

King Edward Memorial Hospital

1916 –

Other Names: • KEMH

URL: <https://www.kemh.health.wa.gov.au/About-us>

Details

King Edward Memorial Hospital (KEMH) has been Western Australia's principal public maternity and gynaecological hospital since 1916. Many young women in out of home care were admitted there, and many babies were adopted from KEMH.

In 1958, following overcrowding in the maternity wards of KEMH, the state government purchased Kensington House, at 91 Hensman Road. This was a former private maternity hospital which was converted into an annexe of KEMH known as Kensington Annexe. This was primarily used as a maternity facility, including as a place where women stayed prior to giving birth and their babies being adopted out.

In 2023, KEMH apologised for its role in past forced adoption practices, noting that “there has been a myriad of painful enduring consequences...we are deeply sorry for the trauma and heartbreak that resulted for all those who have been affected by this practice”.

King Edward Memorial Hospital was mentioned in the *Commonwealth Contribution to Former Forced Adoption Policies and Practices Inquiry* (2012) as an institution that was involved in forced adoption.

Gallery



Ward at King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women, September 1969

Description: This is a digitised copy of negative and is part of the 'Stevenson, Kinder & Scott photograph collection' held at the State Library of Western Australia. The image shows an empty ward the the King Edward Memorial Hospital.



King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women, June 1981

Description: This is a digitised copy of a negative and is part of the 'Fritz Kos collection of photographs' held at the State Library of Western Australia'. The image shows the outside of the hospital.



Staff working with Recordak equipment, 1967

Description: This is a digitised copy of a negative and is part of the 'Stevenson, Kinder and Scott photograph collection' held at the State Library of Western Australia.



K.E.M.H. entrance, 1966

Description: This is a digitised copy of a negative and is part of the group of 11 images titled 'Golden Jubilee at King Edward Memorial Hospital [picture]' held at the State Library of Western Australia. The image shows the hospital entrance.



King Edward Memorial Hospital, 1965

Description: This is a digitised copy of a negative and is part of the group of four images titled 'King Edward Memorial Hospital [picture]'. Held at the State Library of Western Australia. The image shows the outside of the main building of the King Edward Memorial Hospital.



King Edward Memorial Hospital, 1946

Description: This is a digitised copy of a photoprint and is part of the Government Photograph Collection held at the State Library of Western Australia. The image shows the entrance to the King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women in 1946.



King Edward Memorial Hospital, 1926

Description: This is a digitised copy of a negative and is part of the Truth newspaper collection held at the State Library of Western Australia. The image shows the buildings of the King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women in 1926.



Government Industrial School Subiaco, 1900

Description: 'Government Industrial School Subiaco, 1900' is a digital copy of an image included (p.12) in the *Annual Report 1979* of the Department for Community Welfare. It is part of a history of the department, written to celebrate 150 years of European settlement in Western Australia.

More info

Related Entries

Run by

- [Health Department, State Government of Western Australia \(1984 - current\)](#)

The Department of Health in Western Australia is responsible for all public hospital records created in WA. If you wish to find out if there is medical or personal information held about you from when you were a child, you must contact a Freedom of Information Officer.

Related Events

- [Inquiry into Commonwealth Contribution to Former Forced Adoption Policies and Practices, Commonwealth of Australia \(2011 - 2012\)](#)

King Edward Memorial Hospital was mentioned in submissions 48 and 73 to the Inquiry Committee as an institution that was involved in forced adoption.

Related Organisations

- [Government Receiving Depot \(1907 - 1935\)](#)
In 1916 the Government Receiving Depot relocated to West Perth and the Government Receiving Depot building became part of the King Edward Memorial Hospital.
- [Alexandra Home for Women \(1916 - 1950\)](#)
From 1936 babies whose mothers were in the Alexandra Home were born at the King Edward Memorial Hospital, and mothers and babies went to the Alexandra Home afterwards.
Date: 1936 - 1950
- [The Alexandra Home for Mothers and Babies \(Inc\) and Mothercraft Training School \(1950 - 1956\)](#)
Mothers and babies could be transferred to The Alexandra Home for Mothers and Babies (Inc) and Mothercraft Training School from King Edward Memorial Hospital.
- [Ngal-a Mothercraft Home and Training Centre Inc \(1956 - 1989\)](#)
Ngal-a Mothercraft Home and Training Centre Inc. (Ngala) sent all resident expectant mothers to King Edward Memorial Hospital (KEMH) for the birth of their babies in the years between 1956 and 1959. From 1959 to 1980 some women still had their babies at KEMH. Mothers and babies generally returned to Ngala after the birth, but from September 1959, babies could be sent from KEMH to Ngala without their mothers.
Date: 1956 - 1989

Related Concepts

- [Adoption in Western Australia \(c. 1896 - current\)](#)

Resources

- [Beryl Grant interviewed by Christine Choo in the Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants oral history project](#), 20 October 2011
- [Interviews with Clara Taylor and Dorothy Evelyn Wiley, nurses, by Vicky Hobbs](#), 1971
- Welsh, Anita, [Submission No 48 to the Senate Inquiry into Commonwealth Contribution to Former Forced Adoption Policies and Practices](#), 2012
- Hassett, Lorraine, [Submission No 73 to the Senate Inquiry into Commonwealth Contribution to Former Forced Adoption Policies and Practices](#), 2012
- Heritage Council of Western Australia, [King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women](#), inHerit: our heritage places, 8 February 2015
- [Maternity Home Regulations](#), Government Gazette of Western Australia, 20 October 1944

Records

Records held by this organisation

- [King Edward Memorial Hospital records \(1916 - current\)](#)

You can view this page online by visiting <https://findconnect.efront.digital/entity/king-edward-memorial-hospital/>