

Submission  
No 1377

## INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

**Name:** Name suppressed

**Date Received:** 10 August 2023

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Partially  
Confidential

I gave birth to our twin boys 10 weeks premature on 25th July 2022. There were a number of points in our journey that have been traumatic for myself and my partner.

Whilst a high risk pregnancy, the first 28 weeks went smoothly and without complication. At a routine ultrasound at 28 weeks, 4 days pregnant, it was discovered there was fluid discordance between the babies. We were advised to go directly to hospital and this initial communication was without much information or empathy and we were incredibly scared. That moment is in my mind forever, and has taken hours of psychological therapy to work through the trauma and anxiety it set in motion.

We were under the care of \_\_\_\_\_ for the next week and I have to say the team were fantastic, the care we received was of high standard.

The exception to this was the management of my gestational diabetes and food situation. I was diagnosed with GD just prior to hospital admission and while I met the dietician and was given advice, around what to eat, the majority of the time the food I was provided was not in line with the dietician's advice. Eg I was meant to be eating snacks throughout the day which were not provided. Due to the nature of my twins condition in utero, I had to have daily ultrasounds and monitoring and on the chance I would need emergency surgery, I was fasted every night sometimes up to 16 hours before I could eat which was incredibly stressful. I would be starving, light headed and then not even given the appropriate nutrition.

The birth of the twins itself was a great experience and again I credit the team at \_\_\_\_\_. The next traumatic experience was learning to breastfeed/express milk. Whilst there were 2 lactation consultants at \_\_\_\_\_, they were not available on weekends or in the evening. Midwives have limited knowledge and I had no idea what I was meant to do to start supplying milk for my babies who were so premature. They were too small to breastfeed for weeks yet. In hindsight I believe the lack of education and support led to an extremely hard start for my breastfeeding journey and ultimate low supply. The situation was even worse once we were transferred to \_\_\_\_\_ (our local) hospital where there is 1 LC on staff for 2 hospitals! Despite our paediatrician requesting she come to see me, she was so busy she often could not get to me for days.

Lastly, whilst at \_\_\_\_\_ my partner and myself contracted covid and had to be isolated from our boys. Whilst we understand that was necessary for their and the NICU safety, it could have been handled a lot better. We had to evacuate our accommodation immediately and return home 1.5 hours away. We were provided with no psychological support, and I was extremely depressed for days. I would cry every single day and was trying to reach out to other phone counselling services for support, but ultimately the hospital should have provided psychological support at this time. On top of this, and \_\_\_\_\_ had poor communication between themselves, had different policies around covid and even the staff did not understand their own policies or could communicate with us what the requirements were. It was a hugely stressful time in the journey of our boys being in hospital for 2 months. I wouldn't wish that time on my worst enemy. There is a lot of room for improvement in education and communication in the hospital system in order to minimise prenatal, birth and postnatal trauma for all parents.