

Submission  
No 682

## INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

**Name:** Miss Meghan Kelleher

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Partially  
Confidential

I am a patient at [redacted] and have had to attend [redacted] because I am considered overdue. I have had to attend [redacted] on 3 occasions during my pregnancy as I transferred care after I moved from Sydney late in my pregnancy.

On every single occasion I was left appalled and frustrated with the wait times and even the care provided. I waited no less than 2 hours for every single appointment that was booked for me. On one occasion in particular I waited over 3 hours and was still not seen. When I queried how much longer I was expected to wait I was told [redacted] ran like an emergency department and patients were seen based on priority so they couldn't give me an answer. I could have been waiting another hour or another 3 hours.

The unit has created and fostered an environment where women don't feel valued, safe or cared for. When the hospital book an appointment they tell you that you need and then expect the patient to wait over 3 hours with no end in sight you tell women you are not a priority. We do not value your time, we don't respect your time and we don't value or respect how this effects you emotionally or how this will impact on your experience when you are expected to come back to the hospital to birth your baby.

When I was seen for the first time at [redacted] after waiting for over 2 hours I was not given a clear explanation for what was actually happening. Why I was having the intervention I was having and what that meant. I was booked in for an induction and told in about 20 words or less that's what was happening see you at your next appointment. I had to press several times for a clear explanation on what all of the information meant. I left my appointment feeling confused and rushed. I was not clearly informed, I did not feel empowered and ultimately got better answers speaking to my mother who is a midwife elsewhere and a friend who had been through the same procedure at [redacted].

When I was called by someone from the hospital the next day to book 3 separate appointments for my induction, I requested more information and explanations including basic information like where I would be staying/ if it was overnight / what the expected result of the treatment would mean and the woman told me I could asked all of these questions at my next appointment. The appointment I waited over 3 hours for, that I ended up not even having.

After waiting for over 3 hours I ended up leaving my appointment because it was causing me distress and a great deal of frustration to be expected to sit down and suck it up. [redacted] has taken what should be an exciting and happy time in my life and turned it into dread an anxiety. My whole pregnancy I looked forward to antenatal appointments knowing I would leave feeling informed, well looked after and at ease. Every appointment through my pregnancy was like that until I attended [redacted]. It has even taken away the joy and excitement I feel about birth. Knowing I have to attend [redacted] to birth my baby has left me feeling anxious and unsettled. You have created an environment where women do not feel safe or comfortable.

is not able to deliver a basic service in a timely manner and therefore you put women and babies at unnecessary risk.

The organisation of the unit is appalling. You know the number of women you have scheduled daily and you take into account women that will unexpectedly need an appointment for whatever reason and you can almost always avoid this insane wait times. It's not rocket science, it's a lack of communication, organisational skills and resources that lead to these appalling conditions.

This is not my first pregnancy and I understand wait times, emergencies and that things can change quickly in a hospital setting. I have a sister who is a paramedic, a sister who is an RN in the ED and a mother who is an RN and midwife. I am not naive to the pressure the health department is under or the pressure of the staff who work there. However, the normalisation of wait times and the service I experienced when attending at is absolutely unacceptable and below standard.