

Submission
No 870

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

My name is _____ and I would like to share my eldest child's birth story.

_____ was born on 2/4/2012 at _____ Public hospital. I arrived to be induced at 41 weeks and 6 days with "a very large baby."

The induction process was started with Pitocin and I began to have contractions. After 4 hours I was dilated to 5 centimetres. Over the next 4 hours I continued to labour- unattended. The ward was full of women in various stages of labour and I was not experiencing intense pain so did not call the attention of any midwives. By the time I was checked again at 2am I was fully dilated and feeling a lot of pressure.

I was taken to delivery and told it was too late for an Epidural as I "Hadn't made any noise to let them know I needed it."

I had always planned to have an Epidural as I was sure my pain threshold would've been very much compromised by birth.

I began to push. _____ became stuck. I pushed for several hours with her head crowning. She was not descending as she should have been. They tried vacuuming her out. They then tried forceps. There was no one available to do a cesarean. I was told I would just have to manage.

I then fainted from exhaustion. My last memory is of a Dr standing against the end of the bed with one foot propped up on the bed, with forceps around _____ head. She was using all her weight to force _____ out. They then performed a double Episiotomy to make enough room to get her out. I sustained significant third degree tears and began to hemorrhage. I bled profusely. The placenta weighed close to 1 kg. _____ weighed 9"12 ounces. Far too big for my previously 49kg frame. I am 155cm tall and a petite size. I had doubled my weight by the time I gave birth. I did not have gestational diabetes.

My baby had grown too big for me to be able to deliver naturally and I somehow managed to birth her, albeit with a lot of damage. From this I sustained a lot of scar tissue in my vaginal area, total loss of sensation, weak bladder muscles and nerve damage.

I had lost the ability to drive by 39 weeks due to the size of my stomach and could not stand for more than 10 minutes due to blood pressure and swelling.

I don't feel my pregnancy or birth was well managed under the public system and was horrified by the experience.

The hospital asked me to sign an indemnity form when we left to take _____ home. I did not understand the legalities surrounding such a form and was not given a copy, nor informed that this was not standard procedure.

I birthed twice more through the private sector within 4 years of _____ birth. Both were early inductions due to my experience with _____ and were great experiences.

It is my opinion that all of this damage and trauma could have been avoided if I'd had the opportunity to discuss a cesarean section. If I had the option I would have taken it, knowing she was measuring large.

Thanks for giving me the opportunity to share my story.

Kind regards,