

Submission  
No 50

## INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

**Name:** Name suppressed

**Date Received:** 19 July 2023

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Partially  
Confidential

19<sup>th</sup> July 2023

Dear Select Committee on Birth Trauma,

As a mother of 14 children, I am writing to provide my perspective and response to the select committee's enquiries on birth trauma. Birth trauma has been an inherent part of the birthing experience since the time of Adam and Eve. Throughout history, women have faced physical and emotional challenges during childbirth. However, it is important to acknowledge that the majority of this trauma is alleviated by the miraculous arrival of a new life. It is crucial not to exploit or victimise women by weaponizing their experiences. Women by their very nature, possess immense strength and resilience, allowing them to endure the birthing process and any resulting trauma. By recognising and celebrating the inherent power of women, we can foster a supportive and empowering environment for expectant mothers.

While I acknowledge the importance of addressing birth trauma, I would like to highlight the availability of various support services to assist individuals, before, during and after childbirth. Moreover, I would argue that the high standard of maternity support and care in Australia renders additional legislation unnecessary, and it may even pose a threat to maternity hospitals, obstetricians, doctors, midwives and prenatal workers.

First and foremost, it is essential to recognise the support systems that are currently in place for individuals who are experiencing birth trauma. These services include:

1. Consultation with healthcare professionals; individuals can seek assistance from their doctors, obstetricians, or midwives. These professionals are equipped with the necessary knowledge and experience to address concerns and provide guidance throughout the childbirth journey.
2. Pregnancy, Birth and Baby helpline: The Pregnancy, Birth and Baby helpline (1800822436) operates 7 days a week from 7am to midnight, providing access to maternal nursing advice to help support women who may experience some trauma in the birthing process.
3. Continence Foundation of Australia offers support for women who are experiencing bowel and bladder problems during and after childbirth. They operate from 8am to 8pm Monday to Friday offering expert advice.
4. Australian Birth Trauma Association offers comprehensive information through their website. They offer peer to peer support for individuals who have experienced birth trauma. It serves as a valuable resource for those seeking guidance and understanding.
5. PANDA (Perinatal Anxiety & Depression Australia) PANDA is dedicated to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of expecting new and growing families.

These existing support services, which are only a sample of what is available, provide a range of resources, information and counselling to assist individuals who have experienced serious birth trauma. They play a crucial role in addressing the emotional and psychological impacts of such experiences.

While it is important to address this issue of birth trauma. I believe that no amount of legislation can completely prevent or eradicate it. Birth is a complex and unpredictable process and despite the best efforts of health care professionals, complications can arise. However, Australia has a well-established

standard of maternity support and care that is recognised globally. The commitment of our dedicated healthcare professionals, along with the availability of support services ensures that individuals receive the necessary care and attention during and after childbirth.

Yours Sincerely