

Submission  
No 516

## INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

**Name:** Name suppressed

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Partially  
Confidential

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am a new mum.

On the 16th July 2023 I had my baby at \_\_\_\_\_ Hospital in \_\_\_\_\_ NSW.

My birth trauma began prior to my baby being born.

We were considered post dates and had to visit the hospital every second day for monitoring. This created stress for us. Living in a regional town this was sometimes a 3-4 hour round trip. Not exactly conducive to inducing labour.

Each visit we had a different midwife and different obstetrician.

I believe our experience would have been very different if we had continuity of care and had the same midwife and obstetrician. Or better yet, home visits.

I had applied to be part of a midwife group practice but unfortunately I missed out due to limited spaces at the hospital.

Our aim for labour was to have a natural birth with minimal interventions

Given we were becoming concerned about being overdue we opted for a stretch and sweep. This left me feeling sore, emotional and violated. I was not prepared for how this would make me emotionally feel.

Our labour was extremely long lasting close to 40 hours.

Towards the end I agreed to an epidural as baby's obs were declining and we needed to act. Unfortunately the epidural did not work.

I was then told our baby is likely obstruct. We decided to opt for C section.

My husband was not able to be with me while I was prepared for the surgery this was distressing for him and I needed his assurance whilst I had to sit still through contractions a second time to have a spinal block.

When the surgery began no one told me we were beginning or communicated with me. The obstetrician commented that I had caused him "a number of sleepless nights". I wish this obstetrician had more compassion and made a more positive comment such as "I bet you see excited to finally meet your baby".

When my baby was born I was not able to see Dad cut the cord or even get to hold my baby as he was sick. He was taken away by paediatric team for treatment and I was taken to recovery. This is the most traumatic part for me as I was separated from my baby for 3 hours.

Having a C section was very difficult for me to cope with and I wish there were services within the hospital to help us debrief. I have to say the midwives were fantastic at talking with us afterwards and debriefing, though they are very busy and are not counsellors.

My wound became infected and my uterus was still enlarged and I end up back in hospital again. This was extremely triggering being back in hospital.

I believe our experience could have been improved by expanding Midwife Group Practice to especially include new mums. And I hope in the future to include high risk pregnancy as I will no doubt now be considered high risk.

I also think continuity of care is so important and really could have improved our experience of trauma even if the outcome was the same.