

Submission
No 143

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 1 August 2023

Partially
Confidential

I birthed my little one at the old hospital in 2020. My waters had broken just after lunch on a Tuesday. I went in to mid afternoon to be checked over and given a brief run time for how the hospital would like the next 18 hours to go (from waters breaking). They were concerned they wouldn't have the space due to having too many scheduled inductions taking place.

I returned to the hospital around 9:30pm that night as I was too uncomfortable to stay home. On arrival I was directed to the birth suite and told I could jump in the shower to help with pain and then waited around an hour in the birthing suite before a midwife attended to me. I was offered a morphine shot for the pain, as long as birth wasn't imminent. I had an internal and confirmed to be 2-3cm. The morphine was given around 11pm and was then told I would need to be admitted. The morphine knocked me out and I was woken at 12:30am and told I would need to be moved to the maternity ward over night to rest as my labour had not progressed. They were rather aggressive about it. My husband was sent home, as he wasn't allowed on the maternity ward until I had given birth.

I was wheeled up and put into a dark room with new mothers. I was repeatedly told I was in for a long labour being my first. Around 1:30 - 2am I could feel the contractions kicking in hard. I was still quite groggy from the morphine but terrified of the pain I was in, and the fact that with each contraction, my body was surging and pushing. I was terrified my baby would be born then and there with no assistance and no one listening to my concern. Instead I was made to get up and walk down the ward to the toilet to empty my bowel as the pushing sensation was not labour - according to the midwife on duty. I was then forced back to the room I was assigned when I couldn't empty my bowel.

I continued to voice my concerns that I was in active labour. There was no attempt to check on progress instead I was continually brushed off and told I was in very early labour and baby was still some time away.

A shift change occurred and the new midwives noticed immediately on change over that I was in very active labour. An argument broke out between the shifts at the end of my bed, as to why I was in the maternity ward and why my husband had been sent home and not kept with me for support. I was rushed down to the birthing suite terrified I wouldn't make it back in time or that my husband would not arrive back at the hospital in time. The new midwives verbally shared these same thoughts!

I was in the birth suite for 15 minutes before Bub was born. Hubby got there as he started to crown.

Due to exhaustion, I wasn't able to push effectively and bubs heart rate dropped. I was then told I was having an episiotomy, not asked. I was then told if I didn't get him out on the next push, they would use forceps or vacuum to remove him. I managed one last push and he was out. The dr then made a remark that my spontaneous birth had thrown a spanner in the works that night, as they were again too busy with 10+ scheduled inductions taking place. Not only did I feel deflated after this experience, I know felt like a in inconvenience.

Sadly it was not the birth I had envisioned by any means, and if I was to have another child, I would think long and hard about my choice of care before birthing again.

There are far too many first time birth stories that all have the same tune to them. We're birthing for the first time, therefore it will be a long birth, we don't know our bodies etc.