

Submission  
No 594

## INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

**Name:** Name suppressed

**Date Received:** 8 August 2023

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Partially  
Confidential

I gave birth to my first child at [REDACTED] hospital NSW in December 2021.

I won't go into at length my ongoing mental/emotional suffering caused by this birth but I will list the events that took place that with hindsight and better education, should not have occurred.

1. I presented to the labor ward in active labor, 7cm dilated (as stated by on staff OB). This was at approximately 1-2pm. I was not asked if nor suggested that I use the bathroom between this time and 6:30pm (when my baby was born). As I was in established labour I could not feel if my bladder required voiding.

I then was coached to push out my baby for approx. 2 hrs (with a full bladder). I did not realise the implications of this until months later when I sought help for a grade 2 bladder prolapse. This significant injury has resulted in the need for 24/7 wear of a pessary to stop my bladder exiting my body. I now realise the correlation between this birth injury and having had a full bladder since seeking help from a specialist pelvic floor therapist. This is a life long injury that is likely to get worse with time and limits my ability to complete tasks I would otherwise like jumping, carrying my children, running, lifting and many other things. I will most likely require significant debilitating surgery in the future (which has very low success rates).

2. I was given an incomplete 'left handed' episiotomy by a registerer that had to be 'completed' by the on staff OB. Later the stitches opened up and by the time I was assessed I was informed of what had happened it was too late to re stitch. I had to heal naturally leaving me with significant scar tissue. This has resulted in anticipated tearing with my subsequent birth (and will tear again with any further births).

3. Care from midwives. Many were great but all were rushed and some were downright condescending. One particular midwife came into my room late at night, scolding me for crying because I was having difficulty feeding my baby. She growled 'you're being ridiculous'. This same midwife showed up to her shift another night clearly smelling of alcohol. She made me feel very unsafe and fearful for my baby when she was on night shift.

4. No lactation care. There was never a lactation consultant on staff to assist with breast feeding queries although I was told daily that someone would see me. I didn't end up seeing someone until the day before we left hospital (almost a week in hospital) and by then we were significantly behind. Midwives kept offering to take my baby while I slept but wouldn't bring him back and gave him formula despite my requests to bring him to me for feeding. All in all this resulted in a failed breast feeding journey. (My second child, with better help in a different hospital had a very successful feeding journey).

I'd prefer to remain anonymous