

Submission  
No 671

## INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

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Partially  
Confidential

I gave birth to my daughter in September 2017 at \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_. My labour started with my waters breaking at 39 weeks. I was GBS positive which meant that I would need to be induced. When I presented at the hospital, nurses did not believe my waters had broken. So proceeded to examine me use a speculum to open my cervix. This was very painful and did not convince the nurses that my waters had broken. So they brought in an ultrasound machine that confirmed my waters had broken. I still question today why I was subjected to the painful speculum examination when the ultrasound machine was available and more effective.

I was admitted to the birthing suite and prepared for induction via IV. The on-call nurse was very unprofessional bragging about how thick the IV needle would be and seems lacking confidence in her ability to insert the IV suggesting that she gets a doctor to do it instead.

As the induction medication began to take affect, my contractions went from 0 to 100 quite rapidly. I reached approximately 4 cm dilate it when I requested an epidural. Once the epidural was administered, I was able to relax and get some sleep. The nurses shift changed at this time. Despite being administered the epidural, my cervix had not dilated it past 4 cm. The new nurse on duty inspected the catheter that was inserted into my bladder and found that it had been inserted incorrectly, blocking the birth canal. She adjusted the catheter which allowed the babies head to continue coming down, and I proceeded to dilate. When it came time to push, I had agreed for a student nurse to be present throughout the delivery, after pushing for what seemed close to an hour and a half to 2 hours things escalated with the babies heartbeat, dipping.

What felt like quite suddenly an alarm button was pressed and multiple professionals entered the room. My bed was tilted, and nurses began pushing on my stomach at no point did anyone explain to me what was happening. On the right side, I noticed people laying out metal medical tools on table and I knew immediately that this was becoming an emergency situation. I began repeatedly saying I do not want this. I do not want this. I do not want to be cut open I do not want forceps. I do not want any episiotomy. At no point had anyone communicated anything to me , it was at that point that a midwife looked at me directly and said we need to get this baby out. Her heart rate is dipping. This is an emergency situation. They first attempted using the vacuum delivery method which after two or three attempts failed. The obstetrician that delivered the baby proceeded to cut me performing the episiotomy on the diagonal without obtaining my consent.

She used forceps and told me I had three attempts to get the baby out or I was headed for emergency C-section. Thankfully, the baby came out on the second push. However, she wasn't breathing. It took, I think about 30 seconds to 1 minute for them to bring the baby around and thankfully she was okay. It wasn't till later that we were told that she had the cord wrapped around her neck stomach and foot and that's why her heart rate was dipping. At no point did a medical professional offer, support, counselling or a conversation around my birth experience. I was left unassisted for the three day hospital stay.

I was left with severe pelvic floor issues and pain that took well over 12 months to resolve and the mental health implications of the birth trauma were ongoing for quite some time. Overall this experience has prevented me from having a second child and I hope that other women won't experience a similar birth story to mine. Thank you