

Submission
No 167

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

I experienced the birth of my first child at _____ Hospital. I was told I needed an urgent induction as my baby was 'small' on the day of my induction the doctors and nurses laughed about me being 'the induction for a small baby that isn't really small'. I had a male student midwife do all of my birth but not once did he disclose he was a student nor did he get consent to be my midwife. He constantly made mistakes and required other nurses to help him which involved numerous people touching me regardless of my birth plan stating otherwise.

I felt completely disempowered with no voice. They induced me with an oxytocin drip immediately after breaking my waters and didn't give me an option to wait for labour to start on its own. I birthed quickly but painfully as my body was not ready. I had to have an episiotomy. I birthed naturally with no pain relief as requested. But when it came time for doing my stitches I requested gas. The student was in charge of administering the gas and I had too much in that I blacked out. He was told to lower the dosage. I felt every stitch and I was screaming in pain and the midwives advised I 'can't feel anything' as if had a local. The male midwife stood over me and held me down so that I wouldn't move while they stitched me up. I had bruises on my arms and legs from this. As a survivor of sexual assault this was highly triggering and distressful for me.

I have autoimmune neutropenia and my haematologist had advised that it's not genetic and my daughter should be ok but they can test her cord blood just incase. I put this in my birth plan and was assured they will do this. They then advised they can't test the cord blood and took my daughter away upstairs to give her a blood test. I requested to go but they advised no it will take too long if I go and they took her without me. She came back with a large scratch on her leg - she was only a few hours old and the scratch hadn't been there prior. I felt sick at how I was treated and asked to be discharged 4 hours after the birth. I have extreme trauma from this experience so much so I am terrified to have another baby. I've had to see social workers to go over the trauma who have advised they can write a support letter for me to birth at another hospital. I've had to see psychologists due to ongoing fear of even my husband touching me due to my experience.