



**General Register Office for Scotland**  
*information about Scotland's people*

**Paper NHSCR GB 6/08**

**Creating a Backup to NHSCR Archive**

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## **Digitisation Project**

One of the NHSCR's core tracing tools are our Transcript Books. There are 2,082 books in total. They originated from a 'census' that was carried out in September 1939 at the outbreak of war. The count was commissioned by the Ministry of Food and the Ministry of Defence, to establish details of all Scottish residents, to enable the Government to issue ration cards and to call on appropriate people for Armed Forces service. During and after the War, the books were updated regularly to show movements of the patients, changes of names and also deaths. After the NHSCR was computerised, they continued to be used to trace older people and are still in regular use today.

Partly to make access to the records more efficient and partly to ensure their preservation, the decision was taken to digitise the information in the books. During 2007 all the images were scanned and an index created to allow access. The completed NHSCR Index System holds over 13 million records. An initial evaluation has identified that IT response times are not acceptable and we are investigating ways to resolve this. All other early indications are that the system will prove to be the asset we hoped for.