccurate, backdated, invalid, or improper	Access to/transfer of records Refusal to provide report/certificate Timeliness of report/certificate Accuracy of report/certificate Record keeping Records management Report written with inadequate, or no consultation Cost of report/certificate

Health Impairment	Misuse, abuse, or addiction – Alcohol Misuse, abuse, or addiction – Drugs (including prescription, or recreational, self-prescribing/self-administration) Cognitive impairment Mental illness Physical impairment	Misuse, abuse, or addiction – Alcohol Misuse, abuse, or addiction – Drugs (including prescription, or recreational, self-prescribing/self-administration) Cognitive impairment Mental illness Physical impairment Alcohol & drug misuse, abuse, or addiction Mental illness & alcohol misuse, abuse, or addiction Mental illness & drug & alcohol issues Mental illness & drug misuse, abuse, or addiction	Impairment
Infection/Hygiene	Breach of infection control procedure, or standards	Breach of infection control procedure, or standards	Infection control
Informed Consent	Coercion to obtain consent Failure to assess patient’s capacity to consent Failure to inform re financial implications Failure to provide adequate, or accurate information (includes treatment/condition/options/timeframes/risks) Lack of consent	Coercion to obtain consent Failure to assess patient’s capacity to consent Failure to inform re financial implications Failure to provide adequate, or accurate information (includes treatment/condition/options/timeframes/risks) Lack of consent	Financial consent Consent not obtained, or inadequate Involuntary admission, or treatment Uninformed consent
Medico-legal conduct	Breach of expert witness duties (e.g. biased evidence)	Breach of expert witness duties (e.g. biased evidence)	

	Delayed, or inadequate, or inappropriate medico-legal assessment	Delayed, or inadequate, or inaccurate medico-legal assessment	
National Law Breach	<p>Breach of a relevant registration standard/endorsement</p> <p>Breach of condition/undertaking</p> <p>Providing care beyond scope of practice</p> <p>Failure to give notice of relevant event</p>	<p>Breach of a relevant registration standard/endorsement</p> <p>Breach of condition/undertaking</p> <p>Providing care beyond scope of practice</p>	<p>Breach of condition</p> <p>Illegal practice</p>
National Law Offence	<p>Advertising breach</p> <p>Directing, or inciting unprofessional conduct/professional misconduct</p> <p>Registration obtained using false, or misleading information</p> <p>Unauthorised claim to registration/division/specialist registration/speciality – self, or other</p> <p>Use of protected title(s), or specialist title(s)</p>	<p>Advertising breach</p> <p>Directing, or inciting unprofessional conduct/professional misconduct</p> <p>Registration obtained using false, or misleading information</p> <p>Unauthorised claim to registration/division/specialist registration/speciality – self, or other</p> <p>Use of protected title(s), or specialist title(s)</p>	<p>Misrepresentation of qualifications</p> <p>Annual declaration not lodged/incomplete</p>
Offence	<p>Dishonesty offence (includes fraud, theft, falsification of patient record etc)</p> <p>Drugs and poisons offence</p> <p>Medicare offence</p> <p>Sexual offence</p> <p>Violence/Physical Assault</p> <p>Other offence</p>	<p>Dishonesty offence (includes fraud, theft, falsification of patient record etc)</p> <p>Drugs and poisons offence</p> <p>Medicare offence</p> <p>Sexual offence</p> <p>Violence/Physical Assault</p> <p>Other offence</p>	<p>Financial fraud</p> <p>Scientific fraud</p> <p>Assault</p>

Medication	Inaccurate transcription (includes of written, or phone, order)	Inaccurate transcription (includes of written, or phone, order)	
	Inadequate counselling/information about medication (includes lack of information, or insufficient information)	Inadequate counselling/information about medication (includes lack of information, or insufficient information)	
	Inadequate records	Inadequate records	
	Inappropriate administration	Inappropriate administration	Administering medication
	Inappropriate, unlawful, or inaccurate dispensing	Inappropriate dispensing	Dispensing medication
		Unlawful dispensing	
		Inaccurate dispensing	
	Inappropriate, unlawful, or inaccurate prescribing	Inappropriate prescribing	Prescribing medication
		Unlawful prescribing	
		Inaccurate prescribing	
	Refusal to prescribe, or dispense		
	Unauthorised access to medications		
	Inappropriate supply		
	Inadequate storage, or security	Supply/security/storage of medication	
		Refusal to assist, or attend, or admit	
Research/Teaching/Assessment	Conducting research in an unethical manner, or not within approval granted	Conducting research in an unethical manner, or not within approval granted	
	Inaccurate, or misleading reporting of research findings	Inaccurate, or misleading reporting of research findings	
	Inadequate clinical teaching, or assessment	Inadequate clinical teaching, or assessment	
Response to Adverse Event	Failure to adequately respond to adverse event	Failure to adequately respond to adverse event	
	Failure to disclose adverse event	Failure to disclose adverse event	
	Inadequate complaints process		

