

COMPLAINTS, COMPLIMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

1st SEMESTER OF 2024

Executive Summary

In compliance with Decree-Law no. 126/2014 of August 22nd, this document provides information about complaints, compliments, and suggestions presented by healthcare providers' users and discloses information about the healthcare providers that have received more complaints, as well as the results of ERS' actions.

During the first semester of 2024, ERS received:

- 51.532 processes on facts occurred during the first semester of the year, of which 41.588 were classified exclusively as complaints, 9.285 as compliments, and 429 as suggestions. The remaining 230 cases were classified under more than one of these options simultaneously.
- 15.021 processes of complaints, compliments, and/or suggestions relating to previous years.

Compared to the same period in the previous year, there was an increase of 4.5% in the universe of processes occurred in the year.

Regarding the 51.532 cases of complaints, compliments, and/or suggestions, it was found that:

- (i) 64.5% of the cases (33.237) were related to public healthcare providers, including those managed under Public-Private Partnerships, followed by the private sector with 34.5% (17.760 cases) and the social or cooperative sector with 1.0% of the cases (535), similar to the previous year's period;
- (ii) Healthcare providers with inpatient care services presented a higher volume of cases compared to those without inpatient services, regardless of the legal nature of the healthcare provider;
- (iii) approximately 57% of the cases of the first semester of 2024 were related to healthcare providers located in the Lisboa and Vale do Tejo Health Region (29.106 cases), followed by the North Health Region with 26% of the cases (13.591 cases).

Among the cases classified as complaints and reviewed by ERS, the most frequently mentioned issues in the first semester of 2024 were related to constraints in healthcare provision (quality and safety) (19.3%), administrative procedures (17.9%), and restrictions in access to healthcare (16.6%).

On the other hand, the compliments reviewed by ERS during the first semester of 2024 were most often directed towards clinical staff (around 28%), followed by reasons related to the functioning of support services (approximately 27%) and non-clinical staff (about 18%). Public sector providers received a higher number of compliments in the first semester of 2024, regardless of the type of care.

Without any previous analysis based on the size of the healthcare providers, production, or target population, it was noted that the healthcare providers responsible for approximately 75% of the complaints during the analyzed period corresponded to a total of 1.036 healthcare providers. On the other hand, 75% of the compliments and suggestions that occurred in the first semester of 2024 were related to 574 healthcare providers. This document presents the list of all entities with processes submitted to ERS in the first semester of 2024, whether classified as complaints, compliments or suggestions.

In the first semester of 2024, ERS has decided 32.416 complaints, of which 9.613 were related to facts occurring in 2024. Regarding cases classified exclusively as compliments or suggestions, ERS reviewed 11.223 cases, of which 8.997 occurred within the year.

A complaint process may be subject to various regulatory interventions by ERS and may simultaneously or not be referred to one or more external entities with competence in the matter under review.

Thus, concerning the 9.613 complaints about facts that occurred in the first semester of 2024 and decided by ERS:

- (i) in 77.5% of cases (7.641 processes), these were concluded without the need for further differentiated intervention by ERS;
- (ii) 15.8% of cases (1.556 processes) were concluded with resolution of the situation and/or assurance of corrective measures by the healthcare providers; or without irregularity of the targeted healthcare provider after inquiries; or as an identified process for timely and aggregated intervention within the regulated sector.
- (iii) in 5.3% of cases (520 processes), it was necessary to open new administrative or sanctioning processes; or to associate them to other ongoing processes, or to suggest conflict mediation;
- (iv) in 1.5% of cases (143 processes), the complaints were referred to other entities with specific competence in analyzing the reported facts;
- (v) ERS identified 263 complaints with non-compliance processes, primarily concerning public sector healthcare providers.

In the first semester of 2024, ERS made 1.421 referrals of cases to other entities, of which 164 corresponded to complaints regarding incidents that occurred within the year.