

Submission  
No 322

## INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

**Name:** Name suppressed

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Partially  
Confidential

My first daughter was born in July 2023.

I was scheduled for an induction as my daughter was post dates, this was something I hadn't wished for but consented after discussions with my midwife and partner. I felt quite anxious around this decision and was scheduled at 40+6.

My partner and I attended the hospital for the induction and met with our student midwife, we waited some time before she was able to locate the obstetrician on duty to place the gel in begin the induction. After some time the obstetrician entered the room, reading the news on her phone, she appeared like we had interfered with her time as she wanted to finish reading the article, I had never met and had no prior relationship with this doctor however she proceeded to speak to myself and my partner about her sons sex life, saying 'my son is away and having unprotected sex with his girlfriend' and other inappropriate comments that made me feel uncomfortable. She than proceeded to tell me her 'rules' for inserting the gel, one of these rules was to not move away from her. The procedure was excruciating and my body reactively moved away and it felt as if I was being scolded by her for doing so, I was in tears and it felt as though she was trying to hurt me, not pausing or taking a break. Prior to this procedure I had two stretch and sweeps from two different midwives, both of which were uncomfortable and at some points painful, but nothing unbearable or had brought me to tears, when needed the midwife would stop and pause if it was too painful and ask when I was ready to continue, this was not the experience with the obstetrician.

After the procedure with the doctor I Was in tears and felt extremely upset, the doctor then straight away asked me to consent to a number of things, including the remainder of the induction process, epesiotomy if needed and possibly other things that I can not remember as I was so worked up. The doctor than asked me to explain the induction process to her while I was crying.

I felt quite upset the rest the night which was not a good start to the induction which I was already nervous about and my partner than had to leave for the night I.

Due to other priorities and emergencies, I did not see another doctor to continue the induction until the next morning, the next doctors were beautiful and appropriate. While I had not progressed they had planned to break my waters later in the day, however I did not see anyone due to further priorities, I began having contractions during the day and into the night, this it was upsetting that I had to go through early labour alone in the hospital room without my partner during the night as he once again had to leave. At around 4am I was moved into the birthing ward at 40+1 and was 4cm dilated, I was than given permission to contact my partner to come into the hospital.

I feel my labour went well, the midwife broke my waters and I was 8cm dilated. After some time baby became distressed and a team of midwives and the same obstetrician came to the room, my daughter was born with the assistance of an epesiotomy and vaccumm. This was all okay.

A few days later the same obstetrician came to my room, I felt anxious straight away. She asked if I had any questions about the birth and proceeded to tell me that 'all you young ones have trouble because you are so tight', I told her I felt worried about my stitches as they were causing me a lot of pain, she than told me 'oh don't worry, your designer vagina is going to be fine' this comment really upset me and I didn't feel comfortable asking any further questions as I felt my pain was dismissed, at that point in time I had no concern about how

anything looked down there, but had real concern about any possibility of infection, and I felt as though my pain was not taken seriously.

This was my first birth and the first time I have ever been in hospital, the comments this doctor had made to me during my time were completely inappropriate particularly as when you feel so vulnerable and exposed. From the way she so comfortably made these comments to me, I am sure this would be a regular occurrence and I don't wish for any other women to have to experience this in the future.

Since my daughters birth, I have spoken with my midwife and GP and have been referred to psychological support to process my daughters birth. All of the other doctors and midwives were absolutely beautiful and made me feel safe and cared for, it is so upsetting to me that one individual in such a position of power has made me feel this way, in the future I wish for staff to communicate in a caring an appropriate manner and ensure consent is given during procedures with staff continually checking in when someone appears in pain, I also hope that pain management can be taken seriously and not dismissed.

Thankyou for taking the time to hear our experiences and I hope changes can be made in the future.