

# HEALTH RECORDS

In May 2004, State Records issued a landmark authority that for the first time identifies select records of New South Wales health institutions as State archives. Prior to the introduction of the *State Records Act* in 1999, only records of certain hospitals were identified for preservation. Under the new authority, registers of patient admissions, discharges, births and deaths from all public hospitals are required to be maintained in perpetuity. It will be some time, however, before these records will be available for public use. To protect patient privacy, only records in archival custody created prior to 1890 are open to public view.

Work is progressing on identifying other health records related to the administration and management of hospitals which should be kept as State archives. State Records recently accessioned a small cache of such records created by the former Crown Street Women's Hospital in Sydney, dating from 1898 until it closed in 1983. Amongst the highlights are these photographs

of scenes from a diorama representing doctors, nurses and patients at the hospital, possibly produced for the hospital's 75th anniversary in 1968.

For more information about the new **General Retention and Disposal Authority** in relation to health records see: <http://www.records.nsw.gov.au/publicsector/health/health.htm>



→ Scenes from a diorama of the former Crown Street Women's Hospital in Sydney, about 1968, NUA 305

