

Submission
No 745

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Name: Clare Rainbow
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Partially
Confidential

I went through the group care midwife program at _____ Hospital.

I feel I was so blessed to have had access to the amazing midwives there, and the great birth centre space at the _____ Hospital. I had the option to also have a home birth, which I am planning now for the birth of my second child in a few months.

I had a great birth with my daughter. I hardly had any interventions or pain relief.

I did have a stretch and sweep from my midwife, which I was suggested to have because I was 10 days past my 'due date' and the Director of Obstetrics said he wanted to commence an induction - which I declined. I feel fortunate that I was well informed before this moment to know that I could say 'NO' to an induction, and to have had a very supportive midwife who reminded me that it was my choice and suggested other options such as acupuncture that I could try to get labour started. I declined the induction, went for some acupuncture and I went into labour naturally within 5 hours after this recommendation and managed to avoid a major intervention.

I had no pain relief during birth - and was able to have a water birth. My midwife was also supportive of taking me into the birth centre fairly early. I found it stressful feeling i wanted to settle into a location for birth, and being told not to come in too early or I'd be sent home. So very grateful I was permitted to stay when I checked in.

The midwife left my husband I alone in the bathroom for much of the birth so we could have our own 'safe space' and labour in privacy. She was sitting in the next room and very accessible and checked in regularly - but it felt good not to feel 'watched'. She didnt do any vaginal examinations and I am very grateful that my labour process wasnt broken with simple interventions like this.

In hindsight I did have some coached pushing suggested by the provider at the time and which I therefore thought was the right move at the time, however moving into my next birth this is something I would like to avoid. I feel it didn't support my pelvic floor and may have contributed to the light prolapse that I incurred.

I had a second degree tear but we decided it was not worth stitching and Im pleased with that decision also, as felt my recovery went well, and I didn't have to have any stitching or procedures at a critical time post birth to bond with my baby.

I did not have a good experience birthing the placenta.

I feel that we hadn't come into the birth with a plan to birth the placenta, and in the excitement of post birth activity I forgot that I still had this step in the birth to complete.

As a result, the birth of the placenta became 'urgent' and felt like it came from nowhere. I was given 2 shots of synthetic oxytocin to try and speed it up and a doctor suddenly by the bed massaging and putting pressure on my abdomen to try and dislodge the placenta while pulling on the placenta cord. I was threatened that I would be sent for a cesarean if I didn't manage to birth the placenta in the next push. Luckily the placenta came out - but I felt that this part of labour

could have been better managed. For my next birth (in a few months time) I have spoken to the midwife about maintaining the labour environment after I have birthed the baby. I would like to avoid any interventions in this part of the labour as it was scary and unexpected, and I feel unnecessary if we had maintained the labour 'zone'.

I was then offered to go home within 5 hours after the birth of my daughter. I was pleased to go home, and was very supported by the amazing midwives in the 2 weeks after the birth. They gave me access to phone support, They came for scheduled home visits and extra visits when i asked for them due to some concerns i had. It was amazing to have midwives come to our home and show us how we could care for our baby in our own home environment - for example how to co-sleep and best feeding positions in my own bed and living room.