

Submission
No 418

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 13 August 2023

Partially
Confidential

My wife was pregnant due March 2020.

She received care in a NSW Health public hospital.

We attended the hospital's birth and parenting class. This class was the beginning of the grooming behaviour. The midwife explained some of the interventions and started passing around the instruments used to do episiotomies. After she explained the risks and benefits My wife realised how barbaric and unnecessary episiotomies are she asked what happens if you decline an episiotomy the midwife laughed and said "we will just guilt you into it until you say yes". She said this to the whole group. This started to raise red flags for us but unfortunately was just the beginning.

My wife was 40 weeks 10 days so they sent her to the day assessment unit (DAU) to make sure everything was okay- not for any reason other than her due date.

The scans were perfect, the male midwife told her-not asked told her it was time for a vaginal exam. He never asked for consent, never explained the procedure, never explained the risks. Once he started I could see her crying, she was arching her back trying to move away from him but he just kept going. Once he finished he told her to clean herself up and come back out. She stood up and blood was all over the bed and dripping down her legs, she was trembling and to be honest she's never been the same.

We came out and he had booked an induction, he never spoke to us about the induction, never explained the risks or benefits. Never asked us/ her if that's what she wanted just again did whatever he wanted. She declined and he threatened that she had to speak with a dr before leaving. This Dr coerced her into an induction, she told us our baby would die if we didn't do it. She told me I had to convince her to go ahead with it as "she's not able to make rational decisions this late in pregnancy". As we left the conversation with the Dr the male midwife laughed at the dr and said "that's if she even needs it I really messed it up in there". What did he mess up if he did an exam as it says in her records?!

The induction happened again and things were just done to her. They never explained anything to us, just interventions after interventions. The midwife refused to help her unless she got an epidural, she would say no then the midwife would roll her eyes sigh and leave. Then she agreed to an epidural not because she wanted one, but because she thought that was the only way the midwife would help her.

They called it and made her have a c-section that to this day we do not believe was necessary.

When she was discharged there was no mention of recovery, there was no post op appointment to check the healing etc. She was given 2 days of pain relief and forced to see a GP for more pain relief. This was the beginning of the pandemic so forcing her into a car when she cannot walk to go to a clinic at 5 days PP and a 5 day old baby out for pain relief after major surgery? I've had stitches in my finger and was given scripts and weeks worth of pain relief?

She pushed so hard to change this process and every step of the complaints process she was ignored. We have literally been told by the midwifery unit manager she is aware they are doing it.. the HCCC didn't listen to her at all. They only read what was written in her medical records and dismissed any evidence she put forward. The complaints process is extremely corrupt. She's contacted local members of parliament, the ministry of health, lawyers every possible Avenue but no one cares.

I watched my wife's mental health deteriorate at an alarming rate. She was convinced our daughter would be better off without her. I almost lost my wife, my daughter almost lost her mother due to these providers abusive "care". When we decided to have another baby we sat down and had many conversations about maternity care and how we could possibly go back there and trust them again? Not just them but the whole system. You can change hospitals but the next one still follows the same policies.

We decided we felt safest managing the pregnancy and birth ourselves we had a wild pregnancy and planned a freebirth. We felt safer birthing on our own in our home than with them. I made her promise if she intuitively felt a need to attend the hospital that she would.

I watched my wife go through flash backs, suffer intrusive thoughts, panic attacks, left her job at the hospital. She will never be the same person.