

Submission
No 165

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

My experience birthing in rural NSW had a huge impact on my experience of early motherhood. I felt like a number and a timeline that had to fit into the schedule of the on-call obstetrician. Although they obtained my "consent" to perform an instrumental delivery, in reality I felt like I had no other choice. The doctor had to perform a c-section for another patient and wanted to "close off" my birth first, even though I was happy labouring and there were no concerns for myself or my baby.

I feared for my life and my body, as I had heard statistics about increased risk of injury with instrumental birth. Following the birth I required sutures and whilst carrying these out the doctor used the opportunity to detail to other staff personal details about another patient who had presented with a serious infection following the same procedure (vaginal/perineal sutures).

The result of all of this was that I felt very afraid of both experiencing the same outcome and of presenting with it to a medical professional, as the doctor described it in a lot of detail and talked very poorly of the patient in front of me. Following the birth I stayed in hospital for 3 days but was not allowed visitors except for my partner. The lack of contact with my close support system following what I deemed to be a traumatic experience was difficult and I started out as a mother feeling I had "failed" at the very first test - birth. I have had a lot of apprehension about having any more children as I have a lack of trust in medical professionals but also in myself.