

Submission
No 441

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

Hello.

My first pregnancy I was cared for by [REDACTED] hospital, I felt like I wasn't given the proper information about the interventions offered to me and felt like I had no choice but to have a stretch and sweep at 37 weeks. A few days later when in labour, I rang the midwives and they told me to stay home as long as I could.

1 hour and 45 minutes later my baby was born on the lounge room floor, my partner caught her whilst on the phone to triple 0. The ambulance arrived about 40 minutes after she was born.

I lived 25 mins from nearest hospital but 1hr half away from [REDACTED].

The ambulance arrived and took us to [REDACTED] Base hospital instead as it was closer.

During the ambulance ride the officer was directed by midwife's and [REDACTED] hospital over the phone to get my placenta out. I did not tear during birth but tore while they tried to rip my placenta out after the awful, excruciating fundal massage. I do not blame the ambulance officers for this.

I discharged myself after a week due to the way the obstetrician and the paediatrician made me feel with their "care" and condescending comments. It felt like there was no effort made to access my information from my pregnancy care in Lismore and almost made me feel like I had done something wrong as my baby was small and I had had gestational diabetes. A direct quote from one of the obstetricians "how did you have a 5 pound 8 baby with GD?" To which I thought, shouldn't you know the answer to this? Maybe my birth shouldn't have been brought on so early? I was a first time mother who has just birthed her baby with no professional care and not an obstetrician.

I did make a complaint about the paediatrician to which I received a response that she was "sorry I felt that way" but not sorry for treating me the way she did.

Second baby, I tried to find a midwife for homebirth unsuccessfully, so had no choice but to birth at [REDACTED] hospital again.

They knew how quick my previous birth was and still sent me back home when I thought I was in labour. Sent home at around 6-7pm as they didn't see any contractions on the machine then I had to call an ambulance a few hours later to get me back there.

The birth was horrendous, I was taken via ambulance and birthed my son within ten minutes of being there. Midwives laughed at me for wanting the bright lights turned down and for covering my eyes, did not believe that I was about to give birth until my waters broke all over them. Then proceeded to move me from the ambulance bed to hospital bed mid contraction.

They used scissors to chop up my placenta to get it out, tugging and pulling at it with hands and scissors, an image my partner will never ever forget and a feeling that traumatised me for years after.

So much contradicting information from midwife's, doctors etc with his newborn care. Again felt like I had no control and couldn't be a mum to my baby. It was one of the worst weeks of my life when it should've been the happiest.

Third baby, I would've chosen to free birth, then to go back to [REDACTED] hospital. Luckily I found a midwife who could assist with a homebirth, but still felt like the flaws in the system transpired to my pregnancy care and I still didn't feel totally in control of my body and choices.