

Submission  
No 457

## INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

**Name:** Name suppressed

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Partially  
Confidential

Birth of our daughter [REDACTED] [REDACTED] hospital

My ideal birth was a medicated natural birth where my husband delivered, cut the cord and announced the gender. Unfortunately I had the opposite birth.

After being diagnosed with hashimotos thyroiditis and told by my midwives that it could affect the growth of my baby I was placed on thyroxine to reduce my tsh levels by my GP. I then had regular growth scans throughout the pregnancy to ensure the baby was measuring at the correct gestational age.

During my out patient appointments at [REDACTED] hospital I experienced a very toxic and unsupported environment, I was a fit 28 year old weighing 68kg when I fell pregnant throughout my pregnancy at my midwife appointments I was regularly weighed and 'fat shamed' as they would request me to stand on the scales and then turn the computer screen and shown me the expected weight projection for someone in my percentile. They then told me to 'watch what I eat as I am putting on too much weight' and offered me the healthy eating in pregnancy program, which I refused as I was working in an emergency department full time until 32 weeks gestation with regular exercise of gentle walking daily and a healthy diet. As a woman in a vulnerable state growing a baby being told I am 'fat' constantly was causing a significant decline in my mental health, I began focusing on food portions and food groups, eating foods I could barely tolerate as it was a healthier option.

Throughout my pregnancy I went in to birthing suite for decreased movement at 26 and 28 weeks gestation, after the doctor performed a bedside ultrasound during the 28 week scare at 8.30 at night he came back and asked if anyone had contacted me regarding my 28 week growth scan to which I responded no. He then told me that the left ventricle in the brain was enlarged, I asked what this was an indicator of which he told me it's an indication of downes syndrome. He then gave me a referral for another ultrasound to check the afi and dopplers he referred me to [REDACTED] fetal medicine and then sent me home. I began spiralling at this information as all my previous scans had been normal and my risk factors were low, I called on Monday for some clarification and upon speaking to this doctor again he apologised and said he thought he had provided adequate support and reassurance.

Throughout the remainder of my pregnancy I had regular scans at [REDACTED] and was told the ventricle

is fine, however I was constantly told my baby was big, at my final [REDACTED] scan they told me to discuss induction with [REDACTED] as I may have trouble birthing, [REDACTED] refused to give me an induction. At the second last midwife appointment the midwife sat in front of me and told me I was not prepared to have a baby as I had not attended any birthing classes, I explained I would listen to the midwives instructions and had a playlist and other techniques in mind to help with the labour process, to which she responded the midwives are busy and won't always be there to help you. I let this appointment with my husband deflated, scared and anxious that I would be labouring in a hospital alone with no medical assistance.

At 39 weeks I felt I was beginning to leak, on a Sunday afternoon I attended the birthing suite and was given an exam, a swab was collected ( the doctor then informed me that they do not have specific swab to test if it is amniotic fluid) the doctor and midwife then agreed it was amniotic fluid I was leaking and wanted me to come back at 7am to be induced. I returned at 7.30am on Monday morning to be induced, the midwife told me they do not induce this early they do it in the afternoon so I was provided with the wrong information, after waiting 5 hours another doctor performed an exam and disagreed that it was fluid and most likely discharge however they couldn't be 100% certain.

At my last midwife appointment I disclosed to my midwife how mistreated and unsupported I felt throughout this experience and she read through my notes, she sent me to birthing suite to have an induction booked which was scheduled for the following Wednesday at 41 weeks.

I began labouring at home on Friday the 14th July at 3.30am with consistent contractions lasting 90 seconds upwards and minutes apart. I called the birthing suite for guidance which they said they were busy but I could

come in if I wanted I declined and continued to labour at home until 12.30pm until the pain was unbearable. I waited outside the suite contracting regularly for 30 minutes waiting for a room. When I was directed to the room I asked for pain relief which they declined informing me I had to wait until I was examined first, I consented to an exam but they declined to do one and told me to shower for pain relief instead. The midwives handed over and hours into labouring at the hospital they attended the exam where I was 4cm dilated. My husband requested an epidural for me as he knew medication was written in my birth preferences the midwife then said as I was unable to sit or lay without inducing more contractions and I was so active it would be counterintuitive.

Hours later with no pain relief except gas and hot showers, I was examined again by the doctor I had stopped progressing at 4cm. He then offered me the syntocin drip, I asked him for pain relief and he offered an epidural, however the midwife said to him as I was active in my labour by standing and walking she thought it best not to have it. And that my uterus was dehydrated and only needed fluids

Not the syntocin drip.

Eventually I was given fluids and the drip but no epidural. Hours into my labour I began begging for analgesia and was reluctantly given 10mg of IM morphine. Which had no effect. The gas caused nausea I could barely stand without swaying my husband had to hold me up so I didn't fall over and I could barely keep my eyes open.

I began to feel the sensation to push and my body was involuntarily doing it. I remember seeing frank red blood dripping down my leg and was told by the midwife to stop pushing until I was examined. I laid on the bed and was 10cm dilated I rolled over and began vomiting over the floor from the pain, throughout my active labour I continued to vomit over myself and the bed with no anti-emetic given.

I was squatting over the head of the bed but eventually ended up on my back which was not what I wanted. My husband held one of my legs and I held the other and pulled them up with each contraction, I had a posterior labour with babies head bobbing but not progressing. I then recall the midwife leaning over me and pushing the emergency button, she had shoulder dystocia and was stuck.

Dazed, scared and in excruciating pain with no analgesia on board, multiple people Entered the room two doctors began putting their hands inside me and wrapped a tube around my babies neck and shoulder to forcibly pull her out, two midwives pushed down on my belly to get her down further with two more midwives pulling my legs up to my shoulders. My husband was ushered into the corner above my head as I screamed in pain with no familiar face visible or analgesia.

When she was pulled out at 11.54 pm, she was unresponsive and required cpr and suction. As I laid there asking why she wasn't crying. The doctors announced the gender of our baby and then called my husband over and asked him to confirm as we had waited 10 months to find out. This was very disheartening for us.

After 10 minutes of working on her they placed her on my chest. The doctor then explained what had occurred and that I had a grade 2 internal tear and a grade 1 urethral tear. As the doctor was suturing I could feel each incision and requested more local to be injected.

Post birth I was still in an immense amount of pain and requested analgesia at 2am which the midwife said I couldn't have any until 6am and was given panadol. I never received anything stronger than that during my stay in hospital.

I stayed one more night in hospital as a paediatric doctor informed us due to her shoulder dyscoia

And the bruising on her head it was advised to stay to monitor her.

Post birth I have suffered from cellulitic mastitis, which I was told over the phone by the [REDACTED] lactation consultant to monitor i and that I didn't need medical intervention despite fever, flu like symptoms and swelling. Two paediatric doctors and multiple

Miidwives have checked my babies mouth only to find out by an out sourced lactation consultants my baby was 75% tongue tied.

Throughout my pregnancy and my birth I felt I was unsupported and dismissed constantly. I feel robbed of the birth I wanted, although forever thankful my baby is alive and healthy.