

Submission
No 614

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

After having contractions at home over 3 nights I went into hospital to get checked as I was exhausted. I was told there was a 99% chance I was going home. When I went in I knew I was going to consent to a vaginal exam. When I consented. After the midwife removed her fingers she informed me I was actually 5cm dilated and that she just gave my membranes a good big sweep to see if we could get things going more (my contractions). I was not asked, nor was I informed about the risks or positives. I was therefore unable to give informed consent. This felt and still does like a violation. I was then moved into a birthing suite and it was clear with the first midwife I was on the clock. I was threatened into letting them break my waters as I was told when I was already sitting in the birthing pool contracting regularly that I would be sent home if things did not progress fast enough. She also pumped me full of fluids which later after hours of telling the next midwife's I felt pressure like I had to push, they figured out I was unable to urinate which was impacting and probably extending my labour.

I as a result suffered horrible haemorrhoids and anal fissure and was insupportable pain for months and still suffer with haemorrhoids and will need surgery. I am still very thankful that first midwife's shift ended after I was coerced into letting them break my waters. The next midwife I had left me to birth alone mostly with the support of the lovely student midwife who I had support me through my pregnancy. There was also a point where they wanted to do internal monitoring of my baby's heart rate and did not inform me of the risks or that it would be inserted into her skull. Luckily I had taken an external private birth class and knew and was able to decline. Then when birthing my placenta because of the hospital policy around time, I was made to sit on the toilet shaking uncontrollably, had to give my baby to my partner because I couldn't hold her on the toilet.

Shaking while I tried to birth the placenta alone within their time frame. I then was told I had to have an injection to birth it. Right after when I went to lay back down to birth the placenta.... it was right there and the student Midwife pulled it right out. And then asked if that could have been done without the injection. The senior midwife did not fully answer her. I wish I had been left breastfeeding my baby in bed and allowed time to birth my placenta naturally. To this day I am still frustrated that I was not given the information to provide informed consent or even consent at stages. I am aware compared to other women's experiences this is not as severe. However, my body was violated and I was coerced multiple times when I was struggling to advocate for myself because I was so tired from labouring at home for days with no sleep. All women deserve to be able to provide informed consent and know the risks