

# King Edward Memorial Hospital

1916 –

**Other Names:** • KEMH

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

## Details

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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.

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.

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”.

## Gallery

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**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 at 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 \(1984 - current\)](#)

### 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

- [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

- [Ngala Mothercraft Home and Training Centre Inc \(1956 - 1989\)](#)

Ngala 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

- [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.

- [Mt Lawley Reception Home \(1893 - 1980\)](#)

In 1916 the Government Receiving Depot relocated to West Perth and the Government Receiving Depot building became part of the King Edward Memorial Hospital.

### Holds

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

## 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 other organisations

- [Correspondence files, single number series with 'B' \[Child Endowment\] prefix \(1904 - 1974\)](#)

Item B913 of the Child Endowment correspondence files relates to King Edward Memorial Hospital