Teamwork/Supervision	Inadequate co-ordination of care	Inadequate co-ordination of care	Coordination of treatment/results follow
Teamwork/Collaboration (NSW)	Failure to provide adequate clinical supervision, or oversight Other deficiencies in teamwork, or collaboration	Failure to provide adequate clinical supervision, or oversight Other deficiencies in teamwork, or collaboration	
Other	Other issues	Other issues	
Access			Access to facility Access to subsidies
Environment/management of facilities			Administrative processes Cleanliness/hygiene of facility Physical environment of facility Statutory obligations/accreditation stan
Grievance processes			Inadequate/no response to complaint Information about complaints procedures Reprisal/retaliation as result of complaint



**Table S2.** Frequency and relative frequency of each type of complaint by profession

Category	Type	Overall		Medicine		Dentistry		Nursing/Midwifery		Pharmacy		Psychology	
		n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)
Behaviour	Aggressive behaviour	189	(1.6)	79	(1.2)	9	(0.7)	83	(3.4)	6	(1.0)	12	(1.8)
	Rough, or painful examination, or treatment	79	(0.7)	41	(0.6)	12	(0.9)	23	(1)			3	(0.4)
	Threats, bullying, harassment, reprisal	239	(2.0)	96	(1.4)	11	(0.8)	101	(4.2)	5	(0.8)	26	(3.8)
Billing	Inappropriate fees, or billing practices	213	(1.8)	121	(1.8)	70	(5.1)			5	(0.8)	17	(2.5)
	Over-charging	60	(0.5)	35	(0.5)	16	(1.2)			6	(1)	3	(0.4)
Boundary Crossing	Inappropriate sexual comments	49	(0.4)	25	(0.4)	6	(0.4)	10	(0.4)	1	(0.2)	7	(1)
	Inappropriate sexual contact	192	(1.6)	152	(2.2)	6	(0.4)	26	(1.1)	2	(0.3)	6	(0.9)
	Inappropriate sexual relationship	107	(0.9)	56	(0.8)			21	(0.9)			30	(4.4)
	Inappropriate use of social media	21	(0.2)	6	(0.1)	2	(0.1)	12	(0.5)			1	(0.1)
	Other inappropriate relationship (non-sexual)	95	(0.8)	34	(0.5)			23	(1)	2	(0.3)	36	(5.3)
	Other issue	1	(<0.1)	1	(<0.1)								
Clinical Care	Delayed, or inadequate, or inappropriate referral	102	(0.9)	75	(1.1)	4	(0.3)	19	(0.8)			4	(0.6)
	Failure to conduct an adequate examination	1	(<0.1)	1	(<0.1)								
	Failure to ensure physical privacy	9	(0.1)	8	(0.1)							1	(0.1)
	Inadequate, or inappropriate follow up, or review	190	(1.6)	161	(2.4)	19	(1.4)	6	(0.2)	1	(0.2)	3	(0.4)
	Inadequate, or inappropriate history, or examination	220	(1.8)	187	(2.7)	12	(0.9)	16	(0.7)			5	(0.7)
	Inadequate, or inappropriate monitoring	208	(1.7)	99	(1.4)	7	(0.5)	100	(4.1)			2	(0.3)
	Inadequate, or inappropriate procedure	599	(5.0)	448	(6.6)	93	(6.8)	54	(2.2)	3	(0.5)	1	(0.1)
	Inadequate, or inappropriate testing, or investigation	330	(2.8)	310	(4.5)	4	(0.3)	8	(0.3)			8	(1.2)

