

Submission
No 990

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

I do not have time to write down my entire pregnancy, birth and post-birth experience at Hospital, NSW in November 2015, I want to share a summary as I believe everybody deserves to have their say and every woman deserves the right to proper care.

- As a **high risk** pregnant patient I never once saw the same doctor twice, I believe this led to the wrong assessment late in the pregnancy to change me from a patient that would have a scheduled C-section to a patient who would be delivered naturally via vaginal birth. I had been a **high risk patient** on bed rest for the duration of my pregnancy as I did not want my extra short cervix stappled (Stappling had been a recommendation as an alternative to bedrest). I have a short cervix due to multiple surgeries in my lifetime. (Many of my friends were lucky to be in a Midwife program, none of them high risk and I am at a loss to understand how high risk patients are so overlooked when it comes to true care during pregnancy).
- At 41 wks and 4 days gestation, my body struggled to deliver my child, leading to every conceivable form of intervention during the birth process. My daughter nearly died during her delivery, several doctors bickered in front of us; my daughter was finally delivered via suction cap and forceps, I was left with 2nd degree tears and a torn uterus after the placenta was pulled out of me by one of the doctors.
- I haemorrhaged not long after the delivery after getting up to go to the bathroom. Also found out, several days after the birth, when my parents finally arrived, that I had lost over a litre of blood when I haemorrhaged and that the hospital staff **forgot** to give me a blood transfusion. We found this information out because my hand was going septic from a canula stuck in my hand three days prior; my father queried as to why it was there and why I was suffering chills and feeling overall unwell and the nurse admitted the mistake had been made, but it was now too late for the transfusion.
- Despite begging for assistance with my daughter (the hospital does not allow partners to stay) as I had been so woozy and felt so ill after haemorrhaging, I was given none. I had been so delirious that I accidentally pulled out my catheter when I thought my daughter was turning blue and jumped across the bed to help her. Pulling out that catheter led not only to scarring but many more issues as years have passed.
- I spent 5 days in hospital because my daughter would not feed, I had the same nurses berate me for being lazy day in and day out (one nurse told me she had 30 years experience, so it was not like she was new to the role). I tirelessly hand-expressed colostrum from my breast into a syringe to feed my baby. On the morning before I was discharged I had to sign a waiver to put my daughter on formula as she was losing weight. That afternoon a new nurse came on rotation, took one look at my baby and then told me my daughter was tongue and lip tied and gave me nipple shield so I could try to start feeding my baby. I did begin to feed my baby with the nipple shield, finally, but by that time my milk was starting to dry up so I had to top her up still with formula. My daughter had many diet issues for the first month due to formula, had the hospital not failed me in

the beginning (the initial nurses on shift and the paediatrician checks) I have no doubt my breastfeeding journey would have been much different.

I know that during that time in 2015 [redacted] Hospital was operating on less than skeleton staff in the Maternity Ward (this was said to me and other patients during our stay). As time has gone on, I have met other women who birthed in [redacted] Hospital and too faced birth trauma and I hope all of our stories are read and our voices lead to better care for mothers and babies in the future.