

Submission
No 500

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 10 August 2023

Partially
Confidential

I am lodging this birth trauma story on behalf of my sister who I believe was not cared for appropriately by the hospital nor was she provided support from the system that she deserved during her birth and postpartum.

She was initially induced as her waters had broken 24 hours prior. She laboured for around 10 hours for a vaginal birth where forceps, epidural and the vacuum were all medical interventions used during this time to try assist to get baby out. As all had failed, she had an emergency c section where she tore at her abdomen. Once baby was out, she was told by a medical professional that given her size in comparison to baby's (big) size, she should have been advised earlier to opt for a c section because there was no way baby could have come out vaginally. This was a kick in the gut to hear!! She was then sent home on day 3 after her major surgery and to this day regrets she didn't fight to stay longer after being discharged. She spent 8 weeks in absolute pain, her recovery was extremely slow where she could not bend over or pick anything up of the ground for weeks after, she had pain while walking and relied on family support for weeks to even get her off the couch. At her following check up she was told by another medical professional that her healing was not where it should be and was one of the worse they had seen.

I do believe things can go wrong and there are things she could have done to help make the situation better... but I also believe she could have been cared for better by the medical professionals and how they could have prevented so many of these issues by simply advising her early for a scheduled c section without the need for an emergency one and all the distressing interventions she had to endure to begin with. Or how given the extent of ongoing issues throughout the birth, how she was not appropriately looked after for her recovery and healing.

As a current pregnant mum to be, I am yet to experience birth but have thankfully learnt a lot from her experience particularly along with hearing many other stories from family and friends, I am able to better prepare myself, to know I can fight for what I want and the care I know I deserve. Quite frankly, I do not have faith in the hospital system and their programming.. I feel I am fortunate to have found a midwife group to be a part of to help be prepare further to make the experience the best it can be both during pregnancy, birth and especially postpartum. I wouldn't know what I would be like without my midwife's support to answer all my questions, to explain different processes and options, and never makes my questions feel crazy I felt like they were. She makes me feel empowered and at ease as I get ready for birth.