

Submission
No 290

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

My name is _____, I love in _____ and I have a six week old daughter.

I had my baby at _____ public hospital in July 2023.

I applied for MGP very early in my pregnancy but did not get a spot. I was able to get a spot in the 'MAPS' midwife program.

Late in my pregnancy I suffered from gestational hypertension and was admitted a number of times for observation.

Due to my blood pressure I was advised it was best to have an induction at 39 weeks.

On the day of my birth I had my waters broken at 9am. I had the drip/ oxytocin medication started at 10am.

The first few hours progressed as expected.

Later in the afternoon, I was having contractions back to back without a break. I had my husband (an Intensive care Paramedic) and my sister (nurse/ midwife) with me as my support team.

I told my sister I was not getting a break and she looked at my CTG and could see I was having 6 contractions on 10 minutes, not the 4 in 10 that are normal.

When the midwife next came into the room I told her I was having too many contractions, and I was not getting rest. She replied words to the effect of, "oh good, means it's working, time to turn it up". Instead of listening to me she then turned the dosage of the drip up again. I very much felt like I was being rushed along so they could get me out of the room.

I was feeling like I was getting out of control and requested a warm shower for pain management. I swapped to the wireless monitoring and got into the shower. The shower was stone cold. It was then that I was informed by a midwife that they thought the birthing unit hot water was out as the water was cold in other birthing rooms too.

I requested morphine and gas for pain management at this point.

I continued to labour.

About 6pm I reached the 'pushing' stage. I pushed for a while and I was then told that the baby was not recovering as quick as they would like after each contraction.

It was at this point, when I was fully dilated and pushing that I was informed that the baby had turned into the posterior position. The midwife had noticed when she had performed the vaginal examination at 4cm dilated, but had not informed me.

I pushed for a few more contractions, but the baby remained at -2.

A doctor came into the room and I was told, "you need a section". I was informed that I needed an emergency c-section. I was told to stop pushing or I could hurt the baby.

By this stage the morphine had worn off and all I had was the gas for pain management.

I was given an injection to help stop the contractions, however it did not do anything.

From the time I was told I needed an 'emergency' c-section - 6:30pm, to the time I was actually taken to the theatre- 9:30pm, was 3 hours. My husband was told that a lady had been taken to theatre for an instrumental birth, but ended up having a C-section, and at the same time that I was told I needed one, another lady had also been told that she needed one and her

baby was worse off than mine. I was not told about this. I was repeatedly just told I would be going to theatre soon.

In those three hours, every half an hour or so, the midwife would lift up my legs and tell me to push so she could see if the baby had moved. After one contraction she would tell me to stop pushing again. This was extremely distressing to me as it is a natural instinct to push and you do not have much control at all to just stop. It was emotionally draining to have to try to stop pushing for so long after being told I was putting the baby at risk, then to be told every once in a while to push again.

I had to argue to get a portable bottle of gas to use while I was wheeled to theatre.

Finally, I was taken to theatre, wheeled in and someone said, "what is she doing here, we're not ready for her yet". I was put into a side room.

I was taken into theatre to be given the spinal where I was just expected to move about the room, hop up onto a different bed etc, like I was morning any pain at all. Just before the spinal I told them that the gas had run out. I received a condescending, "no it's not, it's all good". My husband looked and pointed out that the gas had in fact run out.

I had the c-section and was taken to recovery.

I believe that if the induction had not been mismanaged (turned up too much and too quickly) my baby would have had time to rest and recover, and would have had the energy she needed for the final stage of labour.

5 days after the birth I was still in hospital due to high blood pressure. I had been up all night from midnight to 6:30am with my baby who would not sleep or settle. I called a nurse/midwife into the room and asked for help settling her. I was made to feel bad for asking for help. I was told that other mums on the ward needed help with feeding, and because I was not having trouble feeding that I did not need help. I was then told that they would only take the baby for 20 minutes because it was change over time and they had other things to do.