

Submission
No 595

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

I live with my trauma daily. Every time I look at my son I'm living my trauma. The lack of aftercare is astounding. I would cry in all my community nurse appointments and still there seemed no where to turn. I think they put it down to hormones. After two years of suffering my GP assisted me with a mental health care plan, I saw a psychologist for as long as I could afford it, at \$180 per visit I was not able to see them for long.

My labour was long, I knew none of my midwife's names as they were in and out so quickly and changed shifts often. I couldn't connect with anyone for help. I remember one dr told me I was being rushed for an emergency c section and a Midwife from the back of the room advocated for me, she explained to the dr how my babies heart rate had trended low the entire pregnancy and previous hours of labor. I don't know this lady's name and never saw her again to thank her.

They told me they would break my waters and we would head to delivery. My birth plan as discussed at all my appointments was for an epidural. Something that wasn't provided to me as there was no anesthesiologist available. I had an epidural prior to my waters being broken for my previous child and the birth was amazing. My pain was so intense with this next birth, I begged my wife to help me and told her, if I were an animal you'd put me out of my misery. I honestly wanted to die.

They handed me the baby and I screamed for them to get him off me because my gutters screams would be scaring him. After trying to deliver the placenta it was decided I would be rushed to surgery as the pain was still intense and it would deliver naturally. I told my wife to take care of our boys as I thought that I was going to die.

While in theatre I had an anesthesiologist trying approx 10 times to put a needle in my spine (I count the holes after) I heard them say "does this patient have spina bifida) which I do not. It scared me. I screamed for them to just knock me out. And they did.

I woke up in the ward next to my baby and I couldn't look at him or hold him. I felt such shame.

The drs came in and explained that they believed I had an IV placed in my artery by mistake and for the next two days I would have vascular surgeons and heads of departments come and apologize for the possible mistake. They explained I had to keep a close eye on my arm for any changes and my wife researched and was terrified I would die.

When I saw a dr in the hall the next day I recognized her face. She explained to her colleague that I was the lady from the difficult birth and his eyes opened wide and he chuckled like he was thinking oh yeah I heard about her.. this made me feel paranoid.

After a few months I tried contacting the hospital to maybe meet with a midwife who was present at the birth so I could talk to her. But I was contacted by the head of obstetrics, whom I had never met. She was willing to answer any questions but could only go off the notes. Unsatisfied with her answers I paid \$30 to the hospital for a copy of my file. When I received it I couldn't understand it.

My baby just turned three and I'm still struggling and still have no support. I saw birthtime the documentary after my birth and it opened my eyes to how things could have been.

Please please please help mothers mentally recover from birth trauma. Mine is only a piece of a huge problem.

Thank you for reading