

Submission
No 784

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Name: Mrs Praxis Valadez

Date Received: 8 August 2023

Partially
Confidential

On 25 April 2019, I was pregnant with my first child, and scheduled to be induced for labour by the labour and delivery team at the _____ hospital because I had gestational diabetes. Having never been pregnant before, I took the midwifery team's advice to get induced, even if it was a few days before my due date and my body made no signs of being ready for labour. On the evening of 25 April

having been in the hospital the entire day, my body made no progress and I was given a Cook's catheter (balloon) to speed up the process of dilation. 6 hours later, my waters were broken, and I was given pitocin. My body still wasn't ready. (No contractions or dilation. Because my waters had been broken, it was important to speed up the birth process so I was given larger doses of pitocin till I reached the maximum levels to get my body to start contracting and dilating. The contractions came once I was pumping with pitocin and were so painful I asked for an epidural. At this point we were forcing my body to birth the baby and I had so many drugs pumped into my system that I was feeling strange.

I was so happy when it was time to finally push, but that happiness soon turned into lightheadedness and an extremely woozy feeling when they put my baby in my arms. I was quickly losing blood as a piece of my placenta was still inside me. They rushed me to the operating room, while I still awake, was pumped with more epidural and they removed the placenta, stopped the bleeding and stitched me up. The effects of the drugs and blood loss made me more woozy and I felt like I was going to die. After the procedure, I whispered to a nurse please tell my husband I'm ok, who meanwhile was left in the delivery room with our baby and the floor covered in my blood. He was petrified.

When I was finally reunited with my baby, I was told to immediately breastfeed her but I had a difficult time as one hand had my IV drip in it that I was told the wire could not bend and I could not move that hand. So my husband would hold the baby up to my breast and manoeuvre the nipple into her mouth while I held her with my one hand. The next day I was informed I had lost over half my blood volume and would urgently need a blood transfusion. The day after that I was told I needed more iron and was given an iron transfusion. The doctor placed the needle into my vein incorrectly and I got a leakage which stained the inside of my arm bright brown.

On day 4 or 5, I'm not sure, we were finally given the all clear to go home after my iron levels had finally returned to normal. I left the hospital a shell of myself, and was now faced with taking care of my baby. To say that was the hardest experience of my life is an understatement. I left traumatised and completely unsure why it all had to unfold like that. The fact is, I didn't have to be induced. I didn't need all those drugs in my body. My baby and I were perfectly healthy before and my body should have been given the chance to labour naturally.