

Submission  
No 192

## INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

**Name:** Name suppressed

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Partially  
Confidential

I've given birth twice and each birth has left me feeling emotionally okay and able to physically recover. I was lucky and privileged and as a consequence I didn't suffer any birth trauma. I say I was lucky because for each birth, I was one of the few women each month to be included in the MGP program. I say privileged, because I was in the position financially to be able to hire a private doula for both of my births.

How did these two factors help?

- The MGP program meant that I had the continuity of care that I needed to feel safe, cared for and in a position to ask questions confidently without feeling like a burden. My midwives for each birth were available via call and text whenever I had a question, they came to my house for follow ups after the birth and because they knew me we didn't have to spend time going over my details each time I came in to see them. They were respectful of my birth-plan, they were generous with their time, they gave me the impression that they were genuinely invested in my well-being, before, during and after each birth. This is very different to the experiences of my friends and women from my mothers group who were not lucky enough to be included in the MGP program. They faced long waits at the hospital, having to go over and over their histories with each new person they saw, and nobody who knew what they want/who they were when they came in in time to give birth.

- Having a private doula was key for me having unmedicated, no or low intervention births each time as doulas had a focus on minimal intervention in a way that the hospitals do not. Having a doula helped me really be able to give (or withhold) informed consent to all aspects of my births. For example - For my first birth I was diagnosed with Gestational Diabetes and at the routine appointment with the hospital obstetrician, she began by telling me we would usually induce at 38 weeks. If I hadn't have had my own doula, who briefed me about my options, about the cascade of interventions etc, I probably would have just gone along with it. Luckily I asked some questions and the Dr made it clear that it was 100% my choice and we could discuss it later if at all.

I am not an expert but I would love to see a birth landscape in NSW where it isn't just the lucky and the privileged who get to have non-traumatic births. MGP programs should be available to anyone who would prefer to use them than other hospital services. And Doula support should be subsidised and made accessible to all.