

Submission
No 331

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

I was pregnant during the 2021 lockdowns so I had to go to every appointment alone and they always felt rushed over to get me out of the clinic fast. No birth options were really covered in depth and I was basically given a flyer and sent on my way so I didn't really have great care during my pregnancy.

I was 7 days overdue and was encouraged to book in for an induction which was booked at the hospital for the next day, Thursday. The first part went fine, the tape was inserted and didn't really do much, then the balloon was inserted and it sent my body into really hard and fast contractions to the point that my baby's heart rate would drop, then come good, then drop again and it was a long night with little sleep and a lot of monitoring. At one stage they called my partner to come back up to the hospital in case of having to have an emergency delivery.

I was the first on the list to have my balloon removed in the morning, Friday, and have my induction drip inserted and started and my waters broken. As I was literally climbing up onto the bed to have my waters broken we got bumped from Birth Suite as an emergency birth was on its way in and needed my room. We were told it was only going to be a little wait and we'll get the next available birth suite... by now my body was losing my mucus plug, in early labour and I was having contractions every 10-15 minutes with the pain getting worse as time went on. I waited on the Ward for a further 2 whole shift changes - in tears from the pain, exhaustion from not getting any sleep, meals forgotten to be provided, alone from 8pm as my partner was sent home, continually getting bumped until late Saturday when the lovely midwife who was looking out for me finally got us a Birth Suite locked in. By now my birth plan was way out of the window and our only goal was to get the baby out.

My waters were broken at about 6.30pm and drip started shortly after. The drip was too much too quickly and my contractions were rolling into each other - I was having more than 3 every 5 minutes. So much so I went from 2cm to 7cm in about 2 hours and then was denied any pain interventions as I was too far along. By 10pm that night I was in so much pain I couldn't advocate for myself very well. I had asked for the drip to be turned down or removed and the midwives weren't listening when I said I had pressure to push. I was fully dilated but being ignored. In one particularly bad contraction spasm I ended up ripping out my drip canula and the midwife then spent 7 failed attempts trying to reinsert it until I shouted at her to stop and begged to have my dialation checked which she finally did and realised I was fully dilated.

By now my baby's heart rate kept dropping again but he was almost crowning. I suddenly had a room full of Dr's, Nurses and Special Nursery Nurses and I was told I was going to need an episiotomy to get my baby out quickly due to his heart rate dropping. My contractions were so intense I couldn't tell when one ended and the next one started. I had a midwife telling me when to push, a Dr cutting a wider opening and my baby was delivered with an ventouse assistance. I gave birth at 1.12am Sunday, 3 days after my original induction booking.

He was fine after a while on room oxygen but due to the exhaustion of my birth I basically passed out and didn't get to really bond with him until after 5am that morning.

I had to wait for a spare bed on postnatal so sat in Birth Suite for the whole of Sunday. No one really explained what my after birth care was, and we were pushed to the ward into a bed which had a broken buzzer, I wasn't given dinner or breakfast. I begged to go home on the Monday afternoon (day 5 of being in hospital) which was probably too early to be going home in hindsight. His tongue tie was completely missed, even after raising concerns with midwives at the hospital that he wasn't latching properly and he was screaming non-stop due to being

hungry, and asking for a lactation consult and being told I didn't need one. The at home visits also missed his tongue tie. My GP picked the tongue tie up at our 2 week check up.

Overall it wasn't an overly traumatic birth experience, but I felt extremely forgotten in an overworked and busy hospital, and ill-informed on what was actually happening during my induction, and ignored when I raised concerns.

I gave birth at ter Hospital in March 2022