

Submission
No 1429

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

I gave birth to my first child in 2016 I was just shy of turning 28 years of age. I gave birth at Hospital (also was my work place at the time , I am a nurse and midwife). I chose to midwifery group practice as my model of care. I felt that I had a low risk pregnancy and wanted the continuity of care as well as non medicalized model as much as possible. My original midwife who cared for me antenatally was not my birthing midwife on the day of labor/birth. It was another midwife from the group practice who was on call that day.

I went into labor at home late on Saturday night 41+2 days and labored at home until 6am Sunday morning where I could no longer handle the painful contractions. I felt supported and confident when being admitted into delivery ward. I had a sense of familiarity and calm to me. My labor was slow to progress I tried the bath and gas and air and eventually with slow progress had my waters broken along with an epidural. At this time I became febrile and shivering. Still the CTG monitoring my baby was happy with heart rate and trace. I progressed to fully dilated and pushed within 2 hours to deliver a healthy 4.1 kg baby boy. I was over the moon. Delivering my placenta was easy too. It was when they assessed my vagina and tear that they informed me I would have to go to theatre for repair. This was because I tore into my external anal sphincter classified as a 3B tear. Still I was ok I had my healthy baby and I was allowed to have him skin to skin with me in theaters. It was not until I got discharged from hospital in the days and weeks that followed that I remember starting to feel pain in my vagina , experiencing some fecal incontinence , lack of gas control as well as emotionally scared from thinking about my tear. It felt like someone should have said to me “hey you have a 4.1kg baby that is 40+ weeks, let’s discuss the option of a c/section”. I had done some Peronium oil massaging in the weeks leading up to my birth. This made no difference in my case. I sought my own early physiotherapy session at 6 weeks as could not wait the 3 months for the gynecologist appointment the hospital offered. To this day I have great urgency when needing to pass stool ,

A feeling of lack of control. In 2019 I went on to have my second baby via a planned C-section a much better healing process and experience for me.

Although I am a midwife and felt really well informed of the processes around giving birth. I would have liked to see an obstetrician at least twice in the antenatal period with a 36 week scan. I would like better postnatal care and education for women around incontinence as well as mandatory physiotherapy sessions as part of the normal postnatal follow-up.