

**Submission
No 1286**

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Name: Emma Hayes

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I have experienced two pregnancies, both conceived naturally, birthed at home with the support of a private midwife. I had such positive experiences, with no birth trauma, an established breastfeeding relationship with each of my children until approx 2 years of age (the WHO recommends this). I believe I had positive experience due to my choice to prioritise continuity of care. I felt safe, supported and cared for by a known care provider who was consistent throughout my pregnancy, birth and until 6 week post-partum (when hand over back to GP). I could access advice about breastfeeding, infant care & development and post-partum recovery without leaving my house. If I was in a hospital setting I would be taking up extra space and resources. Having my midwife come to me allowed me to spend time bonding with my babies with support. This kind of care should be accessible for ALL women. Statistics show that continuity of care is the gold standard and best practice. I believe this is possible. If funds were allocated for pregnant women to choose where they allocate the money to access continuity of care e.g.a number of ultrasounds, birth classes, midwifery or obstetric care, doula care, post-partum support.