

Reseñas

Paul LYDON, *A Catalogue of Records Retained by Hospices and Related Organisations in the UK and the Republic of Ireland*, Sheffield, European Association for the History of Medicine and Health Publications, 1998, xiv, 124 pp. ISBN: 0-9527045-8-7.

Hospice care for the dying has developed rapidly around the world in recent years. This catalogue is the product of Sheffield University's pioneering Hospice History Project set up in 1995, and is the first to list extant hospice records. It covers 90 hospices (and three related organisations) founded since 1850, most of them since 1960. A few have become defunct; the vast majority are still working.

The information for the volume, which does not claim complete coverage, was compiled from site visits, surveys and telephone enquiries. After a short introduction and list of useful addresses, institutions are listed by county within country; brief background information is provided on each, and where relevant oral history interviews have been conducted, this is noted.

Most of the hospices are in the voluntary sector, where records, especially non-clinical items, are largely beyond the scope of statutory legislation, and methods of record-keeping are often highly individual. Lydon has listed them as far as possible in a standardised format, and in the appendix he provides advice on archiving and record-keeping. This makes this volume all the more welcome, as nearly all these records are kept on site, and thus at risk. Only the records of a few defunct hospices are in official places of deposit.

It is to be hoped that by raising awareness of the value of hospice records, this volume will encourage the transfer of archival material to specialist repositories.

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