

Submission
No 871

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 11 August 2023

Partially
Confidential

I wish for my name to be suppressed please.

My first birth was 1983 to a daughter weighing 6lb.

I was induced, had an epidural, forceps delivery and an episiotomy.

I am approaching my 69th birthday and since the birth I have had continual problems with haemorrhoids and urine incontinence. These conditions are worsening with age.

Now I add faecal incontinence which is humiliating.

My second birth was 1985 to a son weighing under 6lb.

My obstetrician advised me he needed to induce the birth because the baby was full term, he the obstetrician was going on holidays and there was a strike by anaesthetics therefore he would do the epidural himself.

After the doctor gave me the epidural and before my son was delivered the doctor left the delivery room to go back to his surgery. I gave birth very quickly after the epidural. The doctor having been called by nurses to return asap, he made it in time for the forceps and episiotomy delivery.

Once my son was delivered and put in my arms I noticed he was turning blue and I pointed this out to the nurses. The doctor had left again. Alarms went off and my

Son was taken from me and rushed out of the delivery room. I had no idea what was happening.

It wasn't until sometime after I was advised that my son was being urgently transferred to emergency where he stayed for some weeks on 100% oxygen.

I was discharged the next day.

We didn't know at that stage whether he would survive or not. It was an extremely worrying time for our family. After some time he was transferred back to Hospital where he stayed for another few weeks.

We were advised he was not a full term baby, that he was only 36 weeks.

I had asked my obstetrician to have a scan a number of times throughout the Pregnancy to clarify the due date but he said it wasn't necessary because the baby was "doing everything it should be at the correct time"

What a traumatic way to enter the world for our poor innocent son. He had no physical contact with us for his first few weeks of his life. I was unable to breast feed him.

I felt so guilty, I blamed myself and still do for the unnecessary trauma my son went through. I suffered extreme post natal depression for years. All of this because of the doctor's incompetence.

My son has had major problems all his life with learning difficulties which have influenced his academic life. Also his self confidence and self esteem have been seriously affected. He has suffered depression since his teenage years. Doctors over the years have blamed these conditions on his traumatic birth, especially the lack of oxygen at birth.

I think about his learning difficulties and his traumatic birth regularly. It breaks my heart. I do hope strategies can be put in place to improve these problems for future births.

Sincerely,