

Submission
No 466

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

My name is [REDACTED] and I live in [REDACTED] NSW.

I am submitting my story as part of the inquiry into Birth Trauma in Australia.

I birthed my son at [REDACTED] hospital in October 2020. I was sent to [REDACTED] because I was told I needed to be induced due to having gestational diabetes (something that they can't deal with at my local hospital). [REDACTED] hospital is 2.5 hours from home. At 39 weeks I drove up to [REDACTED] on a Wednesday to be induced on Thursday. On Thursday morning I was told via text not to come to hospital, I was told to wait on stand by for the day. After calling many times from my hotel we finally found I had been moved to Friday. On the Friday I went in and was shown a room. 8 hours later I was seen by a doctor. I was put in stirrups to have a balloon placed in my cervix. Once in the stirrups the doctor was called away and it was a while before a nurse came to take me off the stirrups. We waited until around 11pm on Friday night for them to come and try the balloon again and the procedure failed (painfully), we then waited... at 5am on Saturday they put a tab in my cervix - I don't know what this tab was but it made my entire vulva swell up and go purple. I was rolling around in pain until around midday. We raised an alarm and waited 5 more hours before a doctor came and took it out as I was having an allergic reaction. It was immediate relief after 12 hours of pain for absolutely no gain or reason. The tab did nothing other than cause this pain. This was when I ate - 5pm on Saturday night (I did not eat for over 24 hours after this).

At around 1am the doctors came in to talk to us, we agreed to try the balloon again. This time they gave me gas and air but it did nothing. I had a nurse pinning down my shoulders and a nurse pinning down my hips as the doctor tried to insert the balloon (this felt like he was stabbing me with a sword). It failed again. Whilst I was still recovering and with my legs still in stirrups, two doctors were arguing - one saying we should be sent home to rest, the other saying we needed a c section. We repeatedly asked that 'why are we here?? If we go home and come back in two days then we'll be at my due date, so why am I being induced?' This was never answered.

We agreed to the c section and were told it would be at 10am on the Sunday and I was to have nil by mouth (not even water). We were eventually taken to theatre at 5pm on Sunday - an extra 7 hours after planned and after an already horrific few days. My son was born by c section.

At some point in those first two days I had a canular put in my wrist. I requested this to be moved many times due to the position meaning the needle was hitting my wrist joint and my hand kept swelling. Everyone kept saying it's fine and ignoring my pain - eventually the anaesthetist in theatre moved it whilst saying 'who the hell did this to you!?'

In the recovery room (I was still high as a kite) my husband luckily stopped me taking tramadol that a nurse gave me - even though I was wearing a bright red band saying I was allergic! When I got to the ward we discovered a terrible long bruise along my hip and leg where it looked like someone had closed a hospital side of a bed on me. I was obviously numb so hadn't noticed. We were in hospital until the following Thursday. Not one person debriefed with us about what had happened, we never saw a physio even though we were told we needed to and we had requested numerous times. I found it hard to urinate for weeks after because of the way my catheter was removed and had issues with the bruised hip for almost a year.

I had planned to have more children but after this experience I now won't be continuing to grow my family.