Health records

The records of healthcare provision for Oxfordshire are split between Oxfordshire History Centre and the Oxfordshire Health Archives. Oxfordshire Health Archives selects and cares for the historic archives of NHS hospitals in Oxfordshire. Their holdings, including a very useful list of Oxfordshire hospitals, can be viewed at their website.

The health collections held at Oxfordshire History Centre relate largely to the administrative bodies for healthcare provision in Oxfordshire. Our collections include administrative and financial records of the Littlemore Asylum up to 1948 (but not the patient records, which are held by Oxfordshire Health Archives) and the Medical Officer of Health for Oxfordshire. Additionally we hold the records of the Oxford Regional Health Board (1948-1974) and the Oxford Regional Health Authority (1974-1994), which don’t just cover hospitals in Oxfordshire, but Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, and Northamptonshire too.

We also hold a few records relating to the treatment of lunatics in the nineteenth century. These form part of the Quarter Sessions records and can be found under reference mark QSL.

Records detailing the history of healthcare in Oxfordshire can also spring up in other, unexpected, places. The records of the Oxford City Municipal Charities feature records from the Cutler Boulter Provident Dispensary (reference number O34/8), where members could pay a weekly subscription in return for medical attendance, advice, and prescription drugs. School logbooks can also provide surprising information on health in Oxfordshire, particularly epidemics and childhood illnesses. Our collections include the logbook of the Peppard Common Sanatorium School (reference number S225/3), where children were educated whilst recovering from tuberculosis.

Due to the contents of some of the records, it may be necessary to close some items in order to comply with Data Protection legislation. Any item which has been closed should be clearly marked in the catalogue, but please check with staff if you have any queries.

Where is the catalogue?

You can search for health records using our online catalogue Heritage Search. Other records may not yet be in our online catalogue so you will need to visit the History Centre to look at the catalogue in printed form. Remember that hospital and some patient records are held by Oxfordshire Health Archives so it is worth checking their website too.