

Submission  
No 593

## INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

**Name:** Name suppressed

**Date Received:** 8 August 2023

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Partially  
Confidential

I have birthed twice at ██████████ Hospital under the MGP program. The care from my midwives and the midwives on the ward was exceptional. I've truly felt empowered and proud of myself in both births. However in both births my midwife had to fiercely advocate for the on call OB to leave me alone, who was wanting to intervene as I guess labour wasn't progressing as fast as they wanted. But my body knew what to do.

My first birth was an induction at 40 + 5 due to ruptured membranes with no labour onset. I'd do it differently if I had my time over but I accepted the syntoncin. I laboured in water without intervention, hoping for a water birth, however ended up with an episiotomy and 3a tear. I was disappointed I had torn & frustrated I had birthed on my back when I should have advocated to birth in a more open, gravity working, position. Following this birth I proactively paid for private physio & all the postpartum education I could do to strengthen my core & pelvic floor for my next planned pregnancy and birth. My recovery was great. When I fell pregnant with my second baby, I did everything I could to protect and strengthen my pelvic floor. I did perineal massage from 34 weeks also.

My second birth (2 years apart) is where I have been left upset. I went into spontaneous labour at 40 + 6, overjoyed to avoid any intervention! I was desperate for a healing water birth. I laboured in water however after 4hrs following my waters breaking, it was clear baby wasn't descending and was going into distress. I was adamant I did not want an episiotomy this time. To get baby moving I laboured on all fours on the bed. However things changed quickly, her heart rate dropped & the beautiful midwives were desperately directing me to push her down into the birth canal so I could birth her ASAP. I became absolutely distraught, in pain, tired, defeated as I could sense the panic in the room rising that this baby wasn't coming out. At this time my midwife was constantly fending off the on call OB wanting to intervene and "have a chat" whilst I was in transition concerned I would tear again, and wanting to suggest interventions, episiotomy, c-section, who knows!? I had done EVERYTHING both in pregnancy & in labour to not tear... I finally pushed my baby out & only in the birth of her shoulders did I sustain a 3b tear. I was so devastated I had sustained this injury again & even worse that I had to wait 5 hours to be stitched up in the OR due to other priorities at the hospital. I was gutted to be told it was unlikely I would be able to have a third vaginal birth given my injuries .

I have been incredibly proactive in healing my body, now 10m post partum. And I'm determined to birth naturally a third time. But not all women have the knowledge or resources to educate themselves, know how to look after themselves post partum, or afford a private physio. Why isn't this knowledge accessible and a GIVEN when women fall pregnant? It's not normal or ok for women to pee themselves, poop themselves, and feel broken as they go about motherhood, which is so incredibly physical.