

## INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

**Name:** Name suppressed

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Partially  
Confidential

I birthed my son in 2014 at the

Hospital.

I had wanted a natural birth in the birth suite, completely healthy pregnancy with no concerns. However, from 25 weeks onwards, I was told my son was 'measuring small' and that this needed to be monitored. The midwives failed to note he was positioned posterior, and was in fact growing well, born at 7.2pounds in perfect health.

This fear mongering continued throughout the pregnancy. I went into labour naturally at 41 weeks (having to firmly decline persistent suggestions of stretch and sweeps and 'being late'. I laboured calmly at home for 24 hours, however contractions didn't progress past 5 minutes. I wasn't concerned, however went into the birth suite when i grew fatigued to have a check that baby was okay. As soon as I entered the hospital, I was 'on the clock'. The midwives and doctor were pushing 'to get baby out' before the doctor finished her shift in 5 hours time. They stated it was best to break my waters which I did not want, however felt forced as they said it was 'for safety'. This then set in motion a list of chaotic interventions, all against my birth plan and gut instincts. As they had failed to notice my son was posterior, I had contractions on top of one another with no break, my back spasming continuously and baby became lodged in my pelvis with no waters to move in.

They refused to let me in the shower, to position myself on hands and knees (this would have helped him move into position!) and instead forced me to lay on my back for 5 hours, pushing, trying to attach monitors to his little head, tried the vacuum unsuccessfully twice and after 36 hours, called a code green and raced us to surgery for an emergency csection under general anesthetic. I was fully aware of what was happening, in back labour and the cae doctor attempted to pin me down as he inserted a catheter into my urethra stating "don't fight me". The midwife eventually noted that I was unable to lie flat whilst having contractions. My last thought as I went under was that I gave up and wanted to die. I hemorrhaged in surgery and later woke up, completely traumatised and defeated.

I spent three days in hospital with no check in from the doctor, no counselling offers and having reactions to the pain medication that I eventually just ceased so I could be present with my son. I was then sent home with no further support, no follow up and later had a uterus infection, PTSD symptoms and PPD and PP anxiety. As a counselor specializing in CPTSD, I'm horrified that this was my experience of birth. I've sought years of help and support since to navigate the effects and ongoing impact of birth trauma on myself and my son. This 'system' is broken. I will never birth within it again. This experience was my greatest teacher, but not one I would wish on any other woman.