

Submission
No 524

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

My pregnancy with my second child was going well with ultrasounds (including the last check at 27weeks) showing everything was progressing as normal regarding growth, weight and development. As living in regional NSW unless anything was a miss we see the local GP for all our checks. My GP at the time had convinced me (against my better judgement and later found out she straight out lied about my concerns of vaccines during pregnancy) to have the Whooping Cough vaccine due to an epidemic in our regional area (this was later confirmed to be 1 child in hospital). Within a few days of the vaccine I had become unwell but did not think anything of it. I had given the GP my concerns over the weeks that I was not putting any weight on, nor was the baby moving as much as it was previously. All my concerns seemed to be dismissed with "logical" answers like I was already overweight and well the baby is taking more space so no need to worry.

At 33 weeks I had slipped and hurt my hip, so I went up to [REDACTED] Hospital (now downgraded to [REDACTED] Health Service). I was put on a monitor to check the babies heart rate but was not working, after 3 hours and 4 monitors later it was deemed that the babies heart rate was fine and with my hip checked I was deemed fine to go. The next 2 days I visited my GP and she checked the heart rate again but at no point was I asked to do another ultrasound to ensure the baby was ok. I relied on the midwives and intending doctor at the hospital and my GP's expertise for what was best. In hindsight if I had an ultrasound it would have picked up that the baby had not grown and in fact the placenta did not continue to completely form properly beyond the 27week check and was failing.

I continued with my concerns with my GP and was still "logically" dismissed. I had finally listened to my body at 38 weeks when I was barely feeling any movements from the baby in a 12 hour period and went to the hospital. Within 20 minutes of put on a monitor I was being prepped for an emergency caesarean, the surgeon had asked for iodine be put on whilst the anaesthetist was putting me to sleep, there was no time to waste as the baby needed to come out now. I was in complete shock at what was happening as my first pregnancy had gone so well that I did not need any drugs for pain in a natural birth, this was polar opposite to that experience.

My son was born within moments of me going under and had to be resuscitated. Before I had much time with him (was not allowed to hold him as he was so small and fragile) he was being prepared to be flown down to [REDACTED] Hospital for treatment which my husband was told to prepare for the worst. He was extremely sick and was in NICU for 4 weeks before he was stable enough to return back to [REDACTED] where he was in hospital for a couple of weeks again. Thankfully he is still with us and is healthy but had suffered brain damage and development delays.

It was determined that the placenta did not attach completely in parts and did not grow beyond the 27 week ultrasound (technical term from Paediatrician "something went wrong between 27 and 38 weeks for placenta to fail"). I had followed all the health guidelines of what to eat and how to stay healthy throughout the pregnancy just as I did with my first child, the only difference is at 28 weeks I had a vaccine that was deemed safe for pregnant women.

I ask that this inquiry also looks at the babies safety for any vaccine that the mother has during pregnancy as this DOES affect the baby in the womb and their lives if they survive.

Obstetricians are needed in rural and regional areas just as much as the cities, it's not good enough to have to go 50 minutes to [REDACTED] to see an Obstetrician. Also a mothers concerns should never be dismissed nor ignored to be written on health records.