

Submission
No 1220

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 10 August 2023

Partially
Confidential

I'm writing this submission as an individual who experienced disrespectful and abusive care as a new mother. The terms of reference I am covering are systemic barriers, physical, emotional, psychological and economic impacts on myself and my family, continuity of care barriers, policy issues and lack of information available for informed consent.

While I had a beautiful pregnancy and my birth was mostly respectful, I was told that I would have FaCS called on me because I was neglecting my baby and putting her in danger by requesting that I use donor breastmilk instead of formula (despite this being the recommendation from the World Health Organisation). When I asked to discharge, I was told I would be doing so against medical advice and consequently risking another FaCS report. I was fear-mongered and belittled as a mother and it had ongoing psychological and emotional impacts on me.

Additionally, I wanted to have a waterbirth at my local hospital, but was told that due to policy I was not allowed. When I planned a homebirth (to be able to access the water during my labour) I had to pay \$4500 out of pocket, which consequently had economic impacts.

After the birth of my second baby I experienced severe difficulties with breastfeeding, but was never provided up to date, evidence based information to support me on my journey.

All of my children have been planned homebirths with out of pocket costs because of the horrific experiences I have had within the hospital system at the hands of care providers.