

Submission
No 1182

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 15 August 2023

Partially
Confidential

I birthed my first daughter at _____ on April 11 2018. I was 25 years old and had been under the care of a midwife through the midwifery group practice. The premise of the practice was to prepare us for a natural birth. My midwife was lovely, however any discussion outside of a natural birth was kind of swept off as being unlikely. When I was diagnosed while oligohydramous at 37 weeks I was induced. I was give the cervadil tape on day one which induced like cramping. On day 2 I was scheduled to have a balloon out in at 9pm that night to prepare for a full induction the following morning. We had to wait untill 11.30pm untill the dr arrived to put in the balloon. I was warned it was uncomfortable. When the procedure began I was in absolute agony. I was screaming crying, my legs began to shake, I went grey and started to vomit from the pain, I was not at all prepared and when I asked for pain relief I was offered a panadol which I took but threw up immediately. When I begged the dr to stop pumping the balloon with water. She appeared to stop by my husband noticed she continued to fill it out of sight. I have never been in more pain in my life to this day and I feel like that type of procedure should not have been attempted without proper pain relief. From that point on I was in severe distress wouldn't walk or move. I was taken to my bed where I was to try and sleep with my induction starting at 8am. I stayed up all night in agony vomitting all night. At 8am my midwife arrived and I told her about the extreme pain I was in and I couldn't move or stop the vomitting. I was told 'birth isn't suppose to be easy'

I was taken to birthing where my poticin drip started. My contractions were intense and fast. I started the drip at 8am and 12pm I was pushing, I was using gas but towards the end the gas was taken away from me and I was told to push as hard as I could as the baby was under stress. They decided to perform a episodomy with no permission and had me pushing so hard untill the baby was born. The pain when the baby was born was excruciating (as it should be) but now having compared to me second birth it was far worse. My episodomy tore to a 3b tear, I needed immediate surgery after my baby was born and I didn't get to hold her as her breathing was unstable. I didn't meet her properly until 5 hrs later. When she was handed to me and immediately put on my breast to feed. She was screaming and distressed and the pain from feeding was severely uncomfortable especially because I couldn't sit up properly or move because I had a catheter and stitches from the surgery.

I was left alone to 'keep trying' to feed her and eventually gave up and just wanted to hold her. I was unable to lift myself up enough to put her in her cot to sleep so I lay awake all night holding her. I eventually ad to ask for a lactation consultant who assisted me by giving me a shield however my supply severely dropped after that and I struggled to feed my baby. My breastfeeding journey was traumatising and I was steered away from formula feeding instead put on a feed - top up - pump schdule all together took 1 hr which I had to repeat every 2-3 hrs. I continued untill 5 months when it was clear my baby was not progressing. She was later diagnosed with a Hypermobilty disorder and low muscle tone and still at age 5 has ongoing issues. She didn't walk untill she was 2.5.

This whole experience has left me with server anxiety. A eating disorder and ongoing problems within my relationship.

When I had my second baby I tried again for a vaginal birth, unfortunately needed a episodomy but had a wonderful midwife who listened to all of my story and decided what formula would be best form the start and was very conscious in my birth allowed me to have Gas the whole time and especially when performing another episodomy. It healed me so much and I enjoyed my post partum experience so much more