	Inadequate, or inappropriate treatment	2379	(20)	1237	(18.1)	739	(54.1)	322	(13.3)	6	(1.0)	75	(11.1)
	Inappropriate admission	9	(0.1)	7	(0.1)			2	(0.1)				
	Inappropriate delay in care	131	(1.1)	86	(1.3)	15	(1.1)	27	(1.1)			3	(0.4)
	Inappropriate discharge, or transfer	53	(0.4)	41	(0.6)	3	(0.2)	8	(0.3)			1	(0.1)
	Incompetent/unskillful treatment	2	(<0.1)	1	(<0.1)			1	(<0.1)				
	Missed, incorrect, or delayed diagnosis	470	(3.9)	428	(6.3)	17	(1.2)	10	(0.4)	1	(0.2)	14	(2.1)
	Other clinical care issue	219	(1.8)	134	(2)	22	(1.6)	55	(2.3)	2	(0.3)	6	(0.9)
	Refusal to assist, or attend, or admit	179	(1.5)	143	(2.1)	11	(0.8)	9	(0.4)	9	(1.4)	7	(1.0)
	Unexpected treatment outcome/complications	1	(0)	1	(<0.1)								
	Unnecessary treatment/over servicing	64	(0.5)	39	(0.6)	23	(1.7)	1	(<0.1)	1	(0.2)		
Communication	Disrespectful manner	329	(2.8)	267	(3.9)	9	(0.7)	26	(1.1)	14	(2.2)	13	(1.9)
	Failure to accommodate cultural needs	9	(0.1)	7	(0.1)			1	(<0.1)	1	(0.2)		
	Failure to communicate openly, honestly and effectively	320	(2.7)	234	(3.4)	31	(2.3)	17	(0.7)	9	(1.4)	29	(4.3)
	Failure to record/convey/respond to messages	69	(0.6)	50	(0.7)	4	(0.3)	5	(0.2)	1	(0.2)	9	(1.3)
	Insensitive, or inappropriate comments (not sexual)	199	(1.7)	153	(2.2)	6	(0.4)	14	(0.6)	7	(1.1)	19	(2.8)
Confidentiality	Inappropriate collection, or use of patient information	81	(0.7)	28	(0.4)	1	(0.1)	35	(1.4)	6	(1)	11	(1.6)
	Inappropriate disclosure of patient information	194	(1.6)	104	(1.5)	1	(0.1)	37	(1.5)	8	(1.3)	44	(6.5)
Conflict of Interest	Discrimination	1	(0)									1	(0.1)
	Failure to disclose, or properly manage a conflict of interest	13	(0.1)	8	(0.1)			1	(<0.1)			4	(0.6)
Discrimination	Discrimination	29	(0.2)	8	(0.1)			1	(<0.1)	1	(0.2)	19	(2.8)
	Not Applicable	18	(0.2)	18	(0.3)								
Documentation	Health record - delay, or failure to transfer	81	(0.7)	66	(1.0)	7	(0.5)			2	(0.3)	6	(0.9)
	Health record - inadequate, inaccurate, or misleading	190	(1.6)	115	(1.7)	12	(0.9)	32	(1.3)			31	(4.6)

