

Submission  
No 1017

## INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

**Name:** Name suppressed

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Partially  
Confidential

My first daughter was born in 2016. I went through a private OB at the [redacted] in Sydney. My care in the lead up to the birth was as expected. At around 32 weeks I started having severe episodes of pain that they did not get to the bottom of until I was 36 weeks when it was discovered I had developed Gallstones. Due to this I was told I needed to be induced at 40+3 weeks even though I was able to control the episodes monitoring the food I ate. After being induced I laboured for more than 24 hours with not much progress. As they then broke my waters my daughter turned posterior, and I opted for an epidural. The epidural did not work (made pain worse) and I was then encouraged to attempt a second epidural. When it came to delivery forceps were used without any real explanation to my husband or myself. My first experience with breastfeeding was a midwife shoving my breast into my daughter's mouth even though I had a good education around breastfeeding and knew what I needed to do. At some point during the night a midwife also took my baby out of the room so I could sleep, even though I said I didn't need that to happen.

My second child was born in 2018. I had her through a different OB due to living elsewhere. She was born at [redacted] Private Hospital. As my pregnancy progressed I discovered this OB had little bedside manner. I had some bleeding after intercourse & after performing an internal examination he suggested I tell my husband "to at least make it worth it and make me climax if we were going to have intercourse whilst pregnant".

I was encouraged to be induced at 40 + 6 (a Saturday morning) being told that the baby's vitals 'were concerning'. I later discovered due to a comment from the OB during delivery that it was because he had a golf game booked for the next day. After being induced I was left in a room in the maternity ward alone for hours as the birthing suite was busy. When I was finally moved back to the birthing suite I had negative comments from the midwives about my choice of using hypnobirthing and how the soundtrack I had selected was annoying to them. Once again my child turned posterior. I had an epidural so

was yet again stuck on my back in a bed. When it came time to deliver and I was doing everything I could to push my posterior positioned child out of my body the OB (sitting at my feet with everything exposed) grabbed my leg with one hand and told me “come on XXXX at least pretend you’re trying to have this baby”. He then proceeded with no warning to use his hands as forceps (as apparently he refused to use forceps in deliveries) and reach inside my body to deliver my baby.

Once we were moved into the maternity ward I was then treated rudely by many midwives that discovered I was still breastfeeding my 2 year old and planned on tandem feeding my children. They would make comments about me choosing to starve my newborn. I also had formula offered even though I had no issues breastfeeding. It alarms me that these midwives are the first point of call for thousands of new mothers each year and have very little education/knowledge around breastfeeding.

My third child was born in 2021 in the peak of the second wave of COVID. With this in mind, I did my research and chose a new OB and yet again a different hospital (Private). She was amazing and for the first time ever I felt really cared for. I felt like I was being listened to. I went into labour naturally and was given the opportunity to create a peaceful birthing space. Once again, I ended up with a posterior baby but this time with no pain relief. This is when a midwife decided to try & turn him during contractions. This pain was excruciating. I opted out but she kept wanting to try. I kept being talked into trying to turn him, even though with the end of each contraction he would turn back. When it came time to deliver my OB had to use the forceps. My son then suffered Secondary Apnoea and needed resuscitation for more than 17minutes. He was taken away to special care. After the placenta was delivered I was left alone in the delivery room for hours with zero information. I had midwives come every 40minutes or so to press on my stomach to ensure I hadn’t retained the placenta. This pain was excruciating and resulted in me being left laying in the bed, in my own blood, with no

idea how my son was. When I asked for information, they would say they'd go find out but wouldn't come back. I wasn't asked if I wanted a shower, although when I finally demanded to see my son I was told I had to shower before going. It was hours before getting to see my son.

Five minutes after getting to see my son I was informed that he needed to be transferred to NICU at a public hospital elsewhere & that my husband or I could not go with him. I was distraught. I ended up discharging myself and my husband drove us to the other hospital where I was admitted into their maternity ward.

In NICU I was made to feel I was inconveniencing them as I wouldn't allow them to give him formula and wanted to use my expressed colostrum instead. I felt like I wasn't allowed to stay near my son and constantly told to go back to the ward to sleep even though I didn't want to. In the ward I wasn't checked once by a midwife even though I had stitches and a traumatic birth. I only got pain relief when I buzzed and asked for it. I was told I was holding my son too much and made to feel like I couldn't mother how I wanted to. I also feel like when we tried to get answers around what happened and why it happened we couldn't get answers. There was no closure as to why he stopped breathing.