

September 2026 Parliament Sitting

Tuesday 29th September, 2026

Written Question:

258/2026 Hon. Premila Kumar to ask the Minister for Health and Medical Services:

Can the Minister inform Parliament on the complaints received by the Medical and Dental Secretariat, for each year from 2023 to date, including the following:

- (a) The total number of complaints received in each year and the number of complaints resolved, dismissed, withdrawn, referred, or otherwise concluded, with a breakdown of the outcome in each case;
- (b) The number of complaints currently pending, including the length of time each complaint has remained unresolved; and
- (c) The nature or categories of complaints received, including complaints relating to professional misconduct, negligence, malpractice, unethical conduct, breaches of professional standards, and any other grounds of complaint?

RESPONSE FROM THE MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND MEDICAL SERVICES

Madam Speaker / Mr. Speaker, I table the official response to the Written Question posed by the Hon. Member regarding the management of medical and dental complaints by the Medical and Dental Secretariat from 2023 to 2026.

The Secretariat operates under strict administrative and statutory procedures. When a complaint form is formally registered, the respondent is issued a 14-day statutory timeframe to submit a defense. Compiled files are then tabled before the Medical Professional Conduct Committee (MPCC) or Dental Professional Conduct Committee (DPCC), which convene every three months.

These committees dictate whether a case undergoes independent investigation, an informal disciplinary meeting, or a full formal tribunal hearing. Independent investigators are allocated a standard 14 consecutive days to finalize reports, though complex medical parameters occasionally necessitate extension parameters.

The comprehensive breakdown requested by the Hon. Member is detailed below:

(a) Total Complaints Received and Case Dispositions (2023–2026)

The statistics represent the case life cycles within the Secretariat. "Referred" cases denote matters officially advanced by the initial screening committee into formal disciplinary pathways. "Resolved" or "Concluded" designations capture finalized administrative or statutory closing determinations.

Table 1: Annual Breakdown of Medical Complaints

Year	Total Complaints Received	No. of Complaints Resolved	Dismissed	Withdrawn	Referred	Concluded
2023	4	1	0	0	3	1
2024	11	2	0	1	8	2
2025	11	0	0	0	11	0

2026 (to date)	7	0	0	0	7	0
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Table 2: Annual Breakdown of Dental Complaints

Year	Total Complaints Received	No. of Complaints Resolved	Dismissed	Withdrawn	Referred	Concluded
2023	3	1	0	1	2	1
2024	2	0	0	0	2	0
2025	1	0	0	0	1	0
2026 (to date)	4	0	0	0	4	0

(b) Pending Case Inventory and Procedural Status

Active monitoring, tracking, and continuous follow-ups are conducted by the Secretariat across all pending files to ensure professional compliance. The specific procedural status of unresolved matters stands as follows:

1. Medical Secretariat Pending Files

- **2023 Lodgements (3 Cases Pending):** Final investigation reports for two (2) of these long-standing matters are completed and compiled for deliberation at the next upcoming MPCC sitting. The third (3rd) case remains under active investigation.
- **2024 Lodgements (8 Cases Pending):** These files remain pending under active processing, with several currently nearing late-stage resolution and completion checks.
- **2025 Lodgements (10 Cases Pending):** Seven (7) files are undergoing formal investigator review; one (1) final investigation report is being finalized for immediate submission;

two (2) files have been referred back directly to the complainant via standard institutional notification.

- **2026 Lodgements (7 Cases Pending):** All seven cases were registered in the current calendar year. Three (3) remain under investigation; two (2) are actively scheduled for the next MPCC session; one (1) has been channeled to the Fiji College of General Practitioners (FCGP); and one (1) has been referred directly to the complainant.

2. Dental Secretariat Pending Files

- **2023 Lodgements (2 Cases Pending):** These matters remain unresolved since 2023, with administrative follow-ups actively ongoing.
- **2024 Lodgements (2 Cases Pending):** One (1) final investigation report is completed and formally listed for evaluation by the DPCC at its upcoming meeting on **09/10/2026**. The remaining one (1) case continues under active investigation.
- **2025 Lodgements (1 Case Pending):** This single matter is unresolved and remains designated under formal investigator review.
- **2026 Lodgements (4 Cases Pending):** Registered this year, one (1) file is marked for onward transit to the full Fiji Dental Council body. The remaining three (3) cases are compiled for deliberate review at the upcoming DPCC session scheduled for **09/10/2026**.

(c) Nature and Categories of Lodged Complaints

Complaints received by the Secretariat are coded by case typology to identify structural risks in clinical and ethical practice:

Table 3: Typology of Medical Complaints (2023–2026)

- **Sub-standard Care** (*Includes clinical negligence, misdiagnosis, and treatment delay*): **16 cases total** (2 in 2023; 4 in 2024; 7 in 2025; 3 in 2026).
- **Unprofessional Conduct** (*Includes breaches of patient confidentiality, alteration of clinical records, misleading advertisements, and fraud*): **13 cases total** (0 in 2023; 6 in 2024; 4 in 2025; 3 in 2026).
- **Unlicensed Provider** (*Aiding or abetting unlicensed practice*): **2 cases total** (1 in 2023; 0 in 2024; 0 in 2025; 1 in 2026).
- **Practitioner Impairment** (*Clinical compromise via chemical substance, alcohol, or mental/physical incapacitation*): **1 case total** (1 in 2023).
- **Sexual Misconduct**: **1 case total** (1 in 2024).
- **Office Practice** (*Failure to provision records or explicit patient abandonment*): **0 cases** logged.

