

**Submission
No 240**

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Organisation: Fantastic Futures

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Philippa Scott

Director

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Birth Trauma Inquiry Committee

Subject: Submission - Birth Trauma Therapy and Obstetric Violence at Fantastic Futures

Dear Committee,

I am writing to provide a comprehensive submission to the Birth Trauma Inquiry regarding my work in birth trauma therapy at Fantastic Futures and the concerning prevalence of obstetric violence affecting approximately 90% of my clients nationally.

Fantastic Futures is a leading institution committed to providing specialized support and therapy for individuals who have experienced birth trauma, as well as birth workers affected by birth trauma. Our team is focused on helping clients navigate the emotional and psychological challenges that often arise from difficult birthing experiences. Over the years, we have gathered a substantial amount of data and insights regarding the prevalence and impact of birth trauma, particularly in relation to obstetric violence.

Obstetric violence refers to situations where birthing individuals experience physical, emotional, or psychological abuse or mistreatment during the childbirth process. This can include instances of non-consensual medical procedures, disrespectful treatment, humiliation, coercion, and neglect. Our therapy sessions provide a safe space for clients to share their experiences, process their emotions, and embark on a healing journey towards recovery.

In recent years, our records indicate that a concerning pattern has emerged. Approximately 90% of our clients nationwide have reported experiencing obstetric violence in some form during their birthing experiences. This alarming statistic underscores the urgent need for greater awareness, systemic change, and support for birthing individuals across the nation.

Key points from our submission include:

1. **Client Data Analysis:**** Our records, comprising a substantial number of cases, consistently show that the overwhelming majority of our clients have encountered obstetric violence during**

their childbirth experiences. These cases encompass a range of mistreatment, from medical procedures conducted without informed consent to emotional abuse from healthcare providers.

2. **Impact on Mental Health:** The consequences of obstetric violence extend far beyond the birthing process itself. Many of our clients exhibit symptoms of anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and even birth-related phobias due to their traumatic experiences. Our therapy sessions play a vital role in helping them rebuild their lives and regain a sense of control over their emotional well-being.

3. **Advocacy for Change:** As an organization deeply invested in the well-being of birthing individuals, Fantastic Futures actively advocates for policy changes and healthcare system reforms to address the prevalence of obstetric violence. We collaborate with medical professionals, policymakers, and advocacy groups to raise awareness, promote respectful maternity care, and foster a culture of empowerment and consent during childbirth.

4. **Support Programs:** In addition to therapy sessions, Fantastic Futures offers support groups, educational workshops, and online resources for both clients and healthcare providers. These initiatives aim to create a more compassionate and informed environment for birthing individuals, ultimately contributing to a reduction in the incidence of obstetric violence.

We believe that the Birth Trauma Inquiry presents a valuable opportunity to shed light on the urgent need for reform within the maternity care system. By sharing our experiences, insights, and the compelling data we have amassed, we hope to contribute to a meaningful dialogue that drives positive change and ensures that all birthing individuals receive the respectful, compassionate, and safe care they deserve.

Thank you for considering our submission. We remain committed to the well-being of birthing individuals and look forward to the opportunity to engage further in this essential conversation.

Sincerely,

Philippa Scott

Director

Fantastic Futures