

Submission  
No 319

## INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

**Name:** Name suppressed

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Partially  
Confidential

I'm a mother of two children and had birth related trauma for each one, despite the children being born in different hospitals - both in NSW. I was born in South America however, I've been in Australia since I was four years old – I am now 38 I have a double degree and work in the professional services sector.

My first was born at [redacted] in Sydney in 2019, I was 35 years old. I was induced at 38 weeks due to my age and gestational diabetes. I was a private patient and my obstetrician was amazing, however I experienced birth trauma in my interactions with midwives and nurses. This occurred during two key points:

- during an internal examination where the nurse was checking, if my cervix had moved, I found the nurse to be quite forceful, and when I asked her to stop due to the pain, I was feeling, I was ignored, and she did not stop. As someone who suffers PTSD and complex PTSD due to childhood sexual abuse, this was quite triggering for me, and made me feel very uncomfortable. I did make a complaint and how they complaint was handled was appreciated as a doctor took over and offered to do the examination with gas so that I didn't feel as much pain. This doctor was wonderful, she checked in during the procedure to ensure I was OK.
- The second point which was also triggering for me, was the amount of times I was questioned by different midwives and nurses on why I wasn't breast-feeding. I made the choice not to breast-feed, and this was on my file, however, I was interrogated by one particular nurse, who refused to leave my room until I told her why I didn't want to breast-feed. I didn't want to bring up my childhood trauma during such a special time in my life however, I was basically forced to to get this nurse to leave me alone.

Highly suggest, for there to be a trauma informed approach to the care provided to women birthing, as women may not only experience trauma while they are giving birth, but they may also come with pre-existing trauma, which can be triggered and exacerbated by the words and actions of nurses and midwives.

Giving birth is one of the most magical things in a woman's life, we literally grow a little human inside of us, the delivery of these babies should be treated as such however, I feel like there is an a balance between medical procedures and patient care. I sincerely hope that this inquiry can suggest some more. Patient centered and trauma informed approaches so that women can experience one of life's most important in magical moments in a more positive light.

For the birth of my son, I had a cesarean at [redacted] Hospital in 2022. I ended up checking myself out early (3 days post partrum) as I was unhappy with the care I was receiving. I left the hospital in tears. There was a lot of miscommunication between nurses during shift changes and given the fact I wasn't breast-feeding I didn't receive the right pain management plan. I was treated unfairly and rudely for wanting pain killers. When I left the hospital, one of the nurses apologized stating that they were following protocols for someone who was breast-feeding.