Table 4: Typology of Dental Complaints (2023–2026)

- **Sub-standard Care** (*Includes operational dental negligence or delayed treatments*): **8 cases total** (2 in 2023; 2 in 2024; 1 in 2025; 3 in 2026).
- **Unprofessional Conduct**: **1 case total** (1 in 2023).
- **Sexual Misconduct**: **1 case total** (1 in 2026).
- **Unlicensed Provider, Practitioner Impairment, and Office Practice**: **0 cases** logged across all years.

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a) Medical Complaint – 2023 to 2026

Year	Total No. of Complaints Received	No. of Complaints Resolved	Dismissed	Withdrawn	Referred	Concluded
2023	4	1	0	0	3	1
2024	11	2	0	1	8	2
2025	11	0	0	0	11	0
2026	7	0	0	0	7	0

b)

Year	Pending	Length of time each complaint has remained unresolved
2023	3	Investigation report for the 2 cases will be deliberated in the next Medical Professional Conduct Committee (MPCC) meeting while the 3 rd case is for investigation. These are cases lodged in 2023. Follow up was conducted for these cases.
2024	8	The 8 cases have been pending from 2024 and some are nearing completion and resolved. The 8 cases lodged in 2024 with follow up being conducted.
2025	10	7 of these cases are for investigation, 1 investigation report to be submitted while 2 cases are referred to complainant for normal notification. The 10 cases lodged in 2025 with follow ups being conducted.
2026	7	3 cases are for investigation, 2 cases to be referred to the MPCC meeting, 1 to be referred to FCGP and 1 case to the complainant. All the 7 cases lodged this year. Continuous follow up being conducted.

c)

	Nature of Complaint					
Year	Sub-standard care (eg misdiagnosis, negligent treatment, delay in treatment, etc	Unlicensed Provider or aiding and/or abetting unlicensed practice	Sexual misconduct	Practitioner impairment (e. g. drug, alcohol, mental, physical)	Unprofessional conduct (e. g. breach of confidentiality, record alteration, misleading advertisement, fraud)	Office practice (e. g . failure to provide medical records to patient, patient abandonment)
2023	2	1	0	1	0	0
2024	4	0	1	0	6	0
2025	7	0	0	0	4	0
2026	3	1	0	0	3	0

a) Dental Complaint – 2023 to 2026

Year	Total No. of Complaints Received	No. of Complaints Resolved	Dismissed	Withdrawn	Referred	Concluded
2023	3	1	0	1	2	1
2024	2	0	0	0	2	0
2025	1	0	0	0	1	0
2026	4	0	0	0	4	0

b)

Year	Pending	Length of time each complaint has remained unresolved
2023	2	Unresolved from 2023 however continuous follow up was done
2024	2	Unresolved from 2024 with continuous follow up being done. Investigation report for 1 case to be referred to the DPCC meeting on 09/10/2026 and the other one for investigation.
2025	1	Unresolved from 2025 and has been referred for investigation

2026	4	Complaints lodged this year with 1 case to be referred to Fiji Dental Council while the other 3 to be elaborated in the Dental Professional Conduct Committee on 09/10/2026.
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c)

Nature of Complaint						
Year	Sub-standard care (eg misdiagnosis, negligent treatment, delay in treatment, etc	Unlicensed Provider or aiding and/or abetting unlicensed practice	Sexual misconduct	Practitioner impairment (e. g. drug, alcohol, mental, physical)	Unprofessional conduct (e. g. breach of confidentiality, record alteration, misleading advertisement, fraud)	Office practice (e. g. failure to provide medical records to patient, patient abandonment)
2023	2	0	0	0	1	0
2024	2	0	0	0	0	0
2025	1	0	0	0	0	0
2026	3	0	1	0	0	0

Process In Place

1. Complainant fill in the FMDS complaint form with all relevant documents and pay a fee of \$10;
2. Respondent to respond to the allegation from the complainant. The complaint form and other documents from the complainant is sent to the respondent so that he/she responds to the allegation. A 14 days timeframe is given to the respondent to respond to the allegation;
3. Once the respondent responses his/her documents are compiled for the next Committee either Medical Professional Committee Meeting or Dental Professional Committee Meeting which is held at every 3 months.
4. Updates on the complaint is communicated to the complainant and respondent.
5. The committee members elaborate on the cases and gives decision whether to be investigated, go for informal meeting or disciplinary hearing depending on the nature of complaint;
6. The Secretariat facilitates on the decision from the committee, for investigation the investigators are appointed from the pool of investigators and are given 14 consecutive days to submit report. At times the timeframe does extend due to the nature of work of the investigator who are on full time employment.
7. The investigation report is submitted to the Committee for elaboration and the outcome is referred to the Council for decision.
8. The outcome of the complaint is communicated to both the complainant and respondent for their information.