

Submission
No 452

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

My name is [REDACTED], I have given at [REDACTED] in Sydney as well as [REDACTED] Hospital.

My first birth at [REDACTED] in 2015 I was in the MGP Program and had a positive experience. I felt very supported by my midwife before, during and after my birth. Even though I had birth injuries after a forceps birth I was able to properly debrief multiple times in the following days with my midwife and don't feel traumatised by that birth.

I couldn't access the MGP in 2018 for my second pregnancy because I had gestational diabetes at [REDACTED]. I fully chose an induction with this birth because of the size of my first baby and was given as much time as I wanted after the gel was inserted in the morning to walk around [REDACTED] and spend time with my husband. Even after my waters broke I was given as much time as I needed. That birth, even tho it was an induction, was very positive experience and I was supported to try different birthing positions.

My third birth in 2023 was at [REDACTED] Hospital which was a very different experience. I had a miscarriage before this pregnancy and felt very fearful about this pregnancy. No one asked anything about my miscarriage.

I chose an induction again but it was very different than at [REDACTED]. The obstetrician told me I couldn't use the gel this time, even though I had a good experience with the gel previously. He didn't ask me what I wanted.

I went in to the birthing unit the night before my induction because of reduced fetal movements. I overheard midwives talking about how understaffed they were and heard a midwife apologise to a mother saying she was sorry no one was there to catch the baby and I felt extremely anxious hearing this, as did my husband.

The next night I went in for my induction and was given the Foleys catheter. While the junior doctor was attempting to insert it, something snapped and made a very loud noise. Several people tried to blow up the balloon inside of me but it didn't work. That was a very invasive experience. They eventually decided they couldn't do it and said I could have the gel.

Getting the gel in the evening was a very different experience than getting it in the morning. I probably slept for two hours that night. Then I was thrilled because my contractions had started and felt strong and I felt so empowered that I had gone into labour.

I assumed at that point that I would have time to let my labour progress. But the doctor wanted to break my waters and didn't give me any choice, and broke them straight away.

I was also told in labour that my baby had a hole in her heart that had been picked up on the 36 week ultrasound and was on the report but the doctor had not read the report properly enough to tell us.

A midwife said to me that the doctor would want to start syntocinon straight away so that the baby could be born during the day while the doctors were all on site. I said "am i allowed to ask for time?" and they said they would give me 2 hours.

they gave me two hours of the dot and the midwife strongly recommended I start the drip.

My birth looked like my second birth but felt very different. I felt completely disappointed and disempowered. It wasn't until I left the hospital that those feelings set in and there was no support.

Also after the birth there was an abscess in my vagina and about five people looked at it including two senior doctors and I felt very exposed.

I really wish I had contact with midwives during my pregnancy, continuity of care and I wish I would have been given more time at every stage of the induction.

██████████ Hospital policies were so much less respectful than at ██████. ██████ felt like it was about me, and not just the baby. This difference was significant.