

Submission
No 136

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

am a registered nurse but speaking from my personal experiences with birth trauma. I have just given birth to my second baby. I experienced significant birth trauma after my first birth and so did my partner. The fear that I felt during my birth was significant and I felt so alone and like I should be able to cope with birth and I couldn't.

My first child was born in April 2020 when support people were restricted so already I was feeling b upset that my mother was not able to be at my child's birth. I also was not allowed any visitors after birth or during the hospia stay. I was convinced by my doctor to have an induction of labour at 38 weeks and the pain was unmanageable through breathing techniques and nitrous oxide, I had run out of pain options and I was against an epidural, the midwife examined me after 5 hours of labour and told me I had at least another 7 hours before the baby was born and that I needed to have the epidural so I agreed in tears as I was starting to hyperventilate due to the pain. When I was finally dilated enough to push my baby was not coming down and was becoming distressed, my doctor told me that she would need yo consent me for a c section at this point another thing I was not wanting. In hysterics I signed the consent and my doctor offered one more try to get my baby out using the vacuum delivery method. at this point my baby was literally ripped out of me an I recieved an episiotomy. I will never forget the sound of those scissors.

My baby was brought to my chest but not touring enough and was taken away and nobody communicated if my baby was or wasn't ok. My placenta was birthed and I had a pph and recieved per rectum medication with no warning. My baby was returned to me and my episiotomy sutured and I felt very stitch and kept complaining of pain but was told that I shouldn't be able to feel it because of the epidural but I felt it! I had 5 hours with my baby who appeared to have a significant bruising and wound to his head from the delivery and he was then taken from me to the special care nursing for supervision overnight. I did not see my baby for another 9 hours when I was finally taken to the nursery where I could barely keep my eyes open as my body continued to try not to faint. I had midwives trying to shove my baby into my breast and I had to ask them to stop. I was not allowed to take my baby to my room and barely saw him for the first 2-3 days as I wasn't able to walk to he nursery and he wasn't allowed to leave. I am so scarred from all aspects of this birth. I have just had my second birth a planned c section that went so much bettter after doing a lot of work to prepare myself for giving birth again and seeking some support from a birth trauma expert at my own expense. I still experienced poor care from midwives who judged me for using pain relief after my procedure but overall my experience was significantly improved and I was more in control.

Overall I did not give informed consent during my first birth procedures were not explained to me and risks and benefits were not provided.

Having an instrumental birth significantly impacted my birth trauma experience.

Post birth the child and family health nurse who would only speak to me via the phone and wouldn't do home visits at their time listened to my birth story and response was you should talk to someone about that.

This trauma significantly impacted my life and the time I had between my children. My partner still remains traumatized from both births.

I don't want other women to go through what I did if I can avoid it. Help needs to be available for women giving birth its so hard to find support post natally.