

Submission
No 371

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

In April 2023 I gave birth at [REDACTED] private

In the lead up to to birth, I was supported in my choice to try for a vba2c and was informed of the risks involved, however in presenting my birth plan to my OB it felt like it was almost brushed over and she didn't even want to take a copy. I had also attended a hypnobirthing class and done extensive research and preparation to give myself the best chance at the vba2c and sometimes the new information I had presented seemed like it wasn't relevant or heard.

After spending the night in the labour ward after my water had broken (without my OB visiting that night) I was advised i wouldn't be leaving the hospital without a baby the next day and I would either be presented with a choice of an intervention to speed up labour or a cesarean section due to my condition.

One of the worst moments for me was when my OB visited first thing the next morning, I was in good spirits after baby had been monitoring well all night and she came in without a positive outlook at all, the tension between her and my midwife's was very uncomfortable. I was advised if I wasn't dilated at all I had to have an emergency csection otherwise myself and my baby could die. This was also so confusing as the midwife who was with me the whole night kept advising everything was going fine, when according to my OB I was not and there was misinformation given to me overnight regarding my condition.

At this time when I should have felt cared for and supported, I felt so let down and confused, I was basically told after breaking down into tears that I was aware this could happen and basically I shouldn't be so upset. My baby had monitored perfectly all night and I felt completely well. I don't feel like i was given an opportunity to ask questions or really process the whole situation and was backed into a corner based around fear. I understand they have to assess the situation based on potential risk and to cover themselves but it all could have been handled so much better, my dreams of a vba2c were shattered.

Birth trauma has impacted my mental health as it's something i replay in my head over and over again and ask myself why couldn't it have been different? Why didn't It get explained better, why didn't I ask more questions. I wish she had been more compassionate, I also left the situation thinking after this traumatic experience I don't think I could have another baby. I've been left with feelings of failure as to why I couldn't just birth my baby naturally.

If I could recommend change one thing to prevent birth trauma and improve care it would be to make sure all health professionals are continually upto date with the newest research available, to give women the best chance at birthing the way they choose, and having them feel supported and informed 100%