

**Submission  
No 49**

## **INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA**

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On the 9th of October 2004, I went into labour with my first child.

After an internal examination determined I was 8cm dilated, I was admitted to the birthing suite.

Due to not progressing I was induced and my daughter was born at 9.30pm.

Around 1/2 an hour later a midwife said, do you feel ok you look pale.

She came to the bed and lowered the bed slightly, examined my tummy and as soon as she touched it a mass of blood and clots came out of me.

She instantly lowered the bed completely and pressed the red emergency button.

I remember looking down and thinking 'Wow I just had my first baby and now I'm dead'.

From here on I don't remember much due to passing in and out of consciousness. The room was full of people, someone said something about the placenta.

Next thing I remember a doctor who I now know was the anaesthesiologist telling me they thought I would need a caesarean earlier.

The next thing I remember is waking up in ICU, I was told I'd had a postpartum haemorrhage, and they had given me a blood transfusion because my veins had started to collapse and I had vaginal packs that would need removing.

So 24 hours after giving birth I was required to sign a form to agree that if I began to bleed again when removing the vaginal packs I would require a hysterectomy.

I spent 2.5 days in the ICU where I was only able to see my baby for 1/2 an hour.

My husband was not allowed to bring my baby in to see me as she had been admitted to the nursery and would need to be with a nurse at all times (she was medically fine).

On returning to the midwifery unit, I was in a room for 2 hours when a nurse came to ask me if I'd like to go home.

I had not seen any midwives apart from this one, I told her no one has even shown me how to breast feed yet.

By the next day I still had seen no one so I signed myself out and went home.

I had zero aftercare.

Feeling lucky to be alive and still have a uterus, I felt pregnant when my daughter was 6 months old.

As the hospital knew of my past haemorrhage which was put down to a lazy uterus (when the uterus doesn't contract after the placenta detaches) they were on the look out for it this time and once again I haemorrhaged. But this time instead of going to surgery a doctor manually removed my clots with his hand.

I had had no pain relief during this labour and it was excruciating, I was screaming in pain and not one doctor or nurse thought to give me any pain relief.

The bleeding stopped and I was taken to the suite.

I asked for pain relief after and was offered Panadol which I refused as it doesn't even ease a headache. Unfortunately my son was unwell and transferred to another hospital for life saving treatment and there wasn't a bed available there for me so I discharged myself again.

It's been 17 years since my son's birth and I have had such a struggle, bonding with him as an infant was extremely hard, I look back and see I had postpartum depression. When my son gets sick I panic. I'm currently looking into having a PTSD assessment due to the trauma.

I have anxiety over going to the doctor and medical test cause me anxiety attacks. I cant discuss any of this without crying.

I hope by telling my story that the medical teams that treat mothers see the need for aftercare when you experience medical trauma, and no one has to suffer alone like I did.