

Submission  
No 1351

## INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

**Name:** Name suppressed

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Partially  
Confidential

I had my first son in September 2021 and am due with my second son in September 2023.

My first pregnancy I went through Shared Care and was cared for by the midwife at my local medical centre with occasional antenatal appointments at hospital with the OB's.

Everything about that pregnancy was SO medicalised and severely lacking information and consent. There was never a mention of "you have a choice" when it came to tests or check ups. There was never "we do XYZ for this reason" or "here are the the actual facts and statistics behind ABC".

I contacted the hospital to notify I was in labour and they dismissed me, twice, when I said something was wrong because "it's your first baby". So not only was the pregnancy medicalised, but then they were ignoring my own intuition and knowledge of my body and my baby.

When my waters broke, they said I could go in. The midwife was rude and said my waters hadn't broken despite the fact I said I heard and felt a literal pop and then a big gush of fluid.

I was then told to stay on a bed, on my back, for 2 hours so they could check my contractions using a CTG (which I have since learnt has next to no research to prove the effectiveness of a CTG). I said again, something is wrong, but I was dismissed. The midwife had left the room and admitted she was doing other things while I laid there in pain for TWO HOURS. They then refused to accept me into the birth suite unless I consented to a vaginal exam, which isn't consenting when you feel you have no choice but to have someone insert themselves into your body just so you can be somewhere that is deemed "safe for birth" because you have said multiple times something is wrong and those medical professionals that are meant to help you, are dismissing you.

I laboured for hours. I then felt that I needed to prepare for pushing. I mentioned this to the new midwife I had but I was told "no, don't push, you aren't 10cms". I hadn't been examined to know whether or not I was 10cms but again, my own intuition knowledge of my body and my baby were ignored because of the medicalised system in place for birthing.

I had been in labour for almost a week and by this time I was told syntocinon was "my only option" to progress. I was exhausted so then had an epidural.

Whether or not I was told of the dangers of an epidural, I can't tell you if I remember, but the time to discuss the dangers of an epidural is not when a woman has already been in labour for days, exhausted and feeling defeated from being repeatedly ignored and dismissed.

My sons heart rate was "dropping low" so I was told we'd need baby out ASAP or he could die. Their version of ASAP is me waiting around for 2.5-3 hours to go to theatre. So it clearly was not the emergency they made it out to be.

Baby was out via "emergency" c-section, immediately taken away to clean/weigh, wrapped in a blanket, held to my clothed chest and then we were separated for however long while I went to recovery, all of it going against every natural instinct mothers have to be with their babies, to hold their babies against their skin and feed their babies.

When I finally got a room in the maternity ward, I wasn't checked on for hours and my buzzer wasn't working. I was alone in the room and had to actually call the maternity wards contact number to have someone come into the room. I didn't get to hold my baby, have a drink or food because I had no idea my buzzer wasn't actually working and the floor was understaffed that I wasn't seen too.

During my stay in the maternity ward, the continuity of care was dreadful. Advice being spit from left, right and centre that was contradicting the previous midwife. My nipples were severely damaged from horrible latching advice.

There was a threaten of not allowing discharge of my son because he developed jaundice.

There are so many aspects of my labour, birth and initial postpartum period in hospital I do not remember because the experience was dreadful. I remember the worse parts of my labour and birth more than I remember seeing my son for the first time.

But to make it worse, my discharge papers from the hospital contain NONE of the actual experience. Time is missing from pushing and total labour time. Issues in labour are not noted, etc. It's medical gaslighting.

This pregnancy, I was accepted into MGP. My midwife was made to leave MGP for whatever reason halfway through my pregnancy. Thankfully, the new midwife I have been assigned is incredible. She seems to be all for women trusting their intuition, trusting their bodies and aiming for the best birth a medicalised birthing system can provide. However continuity of care has not been met and not all midwife's who work in MGP are genuinely supportive of the birthing women.

I had a meeting with my midwife's "teammate" and this teammate refused my request for a HbA1c blood test and said I HAD to do the GTT and that I didn't have a choice. I didn't do the GTT and when I was finally assigned my new midwife, she happily gave me the blood test form I originally requested whilst also providing me information as to why the GTT is recommend but assured me it was my choice.

I'm now 35 weeks and have missed a few midwife appointments due to sickness from myself or my firstborn. Missing these appointments has motivated me to step away from this medicalised birthing system if I ever have another child.

I have an appointment with one of the obstetricians in the next week or so and I have had to do my own research to prepare for it. So that when I walk into the appointment I know the true statistics of a successful VBAC, of my uterus rupturing, of my unborn child dying as a result of a rupture and also the statistic that having a repeated c-section has a higher maternal death rate than that of my uterus rupturing (a statistic that every single woman I personally know of that has attempted a VBAC has NOT been advised!).