

Submission
No 701

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

I received disrespectful care during labour and postpartum at
when:

Public hospital

- my partner was told it he outcome of me refusing a c section was that I would bleed out and die

- the nurses looking after me for the c section surgery were really rough with my body and flung me around like a piece of meat and acted like I wasn't there, didn't address me or tell me what they were doing

- during the cesarean a nurse had to put her hand in my vagina to push my sons head back up, no one asked for my consent for this or told me what they were doing

- while I was being stitched back up after my son was born the doctors were just casually talking to each other about the most important thing about the c section was making sure the scar looked good and was in the right position because women really care about getting back into a bikini

- the nurses in the recovery ward bickering to each other about the nurses from the other department, I wasn't assisted with the first breast feed and had to initiate this after a long time and this was stated in my birth plan that it was really important to me. I assumed since they hadn't mentioned it there was some reason it couldn't be done there

- my son spent a few days in special care where I was supported to breastfeed, the nurse on maternity ward when I had him with me for the first time after he had been releases undermined my attempts to breast feed. Told me my milk should be in by now (she didn't even know how long it had been since his birth as she told me it should be in by 48hrs and he actually wasn't even that old yet, didn't even consider my emergency c section birth and that he had been in special care and we had been separated) then told me it wasn't in because my anxiety levels were too high. Told me my feed times were too short and she wished she could give me some more support but she didn't have the time and left.

I experienced birth trauma due to these events, I have had to seek out psychological support, additional lactation support (everything was completely fine with my breastfeeding when I saw a trained IBCLC, so much stress over misinformation I was given at the hospital), I will be engaging with a private midwife and attempting a home VBAC for any other pregnancies/ births/babies I have.. I have also extended the time I would try for any other children as I don't feel ready to go through it again.

I was part of the MGP program and this part of my birth and pregnancy journey was really positive but as my labour went over a shift change I had new staff come in and I didn't feel like they knew me or my care up until that point.

I wish they treated me with more respect, told me what they were doing, acted like I was actually there and conscious for my birth. I wish there were more midwives available on the maternity ward to support breastfeeding and care after a c section. I wish partners were able to stay over night for support in the maternity ward.