

Submission  
No 172

## INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

**Name:** Name suppressed

**Date Received:** 2 August 2023

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Partially  
Confidential

I experienced post birth trauma.

After my birth I waited over an hour for a staff member who could repair my grade two tear and episiotomy. Dr [redacted] came to suture my wounds. He was told by the midwives the level of tearing and where it was located, as well as the repair to the episiotomy site. He dismissed their assessment stating the tear was an extension of the episiotomy. It was not. He acted out of his scope and repaired my wounds incorrectly. My repair was anatomically incorrect.

Moreover, when 11 weeks pregnant at my first appointment with the antenatal clinic I informed the midwife to my level of scarring from previous births. She sought second opinion and placed my care with the doctors. Noting my concerns in my file suggesting a doctor look at the scarring to forge a plan. On a number of occasions I voiced my concerns about the scar tissue and its extent. It should have been in my notes. If Dr. [redacted] read my notes and the information was in fact evident in my notes, he may have realised the complexity of the scarring and called for assistance. However, he did not and spent over an hour causing damage to my vagina which even with corrective surgery still does not look or feel completely correct.

He did not call a registrar to check his work or even a midwife who sutures to check. He dismissed the assessment of the midwives and continued to incorrectly suture me. No one checked his work. He is a junior doctor learning in his chosen field. Without a teacher, he is not learning. His registrar who was overseeing him should have looked. They should have checked his work throughout the process or at a minimum at the end. As a teaching hospital this should be policy.

Detailing my complaint from the [redacted] 2023.

One week and one day after delivery and went to my GP to have my stitches checked. She referred me to the hospital and called the Birthing Unit ahead. She spoke to Midwife. Once I presented registrar [redacted] and a junior doctor come to look at my suturing. She told me it was fine and would repair by second intention. Told me to take antibiotics and keep it clean. She insinuated I was not keeping it clean and told me to keep it dry and change my pad more regularly. She did not or chose not to identify the inaccuracies of my repair and even instructed and taught her junior doctor that I had a small infection. This infection wasn't due to my 'inability to keep my wound clean', infection was going to happen due to the anatomically incorrect repair.

If Dr. [redacted] couldn't identify the inaccuracies of my repair then her training needs to be addressed as she may act in this manner in the future. As a registrar she should understand the anatomy of the vagina.

Midwife came to see me while I was still undressed waiting for the script. He asked to see the wound. He called for a second opinion and Midwife [redacted] assist him in understanding what had happened during my repair and the inaccurate repair conducted by Dr. [redacted]. They then called for a senior registrar. Once called Dr. [redacted] came to assess my wound. He identified it was incorrect straight away. However, Dr. [redacted] bedside manner during this encounter was rude and disrespectful. The Midwives, senior registrar and herself entered the assessment room together. I was crying after being told how incorrectly I was repaired. She stated to me 'why are you crying, when I left you, you were happy and now you're sad'. She belittled my feeling to cover her own inaccuracies and error. She did this with intention

directing her words towards the midwives who acted within policy and sought further advice. The actions of the midwives saw me readmitted two days later for surgery where I was repaired.

The impact of the negligence.

The actions of Dr. [redacted] have caused permanent damage to my vagina, even with repair. I am devastated that my first three weeks with my family of 5 and newborn were destroyed by his actions. I fear for my sexual function and the function of my vagina and rectum in the future. I am fearful that rather than spending money on my family I will have to spend a large sum of money seeking private doctors to further repair my vagina as I am still not happy with the repair. Even though the best job at the time was done. The damage the actions of Dr. [redacted] and Dr. [redacted] have caused are deeper than physical, I feel a loss and sadness when I think of the way I was treated and I feel anxious about my future as a result. They have damaged my birth experience, my confidence and my overall optimistic outlook. Their actions could have further repercussions as I fear intimacy and have anxiety of the prospect of with my husband when I am physically able.

The complications of this experience are ongoing and have been impactful on my day to day life. I am not the same person I was prior to this experience.