

**Submission
No 1248**

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

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As a birth doula I have witnessed horribly abusive and disrespectful care within the maternity system. I am referring to all terms of reference, but most notably those considering physical, emotional, psychological and economic impacts on the women and families I've supported. I have supported women who've been told during their pregnancy that they are 'too fat' to birth in the water, have witnessed an OB continue to suture a woman without pain relief despite her screaming, "No, STOP, I can feel it!", have witnessed so many women miss out on continuity of midwifery carer (which we know improves outcomes for mums and babies). I have debriefed with women after their births and heard their horrifying stories of abuse, neglect, mistreatment, disrespect and disempowerment. It is completely unacceptable that this is still happening.