

Submission  
No 556

## INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

**Name:** Name suppressed

**Date Received:** 9 August 2023

---

Partially  
Confidential

I'm a nurse educator who worked at [REDACTED] hospital NSW.

I have over 20 years experience

I loved my job. I worked for the past 10 years on the high risk maternity ward, where a part of our service / role was to provide care for women and families having a medical termination of pregnancy. I took great care and pride in providing and teaching others to provide respectful dignified care to the families and to the babies.

About 2 years ago I was caring for a couple who were 19+6 weeks pregnant and unfortunately had ruptured membranes for a few days so had with consultation decided to terminate the pregnancy. Other than the PPRM the baby was alive and healthy, very sad situation.

On the morning of termination I was caring for this patient, the junior doctor came to administer the first dose of misoprostol - policy Dr gave first dose. I noticed the Dr was taking a bit longer than expected to give medication but thought she's just inexperienced and must be trying to get in the right place ( posterior fornix )

I then looked at the dr and to my surprise I could see legs.

I then got the baby blanket to receive the little one. The dr asked me to get the consultant, I gently and quietly said it's ok we don't need them ( I have delivered many many 16-24 week fetus in the breech position and never had any problems, as I was unhurried and hands off)

But the dr said please get her (the consultant)

I got the consultant, luckily she was just walking past.

Then the junior dr delivered the baby's body.

She had been hands on and decapitated the baby.

I had to be very calm for the parents

I took the little body into our fetal loss room.

I handed the body to another staff member and I went back to the parents

Both the consultant and Dr left the room

They left me with the parents for an hour. Thankfully in this time the mother delivered the baby's head ( I did no vaginal examinations or forced her to push, the baby's head was delivered calmly and respectfully.

The parents despite not being told obviously sensed something was wrong

After the birth of the head I found the dr and consultant and they wanted to stitch on the head and dress the baby ( 520grams ) and try and hide what happened.

I knew the parents knew something went wrong.

The parents were told ( gently)

I wrapped the baby after the head was sewn on and got to pass them their baby to hold

I left the ward that day absolutely traumatised

I couldn't go back

I had nightmares and flashbacks

I had to then have counselling with a clinical psychology

After months I did go back but I was never the same , that experience

The decapitation , the hands on management, the trying to hide the event from parents , and then then NONSAC2 review which of course would never blame a doctor do was pointless, so management cover up broke me.

I since have left the profession