

Submission
No 1369

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

I gave birth during covid in 2021.

There were many parts of my birth that went well, but many areas where the system lead to trauma and stress during pregnancy, birth and postpartum.

during my pregnancy i knew i wanted continuity of care, however despite putting my name down i was told there were no spots on the midwifery group practice, instead i had to have shared care with my GP and the birth centre midwives. Luckily, the midwife i saw booked me in to have every appointment with her, but she told me she was doing this against policy, because apparently during covid the _____ in Sydney told all their midwives that they were NOT allowed to have continuity of care with patients and unless you were in MGP you had to see a new midwife every time. At this point i was happy to at least have one familiar face during pregnancy care.

unfortunately, the policy of the hospital meant i had unnecessary interventions pushed on me and mentioned at every point. before i was even at 40 weeks gestation, my midwife kept asking me about induction, whether to book induction, and even booked me in for an induction. when i asked about the risks and side effects of the induction medication (i was particularly concerned about its impact on breastfeeding and cascade of interventions) i was told there werent any and if i was worried about it i should call mothercare. HOW CAN A PROVIDER RECCOMEND/PUSH AN INTERVENTION WITHOUT BEING REQUIRED TO TALK ABOUT THE RISKS.

i had it written in my file that i was allergic to latex, however had multiple vaginal examinations where the midwife said "oops i forgot to wear the non latex gloves"

during labour i was experiencing extreme pain, which i now know that was due to my babys presentation (occiput posterior) i called the birth suite and kept begging to come in for pain releif and was told "i wasnt even in active labour" and to call back in a few hours. when i told them i needed pain releif NOW and was coming in regardless, the midwife that first saw me said "look, i can give you a VE and check how far along you are but im telling you know we're just going to send you home". after the VE, she said... "oops, youre 7cm dilated, lets get you into a room"

my labour "failed to progress" and i was told that after a certain period of being on the clock i would need to have my membranes ruptured manually. what i know now, is that rupturing membranes is not reccomended for OP positioned babies as it doesnt give them enough water to naturally turn in the uterus, there was no consideration for my personal circumstances given.

during post partum, after a 4 day labour where i had not slept more than 10 minutes between contractions, and had a severely bruised and damaged tailbone i was whisked away to a shared room and told my husband couldn't stay with me. at this stage i had a catheder, was physically unable to lift my baby in and out of the cot and i could not get out of the bed to go to the bathroom alone. i was having mild visual halluncinations from exhaustion and nodded in and out of sleep while holding my baby . i was unable to care for my baby or myself without help and no consideration was given to this to allow my husband to stay. i had to ask a nurse to take my baby

so i could sleep for a few hours to function. women who have undergone traumatic births or are physically damaged and recovering should be given the option to have their partner stay with them.

During post partum i had extensive bleeding and was told when i called the ward to come in to be checked out. despite this, i was put in a room with my 11 day old baby and a horrible midwife who kept telling me she didnt know why i bothered to come in etc. she was almost rolling her eyes at me and giving me attitude. i explained that when i called they told me to come in? she said to me "go into the bathroom and change your pad" and gave me a fresh pad. i followed her instructions, and when i came out of the bathroom she said "wheres the pad?" and i was like "in the bin?" and she huffed at me and continued to berate me asking how she was expected to check my bleeding if i threw the pad away. at no point did she tell me to KEEP the pad, or that it would be used for any diagnostics or anything. it was a very confrontingly rude way to be treated in such a fragile/tender/frightened state.