

Submission  
No 1381

## INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

**Name:** Name suppressed

**Date Received:** 10 August 2023

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Partially  
Confidential

## My birth trauma

I was a nervous first time mum, and didn't have a great pregnancy. Towards the end I began to feel a little more in control.

I had done a Calm Birth course which gave me confidence in my self and in my body. Though nerves were still high.

I had a big bump, it was commented on often.

At 40 + 6 I was concerned that I was getting decreased movements so was advised to go in.

They did a scan.

The sonographer referred to 'he' which was devastating as we hadn't found out the sex. She quickly said oh I refer to them all as he. I wasn't convinced but chose to believe it.

They also referred to my baby as being very large and expected birth weight to be between 9-12lbs. He was 9lbs. They were very concerned about this, which then concerned me.

Due to this they did a sweep, put something in my vagina to start labour and put me in room on my own. I mostly slept overnight with mild cramping.

The real trauma started the next day.

The obstetrician came. His name was Dr . I sometimes feel I made this up, as he was a complete horror. He came in, rude, abrupt and told me there I was two ways I was going to birth this baby via styrops where I would likely tear front to back, or via c-sec. I was completely a taken back. I asked if that was his assessment couldn't we just go to c-sec. He said 'oh we like women to try'.

I was completely crushed and lost all faith in myself and the process.

The nurse was kind, and I got to shower before heading to the birth suite.

Nobody truly explained what my options were. I felt like I was on a conveyor belt and had to go with what was recommended. They needed to put a canola in first. One nurse tried a number of times stabbing my bone and messing it up over and over until I demanded a doctor did it. The doctor arrived and it went straight in. I was hooked up to a drip as I hadn't dilated at all. BANG the contractions came hard and fast. It was crippling. No warm up.

I was offered gas and air. It made me vomit. It made me lose my senses but it didn't help the pain.

There was a trainee midwife on my antenatal classes, who had also been calm birth trained. She asked to attend the birth which I was happy for. She could only be there a certain number of hours, so I had been on the drip for a number of hours before she arrived.

When she arrived she immediately asked why I was on the bed, why I wasn't being encouraged to move around. She tried to get me on the floor. By this stage I was in the fetal position. Scrunched up, out of it but in loads of pain.

They kept coming and doing internals and telling me I wasn't progressing.

They had a heart rate monitor on my belly for the baby that didn't work properly and kept picking my my heart beat instead of the babies. I was poked and prodded over and over again. Eventually they put a heart rate monitor on his head via my vagina. After birth I could see he had a cut on his head where they attached it. Surely he would have felt that pain?

Due to them not being able to get a proper heart beat, and due to my labour failing to progress they offered a c-sec. It was 6/7pm by this time and I was exhausted. I asked my mum and my husband to decide. It was that, or sleep and try again tomorrow.

We opted for a c-sec.

They turned off the fake labour drugs and my contractions stopped. I never went into labour. All their interventions did nothing, achieved nothing. Except traumatising me.

In the operating theatre it was so cold, it was likely due to the anaesthesia but it was all I could think of.

It's quite blurry but they handed my husband the BOY (big surprise) and then he was brought to me. Next hubby and baby have left the room. I am stitched up and wheeled to recovery. I am told it wasn't long but I didn't have my baby with me. I was confused to where he was.

When I got him back a nurse whipped out my breasts and shoved him on. It was Brutal and unsuccessful. I had a bruise on my breast from where he missed. There was no love or guidance.

Post birth I stayed for 5 days. I had a kind nurse who gave me my own room as she appreciated everything I had gone through. Even that day they took the catheter out and I didn't wee, so it had to go back in again.

They offered me lots of drugs and I trusted and said yes to what was on offer. I spent the week high and confused. I remember a nurse coming in and smacking my son. I am not sure if he had hiccups or what. I don't trust that she did what she did, or the drugs made me see things. Either way it felt real and traumatic to me but no one believed me.

I had a healthy baby.

I could get healthy again.

SUCCESS!! I was not allowed to look at it any other way. Baby was here safely and that is all that mattered.

The language of the nurses and doctors, the lack of skill by many staff, the constant up and down my vagina multiple times, not keeping my baby with me, the lack of breastfeeding support and the over use of drugs post birth are all failings in my eyes.

My second baby I elected for a c-sec in England to avoid all the trauma. I suffered peri-natal depression with my second. Whether it was linked to my birth trauma I can't know.

Women deserve better. We are bringing the next generation up, the start they get is so important to their development. Mothers are so important.