	Health record - inappropriate maintenance	19	(0.2)	7	(0.1)			2	(0.1)	7	(1.1)	3	(0.4)
	Health report - delay, or failure to provide	62	(0.5)	52	(0.8)	2	(0.1)					8	(1.2)
	Health report - inadequate, inaccurate, or misleading	124	(1.0)	77	(1.1)			12	(0.5)			35	(5.2)
	Medical Certificate - inaccurate, backdated, invalid	51	(0.4)	47	(0.7)			4	(0.2)				
Health Impairment	Cognitive impairment	90	(0.8)	47	(0.7)	2	(0.1)	32	(1.3)	2	(0.3)	7	(1)
	Impairment	1	(<0.1)					1	(<0.1)				
	Inappropriate, unlawful, or inaccurate prescribing	1	(<0.1)	1	(<0.1)								
	Mental illness	374	(3.1)	121	(1.8)	5	(0.4)	206	(8.5)	17	(2.7)	25	(3.7)
	Misuse, abuse, or addiction - Alcohol	159	(1.3)	41	(0.6)	1	(0.1)	111	(4.6)	3	(0.5)	3	(0.4)
	Misuse, abuse, or addiction - Drugs	299	(2.5)	102	(1.5)	4	(0.3)	171	(7.1)	16	(2.6)	6	(0.9)
	Physical impairment	58	(0.5)	16	(0.2)	3	(0.2)	36	(1.5)	2	(0.3)	1	(0.1)
Hygiene/Infection Control	Breach of infection control procedure, or standards	73	(0.6)	37	(0.5)	31	(2.3)	4	(0.2)	1	(0.2)		
Informed Consent	Coercion to obtain consent	1	(<0.1)	1	(<0.1)								
	Consent not obtained, or inadequate	1	(<0.1)					1	(<0.1)				
	Failure to assess patient's capacity to consent	7	(0.1)	4	(0.1)	2	(0.1)	1	(<0.1)				
	Failure to inform re financial implications	12	(0.1)	10	(0.1)	2	(0.1)						
	Failure to provide adequate, or accurate information	43	(0.4)	30	(0.4)	12	(0.9)					1	(0.1)
	Lack of consent	91	(0.8)	63	(0.9)	16	(1.2)	2	(0.1)			10	(1.5)
Medico-legal conduct	Breach of expert witness duties	8	(0.1)	6	(0.1)							2	(0.3)
	Delayed, or inadequate, or inappropriate medico-legal assessment	107	(0.9)	95	(1.4)	1	(0.1)					11	(1.6)
National Law Breach	Breach of a relevant registration standard/endorsement	63	(0.5)	21	(0.3)	2	(0.1)	27	(1.1)	6	(1)	7	(1.0)
	Breach of condition/undertaking	118	(1.0)	66	(1.0)	13	(1.0)	32	(1.3)	1	(0.2)	6	(0.9)

	Failure to give notice of relevant event	10	(0.1)	4	(0.1)			5	(0.2)			1	(0.1)
	Providing care beyond scope of practice	72	(0.6)	19	(0.3)	20	(1.5)	26	(1.1)			7	(1.0)
	Registration obtained using false, or misleading information	7	(0.1)	3	(<0.1)	1	(0.1)	3	(0.1)				
National Law Offence	Advertising breach	72	(0.6)	22	(0.3)	29	(2.1)	3	(0.1)	9	(1.4)	9	(1.3)
	Directing, or inciting unprofessional conduct/professional misconduct	24	(0.2)	15	(0.2)	2	(0.1)	4	(0.2)	2	(0.3)	1	(0.1)
	Other schedule offences	7	(0.1)							6	(1)	1	(0.1)
	Registration obtained using false, or misleading information	49	(0.4)	27	(0.4)	1	(0.1)	18	(0.7)	3	(0.5)		
	Unauthorised claim to registration/division/specialist registration/speciality	29	(0.2)	11	(0.2)	4	(0.3)	10	(0.4)			4	(0.6)
	Use of protected title(s), or specialist title(s)	24	(0.2)	7	(0.1)	1	(0.1)	11	(0.5)			5	(0.7)
Offence	Dishonesty offence	92	(0.8)	27	(0.4)	4	(0.3)	51	(2.1)	5	(0.8)	5	(0.7)
	Drugs and poisons offence	77	(0.6)	16	(0.2)	2	(0.1)	32	(1.3)	27	(4.3)		
	Medicare offence	13	(0.1)	4	(0.1)	1	(0.1)			7	(1.1)	1	(0.1)
	Other offence	80	(0.7)	31	(0.5)	1	(0.1)	37	(1.5)	7	(1.1)	4	(0.6)
	Sexual offence	43	(0.4)	24	(0.4)	3	(0.2)	15	(0.6)			1	(0.1)
	Violence/Physical Assault	31	(0.3)	7	(0.1)			21	(0.9)	1	(0.2)	2	(0.3)
Other	Financial fraud	1	(<0.1)	1	(<0.1)								
	Other issue	213	(1.8)	92	(1.3)	11	(0.8)	64	(2.7)	15	(2.4)	31	(4.6)
Medication	Inaccurate transcription	12	(0.1)	4	(0.1)	1	(0.1)	1	(<0.1)	6	(1)		
	Inadequate counselling/information about medication	40	(0.3)	23	(0.3)			3	(0.1)	14	(2.2)		
	Inadequate records (medication)	13	(0.1)	1	(<0.1)			7	(0.3)	5	(0.8)		
	Inadequate storage, or security (medication)	17	(0.1)	4	(0.1)			8	(0.3)	5	(0.8)		
	Inappropriate administration (medication)	249	(2.1)	41	(0.6)	1	(0.1)	187	(7.7)	20	(3.2)		
	Inappropriate supply (medication)	69	(0.6)	28	(0.4)	1	(0.1)	12	(0.5)	28	(4.5)		

