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**From:** Miss Metal Official  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 28 November 2023 3:40 PM  
**To:** Birth Trauma  
**Subject:** Re: Select Committee on Birth Trauma - Witness invitation

Hi Jessie,  
So sorry for the delay in my email and getting back to you.

Here is my statement & correspondence that I'm happy for somebody to read out on my behalf at the hearing 12th December in Wagga.

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My name is Sasha Lyons, I am 34 years old and writing this letter to give evidence for the birth trauma committee enquiry.  
I am currently heavily pregnant and due to give birth at any moment, so please excuse my absence, and I hope my letter reaches you all today.

In December 2022, I was sexually assaulted by a midwife, otherwise known also as obstetric violence. This midwife went against my consent of a vaginal examination, upon my many pleas and begging her to stop, crying in pain - she proceeded with this exam & forcefully shoved her arm up further to find my cervix in an angry manner, causing me even further and unnecessary pain.

Not only did she violate my trust, but she went against my consent & physically harmed me, to which I now have significant birth trauma in relation to this incident.

This same midwife also lied to my face & told me the surgeons for theatre were "knocking off at 3pm, but don't let that rush your decision into a c section".  
We found out later, it is a 24 hour hospital, and she was the one who wanted to knock off work.... Surgeons are available at all times if needed.

She also made me feel like she had no faith in my ability to birth, telling me that "you'll probably need the drip (oxytocin) - you won't be able to go into labour naturally"  
However, the doctor suggested giving me 1 hour from breaking my waters to see what will happen.... And sure enough, I went into labor naturally, without the need for the drip.

My labour ended up in a c-section, however there was a lot of medical negligence on behalf of the hospital in question.  
The midwife did not change her gloves during my vaginal exams, which meant she was re-entering bacteria into my vagina that just had waters broken.

My newborn son had swallowed some of this now bacteria in the amniotic fluids, and got a "rare gut bacteria" in his body, which Westmead children's hospital picked up on a routine blood screening. He was then placed on antibiotics via IV for a week.  
The hospital have denied any wrong doing and of course "have no idea how he got it"  
Coincidentally enough, after weeks of complaining about my c section wound leaking fluid and saying to them something was wrong, nobody believed me & kept saying it was "fine" - and it "doesn't look infected". All the while, sleeping on a fold out sofa single bed, with no pain relief & in fact - an infected wound.

After having a had a large vacuum wound dressing on my scar for weeks, I noticed it began to smell. I complained about this smell to the community nurses who would visit our home to assess the dressing & she said "it's normal". However, I knew something was wrong - and asked maternity ward to please recheck a further time, because this has been on going for too long and somebody needs to look at this seriously with a medical review.

My wound was necrotic and I had sepsis.

The bacteria found in my wound was 2 extremely rare strains of gut bacteria, which are not found in wounds. I can only assume, the same gut bacteria my son was infected in via dirty gloves from the midwife that he drank in the amniotic fluid.

When I had my c section and he was pulled through my wound, dirty bacteria water entered my wound, causing infection.

All in all, we were in hospital for a total of 5 weeks straight.

Our newborn didn't have his first bath until he was 3 or 4 weeks old.

And my husband, was never even offered a bottle of water during our stay.

He went into \$4000 debt from ordering Menulog to the hospital daily for meals & drinks, as he never left our bedsides and always was there to look after us.

Between meals costing \$25 - \$50 each + delivery fees daily, 3 meals a day, for 5 weeks..... it all adds up.

My experience was nothing short of awful, and I'm glad I am able to share it with you today.

I'd like to see some changes within not only this hospital - but all hospitals in general.

- fathers need to be taken care of too, and perhaps offer hospital meals to them or Ronald McDonald house food facilities should be available for them for meals if their hospital stay is prolonged like ours was. My husband deserved to be treated like an inpatient too, since he never left my side & was a huge help in aiding our recovery.

- I'd like to see CCTV footage in birthing suites.

I understand this is a greyarea for privacy and consent would be necessary from each individual.... But I think if we're able to access footage for serious allegations like obstetric abuse, we can have our stories seen and heard legally, where it is all captured on film & nurses can't get away with lying about their mistreatment to their patients.

These videos should be stored on a high security hard drive or cloud, where the only access available is when the patient, hospital and legal team's necessary have access to view footage.

Maybe having this idea looming over the heads of hospital staff means they'll be more careful, and their actions will be captured in plain sight.

- I'd like to have more infectious diseases staff involved in treatment for diabetic patients in maternity.

I am a type 2 diabetic & the hospital should be fully aware that diabetes causes issues with wound healing, so they should have taken more serious & preventative measures to ensure my c section wound would heal properly and not get infected.

Instead, they just put a normal dressing on, didn't take my concerns seriously and waited weeks until I ended up necrotic and septic, until they finally took me seriously.

Preventative measures for diabetics should have the option of an extremely sterile wound cleaning regime, proper dressings (prevena wound vac, pico or wound vac dressing) placed on the wound immediately after surgery, with IV broad spectrum antibiotics to be administered as a precaution for possible infection and to rule it out.

I apologise for this letter being so long, however I feel it is extremely important to address everything above for my story to be heard, taken seriously and to hopefully have a better outcome for all women in a maternity setting moving forwards.

Thank you,  
Sasha Lyons