

Submission  
No 1463

## INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

**Name:** Miss Madison Neal

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Partially  
Confidential

I gave birth this June at \_\_\_\_\_ public hospital. It was my first child and I had a healthy no complications pregnancy. I was apart of the MGP.

I was encouraged to do an induction by two doctors, as they both agreed with a recent study, 'the arrive trial'. A study that essentially recommends an induction at week 39 to reduce risk of cesarean and other birth complications.

I went ahead and booked an induction at 39+4 hoping for a vaginal delivery.

I began my induction Monday afternoon with the prostin gel application and began mildly contracting late that afternoon. I was in the maternity with my partner being monitored.

The maternity ward does not allow visitors after 8pm. At this point my contractions were bearable, but we knew the baby was coming. I was not given a second round of prostin because I was contracting too much (the prostin had done its job).

My partner had to leave me at 8pm and I was told to have some Panadol and a sleeping tablet to get through the night of early labour alone.

I think this part alone is essentially leading in towards an unideal birth experience. Being alone whilst labouring in a hospital in the middle of the night.

Throughout the night there were emergencies with the other patient in my room so I had 2hours sleep. At 6am the pain was not bearable and I was crying alone in my room buzzing for a nurse to call my midwife to come to the hospital.

At 7am we walked to the birthing unit and everything began as how you picture it somewhat.

My partner and my sister came in and began setting up the room with fairy lights, fake candles, essential oils etc. I had my tenns machine going full strength on my back. I tried out the gas and we noticed the cord/tube was broken. It had household sticky tape holding it in place. It worked occasionally but would continuously drop out and have to be reconnected. This would happen every few minutes.

My waters were broken by my midwife and we then began the sintocin.

I had wireless monitors on my belly which kept dropping out continuously, then the batteries died in them so they had to replace them with other ones (which batteries also began failing).

I used the shower for a while for pain relief and at 11am I requested an epidural.

I had the epidural around 12pm and all was well. About 20minutes after my epidural the hospital had an emergency evacuation alarm go off. The alarm was above my bed and incredibly loud. My staff did not know why the alarm was going off but began emergency procedures. They told my support people they had to leave, although my partner refused.

My midwife began helping me get dressed as I was essentially bed ridden from my epidural. We all thought I was about to be wheeled on the street mid labour.

This alarm went off for 40-60minutes with no one knowing what was happening. We were pretty concerned at this point.

The alarm then ceases and all goes back to normal.

Although I notice I am feeling a lot of pain in the left of my abdomen, my service providers tell me it's where the baby must of been sitting during pregnancy. But my baby had always been on

the right and why am I feeling this after an epidural. My sister who is a doctor does a quick ice patch test around my abdomen and realises my epidural is getting patchy (fading and not working in some spots). We request for the anaesthetist to come back and have a look.

The anaesthetist comes back in a while later and the area which I feel pain has increased and gotten worse.

The doctor then suggests they have a look at my epidural to see if the needle has moved up/down.

The doctor re positioned the epidural and said they will be back in 20minutes to check.

This re positioning did not help, the area of pain continued to grow.

We re-do it again.

My pain is at an 8.

The gas was continuously cutting out and my sister was standing next to the tube fixing it every few minutes.

By this point I had had a few vaginal examinations. All staff were very respectful and continuously asked for consent.

The medical staff were struggling to find the babies heart rate with the monitors. At this point my epidural had completely failed and I was feeling everything. I was 10cm dilated. No epidural and failing gas. I was completely conscious but was contracting 5 in 10 minutes and in my own world of pain.

I notice that the room suddenly has a lot of staff in it, they were arguing about what to do as they hadn't found the babies heart rate for twenty minutes. A staff member even saying out loud 'I'm worried for the baby now!'

My partner was crying in the connecting bathroom thinking the baby was dead.

They then inserted a scalpel monitoring device into the babies head to try and find a heart rate.

They found one.

The sintocin was being increased at a fast rate and I was over contracting.

I was asking for it to be turned down but at this stage they said it had to keep going.

I got to the point where I felt I had to start pushing. I began pushing and my midwife said once we start we don't stop. She began instructing me on when to push and break. She was very supportive. The obstetrician came in to check on me and said she would come back in an hour and a half. The pain was unreal, I asked for the epidural to be re done again. I couldn't handle it. Especially after hearing the doctor thinks I'll be pushing for that much longer.

The midwife didn't say yes or no to an epidural and I couldn't really talk at this point. So my sister firmly stated we needed the anaesthetist back in. They took a while to come in and said they couldn't re do it at the point because I was shaking uncontrollably.

The obstetrician came in the room and did an examination and recommended I have an injection to stop my body over contracting from the sintocin. The doctor told the midwife to turn the sintocin down. The midwife disagreed and they had a slight argument.

My sintocin was then turned down, I had the injection and the anaesthetist then re did my epidural again.

Within an hour I was begging for a c section, I was told by my midwife it would be too dangerous at this point.

My pain is a 10 and nothing is helping.

The obstetrician comes in now for another examination, she recommends an emergency cesarean at this point. The babies head is on angle and not progressing down any further, the babies heart rate is also dropping to low still between contractions and I was not coping with the labour anymore.

My partner was confused as we had just been told it was too dangerous and are now being recommended one.

Just before 6pm she instructed that we would be in theatre within 30minutes max.

I'm in so much pain I was shaking with my eyes in the back of my head at points.

Theatres kept getting held up, it ended up being an hour and a half wait.

The longest hour and a half of my life.

My baby was delivered Tuesday night at 7:30pm via c section. I lost a substantial amount of blood that surgery and required an iron transfusion the next day.

All in all with the labouring alone the night before, failed monitoring, broken gas machine, continuous failing epidurals, hospital evacuation, delay in theatres for time essential surgery. I do believe my birth experience was extremely traumatic and it makes me upset to think about what I went through. I believe a lot of it could have been prevented which adds to my birth trauma.