

Submission
No 1338

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

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Date Received: 15 August 2023

Partially
Confidential

In September 2020 I gave birth at _____ hospital. What was meant to be a happy event meeting our baby was instead traumatic. During and after birth I was subjected to disrespectful care, being dismissed and physical assault, including being told "oh be quiet you're not the first woman to give birth" when moaning through contractions, I was dismissed when I felt my son crowning and called for help, I was told there's no way I'd dilated enough yet, my partner had to push to get them to check, I was in fact crowning. Being young parents at only 18 multiple comments were made to us directly about how "you'll never do this again now that you know how much it hurts" " you'll think twice next time won't you".

One of the worst moments was when I was physically examined by a junior Dr to check dilation, I am a survivor of sexual assault and suffer ptsd, this was made clear to all care teams and advocated by my partner. The exam was rough and painful I asked the Dr multiple times to please just stop so I can take a moment to adjust but all I was told was "it'll be over in a second don't worry" my partner told the Dr I had asked her to stop so please stop and she gave him the same response. During this exam the Dr accidentally prematurely ruptured my waters when I felt the pop during the exam I was told "no they haven't popped I'm only checking dilation" only moments after the Dr concluded the exam and I stood did the waters rush out. Not only was I ignored completely but so was my partner, at a time where I should've felt cared for and supported I felt completely violated,scared and alone. Birth trauma significantly effected my mental health as well as my relationship, my trust with the healthcare system and ultimately my relationship with my baby.