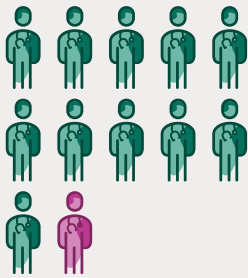


Psychiatry in Focus

This report brings together key data and practical case studies to provide insight into the risks, trends and opportunities shaping your field today. It is designed to help you benchmark your experience, strengthen decision-making and highlight actionable ideas that support safer, more confident practice.

Incidents & Claims Insights | 1 July 2023 — 30 June 2025

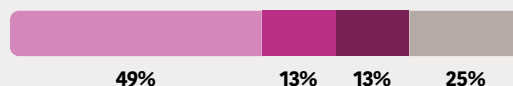


1 in 12

Psychiatry Members notified MDA National of a medico-legal case in 2025.

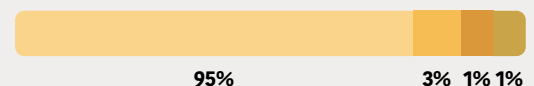
This is down from 1 in 10 in 2024.

Top 3 Incident Types



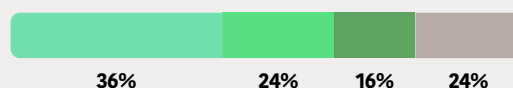
- Duty of Care
- Medication
- Legal
- Other

Top 3 Injury Types



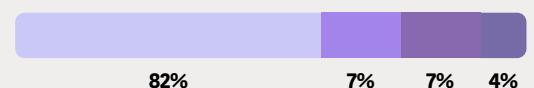
- Mental & Behavioural
- Cardiovascular
- Central Nervous System
- Immunological System

Top 3 Claim Types



- Medical Board Inquiry
- Coroner's Inquest/Report
- Complaint OHR/HSR
- Other

Top 3 Case Types



- Investigation
- Legal Costs
- Incident
- Claims

Key themes from MDA National case data



Coronial Cases

Psychiatrists care for complex, high-risk mental health needs, which correlate with reportable deaths (e.g. suicide).

- A well-prepared statement or report will outline to the Coroner your role in a patient's care.
- MDA National has the experience to assist doctors in writing a Coronial report and respond to a hospital's requests information, so call us as early as possible whenever you're unsure.
- We also strongly advise that you do not alter any records after a patient's death.



Boundary issues with patients

The care you deliver as a doctor can trigger an emotional response from a patient. Boundary issues can lead to significant professional consequences.

Keep your professional and personal life separate. This can include:

- Returning any gifts that may be inappropriate.
- Keeping your comments about personal political beliefs to yourself.
- Managing attempts by patients to contact their doctor through personal email or other social media accounts.

Keep a record of boundary-transgressing communication in a separate medico-legal file.

If you have any concerns, reach out to MDA National to discuss ending a therapeutic relationship, including:

- Informing the patient of your decision.
- Facilitating handover of clinical care.
- Forwarding relevant clinical information to the new treating doctor.

Case Scenario*

An MDA National Member was treating an adult with ADHD. The patient died unexpectedly, and their death was determined to be due to drug toxicity.

The Coroner's Court offered our Member the opportunity to respond to the draft findings before finalising their investigation.

The Coroner had some initial concerns with the Member's prescribing and intended to refer the matter to Ahpra.

- MDA National contacted the Coroner's Court on the Member's behalf to request a copy of the brief and assisted the Member in preparing a statement.
- MDA National engaged legal counsel to assist.
- An expert opinion was obtained which supported our Member's treatment.
- With assistance from MDA National the care provided by our Member was found by the Coroner's Court to be reasonable and appropriate for the patient.
- The referral to Ahpra was avoided.

Looking for more info?

MDA National provides a variety of resources to support you in areas such as consent, medical documentation and complaints. Explore the links below for direct access.

Case Studies & Articles

- [When the Coroner Calls](#)
- [Coronial matters involving hospital doctors](#)
- [The Lovelorn Patient](#)
- [Beware Boundary Violations](#)
- [Non-sexual boundaries](#)
- [Crossing the line with patient boundaries](#)
- [Ending Care](#)
- [Managing Patient Complaints](#)

Learning Activities

- [Reportable Deaths and Coronial Matters – Medico-legal series](#)
- [The challenging emotions of difficult news – E-learning](#)
- [Noteworthy: The how, what, where and why of medical documentation – E-learning](#)
- [A health practitioner guide to social media – Webinar](#)
- [Professional boundaries in healthcare](#)
- Check [MDA National LMS Catalogue](#) for more online and face to face workshops such as 'Practical solutions to patient boundaries'

Early notification ensures that tailored advice and support are available when you need it most. It also helps us prepare effectively should the matter progress.

Members have access to individualised advice and support and Member benefits. Non-members have limited access to our library of resources and education content.

Please contact advice@mdanational.com.au or call us on 1800 011 255 for more information. Members can access our [Member Online Services](#), [Support in Practice](#) or our [LMS](#) for information and education content.

Want more tailored information?

Scan QR code or visit mdanational.com.au/specialist/psychiatrists

