

Submission
No 1028

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 9 August 2023

Partially
Confidential

I gave birth via an emergency caesarean at _____ Hospital in NSW in 2022. I was unwell most of my pregnancy and was unfortunate to have, hyperemesis (since week 4), gestational diabetes (week 26) and preeclampsia just before birth.

My gestational diabetes was diet controlled and the endocrinology team at the hospital discharged me before birth as my numbers were great.

I then had my 34 week appointment where the obstetrician I had to see due to my GD diagnosis, rang up to book me in for an induction at 39 weeks without gaining my consent nor explaining the process/any risk factors. That is not what I wanted to do and I had to fight for the birth I wanted to have. The doctor tried to coerce me by saying I am putting my baby at risk due to potentially having a big baby, but in that same appointment she wanted me to go for another scan because my baby was measuring small. It all made no sense and I thankfully never saw that doctor again.

My labour was three days long and on the third day I was admitted to the hospital where all of my birth plans went out the window as I developed preeclampsia (no one informed me of this, I found out much later). My baby became obstructed, and his heart rate went too high, so we all agreed a c-section was the best option.

I had been given too much medication through my epidural which led to me shaking on the table in the OR to the point where I heard the surgeons tell someone to hold me down as I was shaking off the table. I was absolutely terrified of what I was feeling. The doctors that were cutting me open were discussing their weekend plans as I was focusing on not dying. I was shaking and when my baby came out and I screamed from the tugging sensations felt. It truly felt like my insides were being ripped apart. I couldn't even hold my baby after birth due to what I was feeling. It wasn't until two hours later, on the post natal ward, that I held my baby.

At this point I was aware I had gestational hypertension, I signed myself out AMA knowing that I had the tools at home to deal with gestational hypertension at home (am a registered nurse) although it wasn't gestational hypertension, it was preeclampsia that no one had informed me of. I infact had a doctor ask me the day I signed myself out, if I had preeclapmsia and I said no not to my knowledge and I heard nothing more of it. I was home for not even an hour before I felt off and checked my blood pressure and it was 170/110mmHg. I went immediately back to the hospital and had to be readmitted and started on medication.

The miscommunication, lack of communication and disrespect by doctors, has made me reluctant to ever have another child. I do not ever want to go through what I went through again. I am thankful I have a medical background as if I didn't know any better, I could have died when I went home the night, I signed myself out, out of the pure fact that no one told me that I had preeclampsia.