

Submission
No 1026

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

My third baby was born at _____ Hospital. I applied for the MGP but was denied, I was sad. My first appointment was a phone appointment with a midwife and she informed me that my next appointment will be at the hospital and after that I can have the appointment at the local community centres. This sounded good to me. As I just recently relocated to the _____ area, my GP was in Sydney and I had no local GP, I asked the midwife if she could recommend a local psychologist for post natal depression. She advises she does not have a list but will ask a let me know. I never heard back.

At my first in person appointment, I enquired again about a list of local psychologist with the midwife I could see and was told they don't have one. I was speechless. I also had to see the doctor and was classified of a high risk pregnancy because of my age. This shooked me, as I had no issues in my previous two preganancies and births and I was over 35 on my second preganancy. I did not understand this. On the way out I made my next appointment at the front desk and asked about the local community centres appointment and the reception told me I could not go there I have to come to the hospital for all my appointment, I walked out of the hospital crying.

My next appointment with the doctor at the hospital I was waiting for over an hour. I enquired at the reception twice how much longer it will be till I can see the doctor and they receptionist could not give me an answer after an hours wait I told the receptionist that I am leaving as I need to go back to work she looked at me weirdly and she told me the doctor will call me when he is free. I never received a call from the doctor. When I called the hospital to make my next appointment, I told the receptionist that the doctor never called me and she informed me the doctor would never call me. I was puzzled and confused.

The day of the birth. I called the hospital when my contraction were about 1 minute and 5 mintues appart gave them all the information and told the person I wanted a water birth as advise on my previous check up appointment. When arriving at the hospital I was placed in a room to monitor my contractions. The midwife left the room. After a while my contraction got stronger and I was feeling cold I asked my partner to go and find a midwife. Once the midwife arrived, we were led to the birthing room. Shortly after I went under the shower and the midwife left the room again. When it come closer to giving birth, my partner filled up the bathtub. At some stage the midwife came in again and did not look impressed with me being in the bathtub and instructed me, when she tells me to get out of the bathtub I need to get out and my partner to push the button on the end once she tells him. I was puzzled when hearing the comments she made. After one of the contraction was over and I finished pushing the midwife yelled at me to keep on pushing. I was wondering how can I push when I don't have a contraction. My baby got stuck, after that my mind went blank I only could feel panic in the room, people pulling on me (I don't know how many midwives were in the room), from far away I could hear someone saying something about baby is in the amniotic sac and the next thing I could hear someone say in the room say "What is it?" it was not my partner. This was the first thing I clearly heard after my baby was born. No kind words, telling me the baby is okay and asking if I am okay. It was "What is it?" The gender of the baby was more important than I am the mother who gave birth.

I was sitting in the bathtub with my baby on the chest when I noticed that there was no more water in the bath tub and was told to get out of the bath. My partner helped me get to the bed. When I

was lying there, the midwife push down on my belly I am not sure if it was for an examination or the delivery of the placenta, I screamed in pain I never felt so much pain with the force she pushed down on my belly.

With the birth of my first two babies, the midwives supported me throughout the journey explained what they did when they did an examination and where always calm and caring. I did not have any complications or blank outs during these births. They were kind, calm and respectful of me and my body.

The changes I would like to see:

- Greater access to Midwife Group Practise, or other continuity of care models
- Training of hospital personal from doctors, midwives and receptions on how to communicate in a polite and empathic way and be supportive during birth
- Publicly funded mental health support for women who struggle during pregnancy
- Education of midwives and doctors of the importance of pelvic floor exercises and access to physios
- Information about birth debrief and who can help if birth trauma does happen