	Inappropriate, unlawful, or inaccurate dispensing (medication)	331	(2·8)	12	(0·2)			36	(1·5)	283	(45·2)		
	Inappropriate, unlawful, or inaccurate prescribing	410	(3·4)	376	(5·5)	9	(0·7)	18	(0·7)	3	(0·5)	4	(0·6)
	Refusal to prescribe, or dispense (medication)	58	(0·5)	40	(0·6)					18	(2·9)		
	Unauthorised access to medications	52	(0·4)	5	(0·1)			46	(1·9)	1	(0·2)		
Research/Teaching/Assessment	Conducting research in an unethical manner, or not within approval granted	5	(<0·1)	5	(0·1)								
	Inaccurate, or misleading reporting of research findings	4	(<0·1)	1	(<0·1)			1	(<0·1)			2	(0·3)
	Inadequate clinical teaching, or assessment	10	(0·1)	4	(0·1)			2	(0·1)			4	(0·6)
Response to Adverse Event	Failure to adequately respond to adverse event	16	(0·1)	12	(0·2)	1	(0·1)	3	(0·1)				
	Failure to disclose adverse event	6	(0·1)	3	(<0·1)			2	(0·1)			1	(0·1)
	Inadequate complaints process	2	(<0·1)	1	(<0·1)			1	(<0·1)				
Teamwork	Failure to provide adequate clinical supervision, or oversight	30	(0·3)	4	(0·1)	2	(0·1)	13	(0·5)	6	(·01)	5	(0·7)
	Inadequate co-ordination of care	16	(0·1)	3	(<0·1)	1	(0·1)	8	(0·3)	1	(0·2)	3	(0·4)
	Other deficiencies in teamwork, or collaboration	33	(0·3)	8	(0·1)	1	(0·1)	19	(0·8)			5	(0·7)
	Other deficiencies in teamwork, or collaboration	33	(0·3)	8	(0·1)	1	(0·1)	19	(0·8)			5	(0·7)

**Table S3.** Rankings for type of complaint within each profession. A ranking of 1 indicates the most common type of complaint, a ranking of 2 is the second most common type of complaint and so on.

Category	Type	Overall	Medicine	Dentistry	Nursing/Midwifery	Pharmacy	Psychology
Behaviour	Aggressive behaviour	23	24	25	8	19	16
	Rough, or painful examination, or treatment	39	36	18	29		51
	Threats, bullying, harassment, reprisal	12	20	21	6	28	9
Billing	Inappropriate fees, or billing practices	15	14	3		29	13
	Over-charging	49	42	12		24	50
Boundary Crossing	Inappropriate sexual comments	55	50	29	46	54	28
	Inappropriate sexual contact	20	11	30	25	41	32
	Inappropriate sexual relationship	30	30		31		7
	Inappropriate use of social media	67	74	46	41		67
	Other inappropriate relationship (non-sexual)	32	43		28	38	3
	Other issue	93	95				
Clinical Care	Delayed, or inadequate, or inappropriate referral	31	26	36	32		41
	Failure to conduct an adequate examination	98	90				
	Failure to ensure physical privacy	81	66				64
	Inadequate, or inappropriate follow up, or review	21	9	10	54	52	48
	Inadequate, or inappropriate history, or examination	13	8	19	37		34
	Inadequate, or inappropriate monitoring	17	19	26	7		55
	Inadequate, or inappropriate procedure	2	2	2	11	33	63
	Inadequate, or inappropriate testing, or investigation	7	5	33	51		22

