

Submission
No 1385

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 10 August 2023

Partially
Confidential

I was in labour with my second child.

I'd asked for an epidural promptly, the anaesthetist had 7 attempts at getting it into the right spot in back, in doing so he seemed to give me a double block in my right leg and a single block in my left, to the point I couldn't feel my feet.

I got closer to the end of my labour and told the midwife I'd had a sharp shooting pain and she told me she would check me when she came back from her break. About 40mins later she appeared and the pain hadn't subsided, so she checked and told me my son was in the birth canal and to start pushing.

She then left the room. My husband was asleep and woke up to my heavy breathing, and for a normally very calm guy, he was panicked. I had stopped intentionally pushing when the midwife left the room, but my husband had to push the buzzer and another midwife ran in and was like what's wrong and saw my sons head poking out and just my husband and I in there.

She proceeded to run into the hallway and yell baby's coming, she then ran back and started to help me with pushing and when. Meanwhile the other midwife eventually sauntered back in with the crib etc totally un-phased.

Within 2 mins of the first midwife being in the room my son was out.

After we'd had some time in the suite and I'd showered we walked up to our room on the maternity ward.

I started to not feel right in my head and told my husband I needed to lie down for a minute.

When I went to sit up, I felt like someone had smashed a glass bottle on the front of my head and the back of my neck.

I flagged this with a midwife and about 2 hours later a different anaesthetist came in and said I may have a post dural puncture.

I couldn't get out of bed, the pain I felt even slightly sitting up was horrific.

I had to buzz a midwife during the night and she basically came in and snapped and said we're really busy. My sister was there covering for my husband at the time and was gobsmacked by that response, especially as I was bed bound. I was then too scared to ask for help on the night shifts.

Next morning the head anaesthetist came in and basically said, yes you have a post dural puncture, we can leave it and it should resolve itself in 6-8 weeks (I had a 2 yr old at the time too) or I would have to do a spinal patch.

Long story short, I was terrified but I opted for the spinal patch as waiting wasn't an option.

I was then discharged 24hrs later. But every time I stood up my lower back and neck would spasm, causing me to physically shake. This lasted for about a week and then I had an excruciating pain that radiated from my hip down to my toes in the right leg.

I called the hospital to see if this was a side effect, the anaesthetist I spoke to said yes definitely, but she'd ring the head person and see what can be done.

She called me back about an hour later and surprise surprise he had said no it had nothing to do with that and neither did the spasms.

I've had to do Chiro and some Physio frequently since then to get my body back to some for of normal with no pain.