

Submission
No 391

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

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Partially
Confidential

Subject: Submission on Traumatic Birth Experience and Maternal Care

Dear Chairperson of the Select Committee on Birth Trauma,

I am writing to share my deeply distressing experience during the birth of my daughter on 22 September 2018.

I had my first baby in _____ Hospital in September 2018, a month before it closed and the Hospital opened.

I had a traumatic birth which I almost lost my life in twice in two different surgeries from loss of blood and drop in blood pressure.

My baby was delivered by a doctor in training, that information was not disclosed to us at the time of delivery. What should have been an emergency caesarean became a forceps delivery, episiotomy, broken tailbone and retained placenta followed by 3 x blood transfusions due to haemorrhage and 2 emergency surgeries, one immediately after birth another 3 weeks later.

My husband said the bed I was in was dripping blood from underneath into a large pool of blood on the floor. My body went into hypovolemic shock. I told him my vision went black and ears were ringing. The alarms were going off. Everyone available

My body was in so much shock that I could not stand by myself and my whole body was shaking uncontrollably. As I was rushed to theatre I remember how cold I felt and my entire body was trembling. I trembled for a couple of hours after the spinal block d&c to manually remove the placenta.

Less than a week after giving birth I could not walk, could not hold or pick up my baby. I constantly had waves of nausea and when I would stand up my vision would black out and I'd feel dizzy. We returned to the hospital we went where I had a doctors tell me there was no issue and was sent home.

For 3 weeks I called _____ Hospital telling them I felt so unwell, I was dizzy and blacking out but they told me it's normal to feel that way after having a baby. We packed our bags and went back to _____ hospital as we were not satisfied it was normal. They eventually decided to refer me for an ultrasound. I was internally haemorrhaging and I was referred on to private treatment at _____ by a private obstetrician.

After having an ultrasound they found a large piece of placenta. I not only had an infection which I know was a direct cause of my manual placenta removal, it was turning to sepsis. I had to have another surgery, this time at _____ as I refused to let _____ touch me. This is when my blood pressure dropped so low the surgeon didn't think I was going to wake up. It was meant to be a day surgery but I stayed 4 days. My 3 week old baby had to stay at home with my husband as I was too unwell to care for her.

I had lost a lot of blood in the first surgery and had extremely low blood pressure. My vision went black and my ears were ringing as I was haemorrhaging. The second surgery 3 weeks later, my blood pressure dropped so low the surgeon didn't think I was going to wake up.

I wasn't able to breastfeed my baby and was pushed by the hospital to breastfeed not bottle feed. Formula was treated like it was the devil in the public hospital. I listened to my mother and gave my baby formula so she wasn't starving. The advice provided by the hospital was beyond negligent. Eventually once the retained placenta was removed my milk came in and I could breastfeed. I didn't have a big supply as I was still unwell.

A year later after my birth I was diagnosed with Asherman's syndrome after I never got a period after my birth. I wanted to have another baby so we had to resolve the issues but most gp's told me it was normal to not get a period for a year. I had to push so hard to get answers.

I've had 9 surgeries to correct the issues I was caused from her birth. We spent thousands on medical specialists. We had calls with lawyers who told us we still have time to submit our case (3 year window) and we had a strong case of medical negligence against NSW Health, but we would be out of pocket by approx \$200k in legal fees until we won the case. As a young family with a house and child it seemed risky to go ahead with a law suit and we were funding ivf.

It cost me my fertility and tens of thousands of dollars in specialist fees, scans, tests and ivf. The ivf ended didn't work for us but I did end up having a baby without the aid of ivf. It took 3 years.

We found out this doctor had done this to multiple other women and one happened to be my naturopath who had to have 11 surgeries to correct the damage done by the same doctor who delivered my baby. The doctor was thankfully fired. I would hope she's been de-registered but I am not hopeful. The amount of trauma this person has caused is unreal.