	Inadequate, or inappropriate treatment	1	1	1	1	26	1
	Inappropriate admission	82	70		68		
	Inappropriate delay in care	26	23	14	23		45
	Inappropriate discharge, or transfer	52	38	38	49		59
	Incompetent/unskillful treatment	90	87		78		
	Missed, incorrect, or delayed diagnosis	3	3	11	47	45	14
	Other clinical care issue	14	13	8	10	42	31
	Refusal to assist, or attend, or admit	24	12	20	48	13	24
	Unexpected treatment outcome/complications	99	88				
	Unnecessary treatment/over servicing	46	40	7	74	48	
Communication	Disrespectful manner	8	6	23	27	9	15
	Failure to accommodate cultural needs	80	69		75	51	
	Failure to communicate openly, honestly, & effectively	9	7	5	36	12	8
	Failure to record/convey/respond to messages	44	32	32	56	44	21
	Insensitive, or inappropriate comments (not sexual)	18	10	28	39	15	11
Confidentiality	Inappropriate collection, or use of patient information	36	46	53	18	22	17
	Inappropriate disclosure of patient information	19	17	63	15	14	2
Conflict of Interest	Discrimination	96					60
	Failure to disclose, or properly manage a conflict of interest	75	64		71		40
Discrimination	Discrimination	64	67		77	46	12
	Not Applicable	69	56				
Documentation	Health record - delay, or failure to transfer	37	27	27		39	29
	Health record - inadequate, inaccurate, or misleading	22	16	17	22		5
	Health record - inappropriate maintenance	68	72		64	16	49

	Health report - delay, or failure to provide	48	31	42			23
	Health report - inadequate, inaccurate, or misleading	27	25		42		4
	Medical Certificate - inaccurate, backdated, invalid	54	34		59		
Health Impairment	Cognitive impairment	35	33	48	20	37	26
	Impairment	92			72		
	Inappropriate, unlawful, or inaccurate prescribing	94	89				
	Mental illness	5	15	31	2	6	10
	Misuse, abuse, or addiction - Alcohol	25	35	58	5	32	46
	Misuse, abuse, or addiction - Drugs	10	18	35	4	7	33
	Physical impairment	51	57	39	17	36	56
Hygiene/Infection Control	Breach of infection control procedure, or standards	41	41	4	58	50	
Informed Consent	Coercion to obtain consent	100	91				
	Consent not obtained, or inadequate	95			79		
	Failure to assess patient's capacity to consent	84	79	47	76		
	Failure to inform re financial implications	77	63	49			
	Failure to provide adequate, or accurate information	57	45	16			61
	Lack of consent	34	29	13	67		19
Medico-legal conduct	Breach of expert witness duties	83	73				53
	Delayed, or inadequate, or inappropriate medico-legal assessment	29	21	56			18
National Law Breach	Breach of a relevant registration standard/endorsement	47	54	45	24	25	27
	Breach of condition/undertaking	28	28	15	21	47	30
	Failure to give notice of relevant event	78	77		55		57
	Providing care beyond scope of practice	42	55	9	26		25
	Registration obtained using false, or misleading information	85	86	60	62		



National Law Offence	Advertising breach	43	53	6	63	11	20
	Directing, or inciting unprofessional conduct/professional misconduct	65	59	44	57	40	58
	Other schedule offences	86				23	65
	Registration obtained using false, or misleading information	56	49	54	34	35	
	Unauthorised claim to registration/division/specialist registration/speciality	63	62	37	45		42
	Use of protected title(s), or specialist title(s)	66	68	59	44		37
	Offence	Dishonesty offence	33	48	34	12	31
Drugs and poisons offence		40	58	43	19	3	
Medicare offence		74	81	62		17	68
Other offence		38	44	61	14	18	39
Sexual offence		58	51	40	38		62
Violence/Physical Assault		61	71		30	53	54
Other	Financial fraud	97	93				
	Other issue	16	22	22	9	8	6
Medication	Inaccurate transcription	76	78	51	70	20	
	Inadequate counselling/information about medication	59	52		61	10	
	Inadequate records (medication)	73	92		53	27	
	Inadequate storage, or security (medication)	70	82		52	30	
	Inappropriate administration (medication)	11	37	57	3	4	
	Inappropriate supply (medication)	45	47	52	43	2	
	Inappropriate, unlawful, or inaccurate dispensing (medication)	6	61		16	1	
	Inappropriate, unlawful, or inaccurate prescribing	4	4	24	35	34	44
	Refusal to prescribe, or dispense (medication)	50	39			5	

