

Submission  
No 323

## INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

**Name:** Name suppressed

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Partially  
Confidential

In March 2018, i gave birth at \_\_\_\_\_ Hospital,

What was meant to be a happy event meeting our baby was traumatic and has affected my other pregnancies & birth choices

In the lead up to birth, i was placed under obstetric care due to high BMI. I had no other pregnancy complications in early pregnancy. Each and every appointment i saw a dofferent doctor and had to go through all my information each time. Often the doctor would be reading my notes/hospital record as we had an appointment. This felt really unpersonal and there was no continuity of care. At 38 weeks, I noticed that baby's movements has decreased. My partner and other support people were at work that day. I phoned the birth suite and was asked to attend the hospital for monitoring. I lived an hour away from the hospital at that time, and had no support person that day. When I arrived at the birth suite, I was placed into a room that had a hospital bed but otherwise felt like a storage cupboard. The midwife attempted to find my baby's heartbeat but was struggling to do so, so called a more senior midwife. The senior midwife also could not find a heartbeat and before leaving the room that midwife sternly "You know what this means don't you?" I was a first time parent who had no idea what that meant and what was happening. I instantly felt even more scared and alone, fearful that something happened to my baby. I was then left alone whilst a doctor was called to do a bedside ultrasound. The doctor arrived a short time after, and scanned my entire stomach to find that my baby had flipped footling breech but was fine. It was decided at that point that I would be admitted for monitoring and was not able to leave. As I was admitted on a Wednesday, and care options moving forward were made kn Thursday, I was to stay in hospital.

The rest of my stay and care was fine. In a few points, I received an ECV, then 2 days later my baby flipped back so I elected for a caesarean section

On the morning of my caesarean section I received a bedside scan that found my baby was in the right position for induction.

So the elective did not go ahead and I was to have induction started that day. I don't recall at any point my options being thoroughly discussed with me

But I do remember every internal exam being painful and very uncomfortable.

Induction started with cerdavit and left over night.

Early the next morning I was woken to go to birth suite to continue with induction as have my waters broken. The Plan was to break my waters prior to 7am. I rang my partner and told him to get there asap and due to the travel/distance he got there just in time.

The doctor came to break my waters and I remember being told I was "lucky to get the doctor with small hands". This made me feel very uncomfortable and ashamed.

My waters were broken and syntocin drip started and contractions came in thick and fast and painfully. I laboured for hours and was considered to be in active labour. A few hours later I was checked and dialated to 4-5cms. Due to the time frame of induction I was considered "failure to progress" and advised I required an emergency c section

I don't remember being told at the time, but in the birth debrief I was advised that I had meconium stained waters.

My daughter was born just after 10pm the night. She was beautiful and healthy but I was certainly worse for wear physically and mentally.

I did not feel safe during birth and felt like everything was out of my control

The comments made in this birth mentioned above have stuck with me since 2018. Not completely understanding my options has significantly impacted my future birth choices, and my journey into becoming a parent. At the time they affected my bond with my baby, the relationship with myself and my body. I felt like a failure because that's what my induction was called.

If I could recommend one thing for ALL women is continuity of care regardless of pregnancy risk factors.