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## Community voices – transcript – OH 18/14

**Zofia Wolanska**

1988

Interviewer: Daniela Kautsky

Project: Lives of Older Women of Non-English Speaking Background and Their Adaption to and Contribution to Life in South Australia

*Extract of an Oral History where she explains the wartime conditions of Warsaw and her role in the resistance movement.*

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### **Can you please tell me what happened then? You stayed in Warsaw?**

I stayed in Warsaw with my in-laws and I went to the doctor who was in charge of the district all around Warsaw - and he knew me before the war - and ask him to give me a job. And he gave me a job as a social worker in Legionowo - it is around twenty kilometres from Warsaw - to organise the new health centre - community health centre. So I used to travel there every morning - eight o'clock in the morning. I'd come back to my mother-in-law at six o'clock in the evening. As you know, it was the wartime, and we were under German occupation so we had to be very careful. I think I started to work and after two weeks somebody, a man, came to me and said, "Look, I am from the Resistance Army. I know that you are the wife of a Polish Airforce man and we need you as a social worker to join our underground army - resistance army". One of my duties was to give first aid course.

### **So you did join? It was an underground army? You said you had to be careful so you wouldn't be caught.**

Yes, but I said - I asked him, "Who are you?" so he said, "I can't tell you, but when you say that you do agree, tomorrow I will come again with my boss" - his boss. So they explained to me that I'm very important to them because, as a social worker, and school hygienist I used to give lectures. I could get in touch with other members without being suspected by Germans. So I had to agree. They took an oath from me. That was the first, then other orders exchanged in my office and so on, and from then on, until the resistance army Warsaw uprising in 1944 then capitulation.