

Submission  
No 187

## INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

**Name:** Name suppressed

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Partially  
Confidential

## Birth Trauma NSW..

I enlisted a private midwife throughout my pregnancy to opt for a homebirth midway through my pregnancy as I was sure I wanted continuity of care and was unsuccessful (despite putting in my application at no more than 4 weeks pregnant!) To get onto the MGP. MGP is a program that should be STANDARD care, however even putting in a submission at 4 weeks gestation (no more than 2 weeks from conception!!) I was unsuccessful. There were apparently no more spaces. This speaks volumes to the lack of midwives available for women as they walk through possibly the most important and life altering journey of their life.

I was more so convinced to go with a private midwife given the time she had for me in the antenatal and postnatal period also. She attended our care until 6 weeks postpartum! The same midwife, intimate knowledge of us, able to quickly pick up any issues and support me through challenges that arose. Invaluable care that undoubtedly shaped the nurtured supported postpartum I had. Unfortunately this is far too commonly not the case for many, many of my friend, family and extended network which is very clearly related to the lack of support from health professionals given their limited availability, limited funding and the shortages of staff.

I had a beautiful home birth with private midwife. Unfortunately due to a post partum heamorrhage that although was managed well at home by midwives, couldn't be completely stopped due to blood clots in the uterus requiring a D&C under general anaesthetic, I required a transfer to Hospital around 2 hours post birth.

During my stay at Hospital I was completely shocked by the staffing shortages and resultingly the limited care that was able to be given to the patients, the mother's and baby's during our stay. I am aware that during our stay that the maternity ward was not completely full, but the midwife caring for us was advised that she had at that time and other times, up to 12 mother's that she was caring for, which meant 24 patients including the babies all under her care alone for a whole shift at a time, and she was often working double shifts at times also. This was outrageous! Not only did she have to apologise that it may take her some time to get around to us if we needed her, we hardly saw her! Due to my surgery, I was unable to move out of bed. I was strapped to machines of all kinds and as well as that, I was incredibly faint due to the blood I had lost and I was incredibly sore and swollen in the vulva region after giving birth. I had urinary incontinence and if I stood I would completely void my bladder. I couldn't move to get my baby.

My husband, my sole support and my limbs for everything was then asked to leave at 8pm. We could not believe how barbaric this was. I was completely distraught at the concept of him leaving and having to be alone to care for our baby when I couldn't move, I wasn't allowed to bedshare with her and the nurse was basically unavailable. My husband and I both cried and cried as he had to leave because he felt so useless. He kept saying he would honestly not sleep and would rather sit in a chair next to me to be able to pick up our baby when needed and pass her to me, help me if I needed something and just generally be the only physical and emotional support available to me, not no. He wasn't allowed. I still cannot believe how archaic and simply barbaric it was for me to have to be so broken and alone in that hospital bed so unable to care for myself and my baby. Too concerned for other people to continue to

press for help when I needed it given I was aware of how short staffed the midwives were. I am still shocked, disgusted and traumatized by the fact that this is our public health system!!

To make matters worse, through the night a beautiful mother turned up in the bed next to mine in our shared room and she had just woken from an emergency cesarean under general anaesthetic. This poor woman was phenomenally upset and distraught. She had no idea where her husband and baby were, she had not yet met her baby, didn't know if she was ok, the mother was completely traumatised by her birth and was left at 2am in the bed next to mine to cry, try and make sense of it all and to start to figure out where she was and what was happening. A lovely midwife did spend some time talking with her but this woman should have been given a private room to spend time with her husband, meet her baby and work through all of this. Instead I heard it ALL. she should not have had to share such a traumatic time and period of her life worrying about the other people in the room. It was handled in my opinion, disgustingly. And I know if I knew her personally and could get her contact she would have an incredibly traumatizing birth story to tell from Hospital.

In such a time of life that shapes women, families and children, one that can truly make or break people in their future, it is imperative that something be done to change the current format of how things are done. Women deserve to be heard, supported, empowered, given time!! But this isn't happening. I implore you to take action. I truly believe the prosperity and success of our nation depends on it.