

Submission
No 199

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

hospital 2021

My wife gave birth to our first child via a “planned emergency c section”.

The previous day the OB/GYN identified there was minor placental tear and the child had moved into a breach position.

Although the information and the reason provided was limited and biased, it was a minimum risk at all cost mentality. The procedure went relatively well, and when my son was born, we were able to carry out most of our birth plan i.e. skin on skin contact, breastfeeding and seeding.

Pressing Issues started to show during the post birth care. I felt the care was biased. I had no idea how to hold or even change my child’s nappy and a nurse/midwife was more than happy to help and demonstrate and guide me throughout the process.

But when my wife asked for assistance and guidance with breastfeeding and other crucial care, there was a real difference in treatment. It felt as though that as a mother, she should know all these things.

I feel that due to the birth being a c-section with her file indicating “planned c-section”, her treatment and support was lesser compared to a natural birthing mother. This included pain management, support and guidance in caring for our child and, support for a new mother who just experienced major abdominal surgery. In a way she was punished and provided lesser care for not having or attempting to have a natural birth.

Support from midwives would vary greatly and each morning I would arrive to the hospital with my wife in a highly distressed, physically and emotionally drained state, worse than the previous night I left.

Post hospital care and support was minimal. There was next to no pain treatment plan other than Panadol and ibuprofen. The one size fits all in the technique provided when it came to breastfeeding support was not effective and the whole process from baby positioning to attaching was forced and not effective, resulting in physical and emotional trauma to both my child and wife. It wasn’t until we paid for external lactation support that breast feeding became a “healthy” experience.

The experience in its entirety has greatly impacted and delayed our decision to have another child.