

Submission
No 641

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

December 2020

██████████ private hospital

Mentally and physically traumatic birth.

I started labouring being left alone with my partner. Bring my first time I felt shocked like we were dumped without feeling like I had much support. Had some gas and then asked for more pain relief when I wasn't coping and was given morphine. I thought this stalled the labour but when they inspected I had gone from 3cm to 8cm in a couple of hours. Then pain came back very suddenly and intensely. I had intense pain down the front of my hips like my hips were being dislocated (I have hip dysplasia so maybe?). The midwife dismissed my request for an epidural when I wasn't coping. She said 'we'll see how you go'. No reason given for denying me pain relief. I felt like I was being tortured for 12 hours but in reality was only maybe an hour or two.

I was in so much pain right after this last request I was physically unable to move or speak so felt trapped and perhaps due to total loss of control and for being dismissed by the midwife.

Told to push like I was doing a poo to get the baby out which brought tears to my eyes as I knew I was severely damaging my body/rectum.

Right after the midwife said to me 'see aren't you glad you didn't have the epidural'. My but my response was 'I can tell you I really wanted it at the time'. She said 'oh...'

I was released from care without being properly assessed of my (rear) injuries. I had one midwife who thought it wasn't right and noted for my obs to check but she never did. I was not in any state to ask I was in mental shock and in a haze of just surviving. I only had minor perennial tear but my bottom was so bad I couldn't properly sit down. I went back into emergency 2 days later to have emergency procedure to have thrombosed hemeroids drained, while trying running in and out to breastfeed my newborn in the car.

Dec 22-march 23

Months of therapy to prepare myself mentally for second birth. To try to release myself from past trauma to allow myself a positive second birth experience without feeling loss of control.

April 2023

██████████ private

Second birth went in with better mental preparation (hypno birthing and therapy) and pain management birth skills.

Midwife's were all so supportive and caring.

I went home first time as was too early to labour at home some more.

When I went back in was 3-4cm. Asked for epidural early. I got it. Said was perfect timing. Most calm and nice birth I could have imagined even though I was terrified of being on my

back in that bed. Completely different experience with the pain relief. I could feel the contractions from the outside. I then had urge to push. Didn't even push I used coffee plunger method to use diaphragm to push out baby. Baby couldn't even wait the 10 minutes for the obs to arrive. No tears. No hemeroids. Calm baby instant connection and feeding well after 15 min.

My first baby I was in so much shock I didn't feel bonded for months and months until she started to smile and interact and I found breastfeeding much harder and hated it for the first 6 months. She struggled to gain weight. She was colicky and I struggled with mental health during the intense witching hours of constant screaming for weeks on end.

My second baby fed straight away, had always fed and gained well and never has had any witching hour and is so so settled.