

Submission  
No 467

## INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

**Name:** Name suppressed

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Partially  
Confidential

When I gave birth to my first child in NSW I felt the care leading up to the birth fine. The one complaint I would have made is the lack of information on what can really happen during birth to keep mother informed which is why I was blindsided by what happened during my birth. I was induced at 41 weeks and 3days. My labour was long and they realised my daughters head wasn't moving when I was pushing so after saying that she was stressed they took me to theatre where they said they could move her head and would do an episiotomy and use forceps to help her out. All of this was done with no one explaining what repercussions this could have on my body. We are informed about a c-section but never told about what a forceps birth can do to you. Since then I have had a posterior prolapse, slight bladder prolapse and where the episiotomy happened needs to be corrected because the muscle hasn't been able to connect back.

If I was informed about what these risks were and how they would have life long consequences I would have opted for a c-section but like I said not one midwife or doctor ever mentioned the word prolapse to me during or after my pregnancy until I took matter into my own hands and went to a woman's physio.

Where the hospital system really failed me was also in the aftercare. I asked one midwife how often I should feed my baby as she seemed to feed a lot and I was told only once and then wait until your milk comes in, she also told me to have a shower and with no help and as I hadn't walked since my epidural I asked if I would be ok she said "well if you fall in the shower, just pull the red cord" and left. I was also told after my horrific birth which I still had a catheter in from that I had to walk to get my breakfast or I wouldn't eat.

All of this after a truly traumatic birth lead to feeling uncared for and like what I had just gone through was nothing. I suffered PPD for years after that birth and still frequently think about it wishing I had known more. I didn't even all to anyone about my PPD as I felt after my treatment like no one cared or would have listened.

I came away from that birth with zero confidence and a stolen bond with my daughter which I am currently in therapy to try and overcome the grief that came with my whole experience.

I wouldn't want this treatment for anyone. That's why I am writing to ask you to please reconsider how you approach birthing women. Knowledge is power and we need to be informed of what can happen to our bodies if certain instruments are used. Not just telling us the names of them and what they are used for but actually tell us what can happen to us, the mother, if they are used. Then we can make a more informed decision about how we want our birth to proceed.