

Submission
No 596

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

I recently gave birth to my second child. My first child was born via emergency cesarean. For my second birth I attempted a VBAC (vaginal birth after cesarean). I was being looked after by my [REDACTED] Hospital in a shared midwife and doctor program.

[REDACTED] hospital were extremely positive about my attempting a VBAC and were very supportive.

I went into labour naturally and all signs were leading toward a successful VBAC. I was in excruciating pain with contractions early on in my labour so it was suggested I get the epidural. The doctor that assessed me made me feel like if I couldn't handle the pain I was feeling at that point, I had no hope of progressing without the epidural. I received the epidural which failed due to the clip being faulty. The anesthetist administered it again and turned it up as strong as it could go.

This was fine and I started to progress.

I was labouring on my back which I didn't want to do. I requested the epidural be turned down so I could attempt to labour on my knees. I was told the epidural was as weak as it could be. I had no feeling in the bottom half of my body. I didn't believe this was the case as the anesthetist told me he turned it up because I hadn't had it for a while due to it failing.

I had an examination and was stuck at 8cms for over 4 hours. I was offered to break my waters which I accepted.

My cervix still wasn't dilating and my babies heart rate started to race. I was told I will need another emergency cesarean. I was distraught but wanted my baby out safely.

I was wheeled into theatre and they started the surgery. It was taking a really long time (I knew this due to having previously had a cesarean). I asked what was wrong and was told nothing.

A little while later my baby was out safely. I started to feel excruciating pain again. I heard the doctor make a phone call to another surgeon. It was on speaker. They requested the surgeon to attend my cesarean as I had suffered a bilateral cervical tear. I heard the female surgeon saying she wasn't attending because she was busy. They kept asking her and she kept refusing.

I was then told I would need to be put under a general. That's the last thing I remember and I woke up in recovery 7 hours later.

I found out I hemorrhaged and lost two litres of blood requiring 3 blood transfusions.

I'm not sure if the outcome would have been different if I was operated on more promptly or if I hadn't been allowed to labour for so long. I believe my VBAC would have been successful if I was allowed to labour on my knees.

Since this I've carried some pretty bad trauma. I accepted the hospital's offer speaking with a social worker however 8 days on from accepting this I still haven't heard from them.