



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

SELECT COMMITTEE ON BIRTH TRAUMA

MEDIA RELEASE

UPPER HOUSE COMMITTEE URGES ACTION TO ADDRESS BIRTH TRAUMA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

29 May 2024

Today, the Select Committee on Birth Trauma handed down its report with 43 recommendations addressing birth trauma and the physical, emotional, psychological, and financial impacts birth trauma can have on birthing parents and their families.

The inquiry found that a significant number of individuals in New South Wales have experienced birth trauma, highlighting the urgent need to address the avoidable and preventable factors that are contributing to these high rates of birth trauma.

The committee received over 4,000 submissions, reflecting the significant community concern regarding this often-overlooked issue. The committee held six public hearings: four at NSW Parliament, one in Wollongong and one in Wagga Wagga.

During the inquiry the committee heard evidence from a diverse array of organisations, healthcare practitioners, researchers, academics, subject matter experts, government agencies and representative bodies. Critically, the committee also heard from 27 individuals who shared their firsthand accounts of childbirth, as well as their experiences of pregnancy and early parenthood.

Committee Chair, the Hon Emma Hurst MLC, stated, "The significance of this inquiry cannot be overstated. The overwhelming response and the breadth of evidence we received underscore the critical need to address birth trauma comprehensively. The personal stories shared were heartbreaking, and revealed systemic issues that must be urgently addressed to ensure all parents receive high-quality healthcare, along with respect and support".

"Birth trauma and obstetric violence are global issues that have been recognised by bodies such as the United Nations and the World Health Organisation. This is the first time a parliamentary committee has examined and reported on birth trauma – and it was long overdue. The unprecedented scale of evidence the inquiry received reflects the number of birthing parents unnecessarily traumatised giving birth".

"On behalf of the committee I would like to extend our deepest gratitude to all who contributed to this inquiry, especially the individuals who shared their personal stories. Thank you for your courage and bravery. Every experience we heard broadened our understanding of the impact birth trauma can have on people's lives. We would also like to acknowledge the dedication and hard work of the maternity healthcare professionals who strive to deliver excellent care amidst challenging circumstances".



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The Chair concluded, "The report's findings and recommendations aim to inform the NSW Government's considerations of these matters and to prompt action, with the hope that every birth is met with dignity, respect and compassion".

The NSW Government now has three months to respond to the committee's recommendations. The committee's report and other documents can be found on the [inquiry webpage](#).

-ENDS-

For further information please contact Committee Chair, the Hon Emma Hurst MLC, on (02) 9230 3462