

COMPLAINTS, COMPLIMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

2024 REPORT

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 year 2024, ERS received:

- 109.314 processes on facts occurred in 2024, of which 87.727 were classified exclusively as complaints, 20.227 as compliments, and 874 as suggestions. The remaining 486 cases were classified under more than one of these options simultaneously.
- 21.156 processes of complaints, compliments, and/or suggestions relating to previous years.

Compared to the previous year (2023), there was an increase of 4.6% in the universe of processes received by ERS that concerned facts occurred in the same year (2024).

Regarding the 109.314 cases of complaints, compliments, and/or suggestions, it was found that:

- (i) 65,9% of the cases (72.067) were related to public healthcare providers, including those managed under Public-Private Partnerships, followed by the private sector with 33,1% (36.137 cases) and the social or cooperative sector with 1.0% of the cases (1.110);
- (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 56,1% of the cases in 2024 were related to healthcare providers located in the Lisboa and Vale do Tejo Health Region (61.289 cases), followed by the North Health Region with 26,9% of the cases (29.378 cases).

Among the cases classified as complaints and reviewed by ERS, the most frequently mentioned issues in 2024 were related to other procedures adopted by healthcare providers to respond to the needs and expectations of their patients (19,5%), administrative procedures (18,1%), constraints in healthcare provision (quality and safety) (17,9%), and restrictions in access to healthcare (15,2%).

On the other hand, the compliments reviewed by ERS during 2024 were most often directed towards clinical staff (29,8%), followed by reasons related to the functioning of support services (26,1%) and non-clinical staff (about 18,9%). Compared to the private and social sectors, public sector providers received a higher number of compliments in 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 75,4% of the complaints during the analyzed period corresponded to a total of 2.073 healthcare providers, belonging to 35 entities. On the other hand, 75,6% of the compliments and suggestions that occurred in the first semester of 2024 were related to 1.029 healthcare providers, belonging to 31 entities.

This document includes the full list of all entities with processes submitted to ERS in 2024, whether classified as complaints, compliments or suggestions.

In 2024, ERS issued decisions regarding 65.669 complaints, of which 35.956 were related to facts occurring in 2024. Regarding cases classified exclusively as compliments or suggestions, ERS reviewed 23.368 cases, of which 20.378 occurred within the year.

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

Thus, concerning the 35.956 complaints about facts that occurred in 2024 and decided by ERS:

- (i) in 62,9% of cases (22.795 processes), these were concluded without the need for further differentiated intervention by ERS;
- (ii) 27,4% of cases (9.934 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 7,9% of cases (2.864 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 1.8% of cases (666 processes), the complaints were forwarded to other entities with specific competence in analyzing the reported facts;
- (v) ERS identified procedural non-compliance in 1.516 processes, mostly concerning public sector healthcare providers.

In 2024, ERS made 2.370 referrals (2.004 processes) of cases to other entities, of which 794 (667 processes) corresponded to complaints regarding incidents that occurred within the year.