	Unauthorised access to medications	53	75		13	49	
Research/Teaching/Assessment	Conducting research in an unethical manner, or not within approval granted	88	76				
	Inaccurate, or misleading reporting of research findings	89	96		73		52
	Inadequate clinical teaching, or assessment	79	83		65		43
Response to Adverse Event	Failure to adequately respond to adverse event	72	60	64	60		
	Failure to disclose adverse event	87	84		66		66
	Inadequate complaints process	91	94		69		
Teamwork	Failure to provide adequate clinical supervision, or oversight	62	80	41	40	21	38
	Inadequate co-ordination of care	71	85	55	50	43	47
	Other deficiencies in teamwork, or collaboration	60	65	50	33		36
	Other deficiencies in teamwork, or collaboration	61	66	59	32		35

**Table S4.** Differences between age groups by complaint category

Category <sup>1</sup>	18-34		35-44		45-54		55-64		65+		Differences in proportion from 18–34 year olds				Adjusted relative difference from 18–34 year olds <sup>3</sup>				P-value
	N	(% <sup>2</sup> )	N	(% <sup>2</sup> )	N	(% <sup>2</sup> )	N	(% <sup>2</sup> )	N	(% <sup>2</sup> )	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	
Behaviour	42	(8.2)	98	(19)	162	(31.5)	148	(28.7)	65	(12.6)	10.8	23.3	20.5	4.4	1.29	1.58	1.59	1.30	0.045
Billing	22	(7.5)	58	(19.7)	94	(32)	85	(28.9)	35	(11.9)	12.2	24.5	21.4	4.4	1.23	1.53	1.66	1.02	0.08
Boundary Crossing	30	(6.4)	86	(18.4)	145	(31)	131	(28.1)	75	(16.1)	12.0	24.6	21.7	9.7	1.44	1.71	1.66	1.54	0.22
Clinical Care	512	(9.6)	1128	(21.2)	1584	(29.8)	1307	(24.6)	780	(14.7)	11.6	20.2	15.0	5.1	1.12	<b>1.20</b>	<b>1.13</b>	1.11	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
Communication	55	(5.8)	184	(19.4)	258	(27.2)	261	(27.5)	192	(20.2)	13.6	21.4	21.7	14.4	<b>1.73</b>	<b>1.86</b>	<b>2.24</b>	<b>2.76</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
Confidentiality	34	(12.3)	49	(17.7)	82	(29.6)	71	(25.6)	41	(14.8)	5.4	17.3	13.3	2.5	0.87	1.08	1.1	1.24	0.69
Documentation	31	(5.9)	87	(16.5)	147	(27.8)	138	(26.1)	125	(23.7)	10.6	21.9	20.2	17.8	1.49	<b>1.91</b>	<b>2.01</b>	<b>3.01</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
Health Impairment	190	(19.4)	284	(29)	255	(26)	175	(17.8)	77	(7.8)	9.6	6.6	-1.6	-11.6	0.93	<b>0.58</b>	<b>0.46</b>	<b>0.39</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
Informed Consent	18	(11.2)	41	(25.5)	32	(19.9)	45	(28)	25	(15.5)	14.3	8.7	16.8	4.3	1.10	0.64	0.93	0.81	0.24
Medication	261	(20.8)	264	(21.1)	263	(21)	287	(22.9)	179	(14.3)	0.3	0.2	2.1	-6.5	<b>0.56</b>	<b>0.42</b>	<b>0.54</b>	<b>0.59</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
Medico-legal conduct	1	(0.9)	6	(5.2)	39	(33.6)	38	(32.8)	32	(27.6)	4.3	32.7	31.9	26.7	3.00	<b>12.97</b>	<b>12.91</b>	<b>17.56</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
National Law Breach	30	(11.2)	58	(21.6)	80	(29.9)	70	(26.1)	30	(11.2)	10.4	18.7	14.9	0.0	1.02	0.97	0.99	0.77	0.85
National Law Offence	32	(15.7)	46	(22.5)	63	(30.9)	31	(15.2)	32	(15.7)	6.8	15.2	-0.5	0.0	0.76	0.78	0.42	0.84	0.018
Offence	64	(19.1)	93	(27.8)	85	(25.4)	78	(23.3)	15	(4.5)	8.7	6.3	4.2	-14.6	0.76	<b>0.50</b>	<b>0.50</b>	<b>0.19</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>

1. Excluded categories of Conflict of Interest, Discrimination, Hygiene/Infection Control, Research/Teaching/Assessment, Response to Adverse Events and Teamwork due to small numbers for these complaints and Other
2. Column percentages
3. Adjusted for age and region of birth. Shaded and in bold numbers denoted significant difference  $P < 0.01$