

Submission
No 1137

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

I have worked as a Registered Midwife since 2000 in various settings around the world. I moved to NSW Australia in 2019 and have been working as a Registered Midwife since. I worked in a public Tertiary care hospital since.

During my full time employment in the hospital I witnessed many instances of disrespectful care, coercive care by holding policies and guidelines against clients' individual wishes or needs, some instances of obstetric violence by disregarding pleas, ignoring 'no', speaking sweetly before forceful procedures. Partners are not included while family centred care being advertised. There is pressure every day to follow policies even though I know it is not in the patient's best interest.

When I have tried to speak up, I was laughed at, scoffed at, yelled at, threatened with repercussions.

As a result of witnessing birth trauma on a very frequent basis, I find myself in a situation where I would prefer women/clients not to go to the location. Also I find it very difficult working there. I leave this specific work place worried/ concerned for women's physical and mental wellbeing. It pays a toll on my own mental health.

Also I am concerned about how junior staff of all professions is being treated in this environment. They are very often asked to attend to work they have not yet been trained in sufficiently/at all. They have an unfiltered way of observing and are left in shock with little or no support after scary/ life threatening/serious situations.

I do not know how this system, so run down and worn out, so short staffed and tired can be changed. There is so much knowledge and compassion, yet so much fear and pressure.

I find women benefit from midwifery led care and having their midwife advocate for them beneficial. All women should be able to access their preferred model of care, low risk women should not be birthing in a hospital.