

**Submission
No 7**

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Name: Mrs Steffanie Hoschke

Date Received: 4 July 2023

My birth happened on the

It was the birth of my third daughter,

Throughout my pregnancy I faced a number of complications, when I was 6 weeks I had a big bleed and ended up in hospital, turned out I had a submembranous bleed that didn't heal until about 16 weeks, when I finally got my yellow card because my pregnancy was finally viable. I also had a velamentous cord insertion, so they were keeping track of baby's growth and had concerns about birth. They also had concerns about me birthing naturally because my delivery before, my daughter had shoulder dystocia causing an emergency and one of the midwives having to use a manoeuvre to safely deliver her.

In my appointments leading up to the birth of my daughter, they spoke about induction as they didn't want me to have the delivery I had with my last daughter and they also had concerns for my cord and could monitor it if I was in the hospital being induced. I had 2 active fairly pain relief free births previously so it wasn't something I was familiar with but with their suggestions I was willing to go along with it because what they were saying made sense in my mind. They said a dr would have to be present during the birth to monitor the situation because if the already delicate cord were to break off it would be an emergency situation, but that was only a slight possibility.

I also experienced hemorrhaging with my other 2 births last one totalling in 880ml blood loss.

We all agreed to induce 1 week before my due date at 39 weeks with me having to go to the hospital the afternoon before to get the gel inserted and then the waiting began.

It caused a few random contraction pains but by morning my cervix was still long and closed, I had to wait in the maternity ward that whole day after having some more gel administered only to be told by 12pm my cervix was still fairly hard and closed so I had lunch with my family and a walk around the hospital, by 1 I lost some liquid and they said I could be moved into the birthing unit and I got placed into the care of a student midwife, myself and my sister (one of my birthing partners) asked if she was familiar with what my problems were and she said yes she would be able to deal with it when the time came and there were senior midwives hanging around. When I lost the liquid she looked at the pad and said she thinks my waters broke so I didn't need to have them broken to help the induction along so let me labour naturally, I had to be hooked up to the heart monitors for bubs because of the gel that was used for induction and they weren't working properly so I was restricted to laying in the hospital bed unable to have another active labour like I wanted, after a few hours the contractions I was feeling dropped off and things were at a standstill so she did an internal exam and found that my waters didn't actually break and I was only dilated to a 4 so she called in a senior midwife who went ahead with her fingers and broke my waters, with that came some clots but she didn't bother to check my notes and they started my on the induction drip, they bumped it right up high to get things moving, after about 35 mins I was in so much pain and was wanting to move around, I was told I wasn't allowed to because I needed to lay down so the monitors could pick up the fetal heart rate. A dr ended up coming in to put an internal fetal heart rate monitor on so I could be more mobile because their equipment wasn't working, she didn't know how to release the monitor and ended up doing 3 attempts and failing the last attempt she was pushing the probe in so hard my sister almost tried to snatch it off her because my baby's head was right there she was afraid she was going to puncture her skull.

So again I was left on the bed unable to move with no relief from a shower or anything like my last 2 births so I asked for an epidural I was in soo much pain and I was also telling them to turn their induction medicine off because it was causing so much pain, I said I felt like I needed to push and the midwife said it's impossible for someone to dilate from a 4 to a 10 in such a small amount of time and she wouldn't check so I asked for an epidural again this time with urgency, my birthing team was shocked because I had never had one before and didn't ever want to have one but I had just had enough, I wasn't feeling heard, I was in extreme pain, I couldn't move so I just wanted it to be over. 10 minutes later the anesthesiologist came in and the midwives make him put the canula in my back laying in my side because they couldn't get baby's heart rate on the monitors when I sat up. While I lay off to the side and I felt him put the first needle in my back I could feel myself birthing my baby on its own the pain was excruciating but I knew if I moved when he had the needle in my back it could end up disastrous so I was just trying to get my body to stop from involuntarily pushing while I just stared at my sister from across the room, as soon as I knew it was safe I yelled I need to push! And the midwife grabbed a leg and her head was on its way out and the bleeding had already started, and they were yelling at me to stop pushing but I couldn't help it my body was doing it on its own and with that she came flying out on the bed with nobody to catch her, she was born with the anesthesiologist holding one of my legs, and there was just soo much blood. They pushed the emergency buzzer and the room filled with people. They gave me the injection in my leg to release the placenta and the student midwife gave my cord a tug and it broke off into her hand. They then called in a dr who came in and with gloved hand, started going up and removing my placenta piece by piece I was screaming at her to stop because they hadn't had time to administer the epidural medication so I could feel everything and it was excruciating. They pushed my support people into each corner of the room so I just lay still I knew I couldn't do anything more the blood was just pouring out of me. They were arguing about who was going to put a canula in my arm one nurse bragging she could do it even though she didn't have her glasses on, and they were trying to take out my earrings and dress me in a robe to wheel me down to surgery but the anesthesiologist

yelled at them saying my pulse was thready and I had to be taken now. He was able to give me enough medicine in my back for a spinal block and by the time I was down there I couldn't feel much so I was able to be awake while they operated on me to remove the rest of my placenta and stop the bleeding and stitch me up, I ended up being away from my little one for 2 hours through surgery and recovery. They left my family with my newborn wrapped in a wet towel they never checked her over, when my husband asked if our baby was okay the midwife said that she was with the best people she could be with, no apgar test was performed even though it says on her records it was. They were just too concerned with cleaning up all my blood off the floor and getting my room back in order. When they first told my of my total blood loss it was over 3L but then every time we spoke with the midwives the number got lower and lower from 2.5L to 2L etc

After this I faced a year of nightmares, being diagnosed with ptsd, regular psychologist visits and medication for day and nighttime just to get me through. I felt like such a bad mother to my newborn and my other two young daughters I always wanted more children but I didn't let my husband touch my until he got a vasectomy so this would never happen to me again. I still face guilt daily about not remembering much of my last daughters first year of her life. All I got from the hospital was a sorry it happened to you and sometimes birth can be traumatic but that's all.

I share my story because I wouldn't want this to happen to anyone else.