

Submission  
No 860

## INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

**Name:** Name suppressed

**Date Received:** 18 August 2023

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Partially  
Confidential

Hello,

**\*\* Please keep my name off my submission, I would like this as a confidential submission\*\***

I am writing in relation to the enquiry in to birth trauma in NSW.

I gave birth to my son in April of 2022 at [REDACTED] hospital. having a complication free pregnancy and being extremely well, looking after myself throughout the pregnancy, I had entered this life changing experience with confidence, relaxation and felt excited to meet our son.

This was the birth of my first child, at the age of 32.

I chose GP shared care and regularly visited my GP-OBS in [REDACTED] [REDACTED] is the closest appropriate hospital for us in terms of location although of course this is not a birthing option at this time, making it a long journey to [REDACTED] for many women in this area. I have friends who have birthed their babies on the side of the road.

I went in to labour on the Monday evening naturally and we headed to [REDACTED] in the early hours of the Tuesday morning driving some time after midnight Monday. I had been having regular contractions and things were going well. I was checked by the obstetrician on duty on the Tuesday, and at that point, I believe an induction was possibly recommended, although the timeline is a little bit blurry for me. We chose to continue with letting things take their course and I continued to labour relaxed and comfortable until the Tuesday evening at which stage there was then discussions of possibly needing to consider inducing me but being the evening of Tuesday, they don't recommend doing this until Morning.

So we waited till Wednesday morning at which point I was consulted by the Obstetrician (GP-Obs) on duty that day, which is when I began to get quite emotional that I knew I was going to need intervention (or to this day I still am questioning everything in terms of timing and decisions - weather I should have actually been induced/offered a cesarian in the earlier days or much sooner to reduce the risk/outcomes that I have experienced, I was told though that at the point when I had my son ( on the Wednesday) he had made his way too far down so cesarian was not safe, which I understand.

I was given the drip for induction at 8am or thereabouts on Wednesday morning. After several hours of intense very close contractions, I was examined again and I had not dilated much further. Then came the next intervention being an epidural to relax me. I then dilated from 4-10cm (or thereabouts) in 2 hours. My son had made his way quite far down and so it was time to start the pushing phase etc. From here it is all a blur.

He wasn't making his way out - and I think from what I remember 'got stuck'. The ventouse didn't work. I was given then an episiotomy, and eventually he was delivered with forceps.

I suffered a 3C tear and my son was healthy and well. He fed, everything felt rushed and is a big blur. From there I remember a midwife running around, it felt panicked to a degree but then the staff were also so calming and helpful.

I was stable and fine, but then I began to loose large amounts of blood and ended up loosing just shy of 3L of blood.

It does feel like through that process, it just felt like one thing after another in terms of intervention.

I was taken to theatre and I remember feeling very scared at this point being taken away from my son, I felt the symptoms of the blood loss and I felt very frightened. I remember begging the anaesthetist to put me to sleep.

I woke up - I was told this was some 4+ hours that I was in theatre with my beautiful new baby boy, my husband and my son waiting for me. My mum was there too, thank goodness.

One of the midwives had said to my husband once I had arrived back to the room, that he would have to go home (we had been at the hospital for days on end together) but we refused I was not letting him leave after what had happened.

The biggest triggers from this whole experience for me was for a long time after I felt like I needed to know if I had nearly lost my life with such a huge PPH at the time if felt like I was losing consciousness, and it was frightening as I mentioned. So that was one of the questions I ended up asking in a debrief I had with the doctors.

I was asked when down in theatre to consent to a hysterectomy (this was in case they couldn't stop the bleeding from what I can gather), so I remember going to sleep for the operation to repair my tear, wondering if I would be able to have another child, this is still traumatic to me. This is confronting to reflect on I can remember the look on the doctors face and just that felt so rushed and weird and wrong.

I remember waking up from surgery and that was the first question I asked if they had done a hysterectomy.

The surgery team and everyone at the hospital were so helpful through that time when I woke up and in the days after.

Whilst I'm not sure how much of all of this was preventable for me, I still have so much to work through. The mental trauma. I have significant difficulties with the injuries/3C tear and have constant issues needing attention by the pelvic floor women's health physio and professional guidance. The financial burden feels overwhelming. and the physical.

I have ongoing issues with my pelvic floor now, which feels demoralising.

I will note that the hospital, GP-obs and surgeon had all offered me a debrief and this was extremely helpful, but doesn't change what happened.

I think the financial pressure of all the appointments I've had to have after the birth is really tough. Lastly the mental trauma can be quite overwhelming at times and again it is a costly venture to get the right support with specialists for trauma related care.

It would be so wonderful if this was better supported funding wise with the NSW government.

thank you for taking the time to read my submission