

Submission
No 887

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Name: Name suppressed
Date Received: 1 September 2023

Partially
Confidential

I gave birth to my daughter at _____ Hospital in August 2022. As soon as I found out I was, I knew that I wanted to be a part of the MGP program to ensure that I had continuity of care throughout my pregnancy. I was lucky to be accepted on to the program and met my wonderful midwife in the 16th week of my pregnancy. This was my first pregnancy and I thoroughly appreciated and enjoyed having one midwife to speak to about any questions or concerns I had and knowing that it would be a familiar face at every appointment was comforting. At 32 weeks it was discovered that my baby was breech, this set-in worry for me immediately as I knew that this meant at _____ hospital I would have to have a C-section, giving up my dreams of a natural birth. My midwife was incredibly supportive throughout this process and talked me through all of my options, one of which was to be referred to the breech clinic in at _____ Hospital. This is the option I chose. I was fully supported by my midwife throughout this and my baby was turned via ECV at 39 weeks meaning I could continue with my plan of birthing at _____ Hospital.

On the day of my daughter's birth, my daughter was born unresponsive. She was resuscitated by doctors at _____ Hospital and was immediately taken to the NICU, my husband went with her meaning I was left separated from my husband and newborn daughter within minutes of her arriving into the world. Had I been in a room of strangers or people I had just met I can honestly say my experience would have been a lot more distressing. Yes, I was distressed and desperate to be with my daughter, but I was being supported and cared for by a midwife I had spent the entirety of my pregnancy with, a familiar face and a familiar hand to hold in the most horrible moments of my life made all the difference. My daughter was then transported to Sydney along with my husband and I had to remain at the hospital until my own transport could be arranged.

My daughter spent the next 72 hours in NICU at _____ where my husband and I were able to stay with her. Thankfully she improved very quickly, and we were able to take her home within 5 days. As a new mum I was exhausted physically and emotionally. Our midwife from _____ Hospital remained in contact with us throughout our stay at _____, checking on the well-being of myself, my daughter and my husband and ensuring we add all the support in place we needed. This helped us so much in a time that could have been so isolating, it was greatly appreciated to know that our support system was still there and would continue to be there when we came home. The day after we arrived home, we were visited by our midwife for our first home visit. This was an extremely emotional time for all involved, my husband and I were able to ask any questions we had and talk about the birth and what happened in detail with the person that was there on the day, I believe that this helped greatly with me processing the events of my daughters birth. I also believe that it helped our midwife to see our daughter thriving and doing so well since leaving the hospital. I do not have family here in Australia and found the first few weeks of my daughter's life incredibly tough emotionally but knowing that I had the same person coming to visit on regular occasions to check on myself and my daughter helped immensely.

I was and still am so grateful for everything my midwife did for my daughter and I on the day she was born and beyond. My daughter's birth was terrifying and distressing in many ways but not because of the way I was treated, I truly believe the way I was treated and cared for helped my mental health greatly and it saddens me that every women in Australia is not entitled to this model of care.