

Lying-in Home

1850s – 1950s

Details

Lying-in Home was a term to describe a maternity home from the late nineteenth century, a place 'for the accommodation of females during their confinement and lying-in', to quote the Western Australian State Children Act 1907. At a lying-in home, a mother could give birth with the help of a midwife (who might not have formal qualifications). These women employed in lying in homes sometimes helped single mothers who worked to find care for their babies. Sometimes this involved an informal adoption (that is, arranged outside of adoption legislation). From around the 1900s, as the requirements for midwifery training became more rigorous, the number of lying-in homes in Australia began to fall.

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More info

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