

Submission
No 1367

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 9 August 2023

Partially
Confidential

My first pregnancy was in the middle of covid. I was fortunate to be delivering at a large tertiary hospital in MGP. As an RN working in a NICU (different hospital) I believed at that it was important to have a baby in a hospital with a NICU.

My pre natal care in MGP was fantastic, however I do feel like I wasn't given enough education on all things birth due to covid restrictions and the assumption I knew enough being a registered nurse. From routine scans they informed me that my baby was big and that I couldn't go past 40 weeks, I agreed not being given any other option.

My waters broke spontaneously at home, I was checked by my midwife at the hospital who sent me to labour at home. As things intensified I felt I needed to return to hospital, after a few back and forth conversations with the midwife I made my way to the hospital. I was 8cm on arrival. Continued to labour however, I felt the instant change in my labour and mindset from the second I arrived in hospital. I believe my labour slowed down and changed due to the environment I was in.

I was given another vaginal examination and told it was time to push. I was coached into how to push my baby out and the 'timer' started. After two hours I was happy to continue however they made the decision I needed to go to theatres for a trial of forceps. I tried discussing this with the medical team, it was impossible to get my words out and I was made to feel very small and stupid for attempting to question their medical advice. They reluctantly gave me 20 more minutes which were filled with multiple attempts at cannulations and prepping me for theatres. I was separated from my partner while I was given a spinal in theatres inbetween regular contractions. Baby was born by an episiotomy and forceps.

Once baby was born I was separated from him while I was on recovery despite us both being well.

I was informed that it was a successful procedure. However my baby had grazes on his face and a black eye from the forceps and I had been cut. They then started swabbing the graze and questioning if I had a history of HSV (I did not and I continued to tell them this).

I believe the only reason I wasn't completely traumatised by my first birth was because I had the same supportive midwife throughout who stayed by my side. However I often think about it and it made my recovery harder and delayed having a second baby.

My second pregnancy was much the same however I knew I didn't want to be in a hospital. I have birth with a private practicing midwife at home. Labour and birth totalled 90 minutes. This experience was euphoric and so healing for me. The care I receive was above anything I could have experienced and my post partum recovery, breastfeeding and bonding with baby have gone so smoothly.