

Submission
No 817

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Name: Mrs Grace Cupitt

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Partially
Confidential

I gave birth in 2021 at _____ Hospital on the 31st of December. I want to tell my story as it was overall a positive birth in the hospital system, despite my own concerns with the hospital system, and my original plan to birth with a private midwife at home.

I required an induction of labour as I was 41 weeks and 3 days, and had a scan that showed my amniotic fluid was low and less movement from my baby. My midwife made the decision that my care would need to change to the hospital as waiting for labour to start naturally was no longer an option. I had many misgivings about this process but knew that in the interests of my baby that this was the right choice.

When we arrived at the hospital that afternoon on the 30th of December we were treated respectfully and the midwife was kind and respectful at explaining the process. As I was already 1 or 2cm dilated it was decided that in the morning I would have my waters broken and a syntocin drip started.

In the morning we were assigned our midwife, named _____. She was brilliant, very nurturing and caring, and was in communication with our private midwife on the phone at different points. I think the fact that we had an advocate for us (even though she couldn't be there because of Covid rules at the time) it made a difference. And that we knew what type of birth we wanted.

My labour was short and fast, and very intense. Our midwife was so helpful, when I was feeling like it was getting too intense she and my husband worked together to help made the best decisions as I couldn't really think straight. My husband knew I didn't want an epidural so when I was feeling like it was too much he asked what we could do and she recommended changing positions onto my side on the bed and having some gas.

Her calm reassuring presence was just what my husband needed. I wasn't really paying attention but I knew it made a big difference for him.

When it came time for pushing they were going to use a vacuum but didn't end up needing it because the baby and myself pushed it off. They also asked for my consent to do an episiotomy. It is important to note that despite the fact that I said yes, I didn't end up having one because my husband asked them why it was necessary. In the time it took to explain why, twenty seconds, I managed to push her head out and then it was unnecessary. This, for me is an example about how birth trauma was avoided. But it took the partner asking a question and making them pause for it to happen. I don't think it should take this particular circumstance and individual scenario for such a simple thing to be avoided.

My daughter was born at 12:20pm after four hours of labour and we were so happy.

The birth was positive and powerful and done as much on my terms as possible. This was partly in due to our circumstances, birth education/ knowledge and the quality of the hospital staff.