

Submission
No 484

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

The birth of my baby at [REDACTED] hospital.

As first time parents my partner and I did not do much birth prep. We live very far out of town and although covid times are in our past our hospital did not offer any classes and suggested we join online classes. This didn't work for our family as we don't connect well online and expressed that we would like to have a face to face chat but were told this wouldn't be possible. This was disappointing but we put our trust into the hospital and thought we were in good hands.

Towards the end of my pregnancy I had high blood pressure. I was tested for pre-eclampsia but this test was negative.

The doctor still decided it was best to deliver my baby so I wasn't at risk. I was then told I have an unfavourable cervix and that a caesarean section would be best. I was 38 weeks pregnant. I expressed that I would really like to try an induction rather than a c section right away. The doctor said 'okay but if nothing is happening by 9am the next day we will do a c section' I felt I had no say in the way MY birth was going to play out . At the time I really thought that what the doctor said goes and I didn't actually get a say.

My baby was born at 5:16am the next day my labor and delivery were wonderful and fast (haha) I really enjoyed giving birth.

My baby didn't latch the whole day. Then at 9pm my partner was sent home. I was all alone and my partner had to drive an hour home, I would have loved for him to be able to stay as I was in a room alone.

At 10pm a midwife came into my room and tried to help me latch my baby (who had been having my milk in a syringe all day) this was unsuccessful. The midwife then quickly said 'he's breathing a little funny' and said 'I'm just going to take him to special care'

I then did not hear about his condition until 2am. In this time I buzzed the midwife's 3 times and asked for them to update me or check on my baby or take me too him (I had been stitched up and had a catheter and cannula in) I was met with dismissal and chat such as 'I'll check after my rounds' 'yep let's just check you first' I was then asked to express for my baby but when I asked to go to him the midwife's said 'it's best you stay here and rest' I didn't know where the special care unit was, I didn't know what had happened to my baby and I needed my partners support.

We were then in hospital for the next week where we were told different plans continuously by a different midwife's and doctors. We overheard one doctor speaking loud enough so we could hear him saying 'some parents enjoy having their children in special care because they get free things for longer then they need it' we were heartbroken by this comment. Upon discharge, our baby was not weighed. We did not have a feeding plan nor did we have any referrals to future resources to help with breastfeeding etc. we were told we live too far out for the nurses to come to our home and we had to sort it out ourselves.

This is a very short story outline our birth trauma. Some suggestions I would like to offer are:

- options for support partners to stay at the hospital too
- for hospital staff to know local pregnancy classes and support.
- more information and encouragement surrounding home births.
- information and access to doulas
- having information presented in different ways for different learning styles rather than paper being given to read only.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely

A tired mum who hopes she has made sense.

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