

## INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

**Organisation:** Hygieia Health Ltd

**Date Received:** 15 August 2023

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Partially  
Confidential



Monday 14th August 2023

Subject: Submission on Birth Trauma

Dear Members of the Committee,

I am writing to share my personal experiences and perspectives on behalf of women who have encountered birth trauma. As a practitioner who has personally witnessed birth trauma I hope to shed light on the impact it can have on individuals and families and the care providers.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have witnessed birth trauma on countless occasions. The specifics of my what I have witnessed are as follows:

- Junior doctors practicing epidurals and IV cannula insertions on women in active labour. These have resulted in multiple attempts prior to being escalated to a senior clinician. Most recently a patient informed me she had a first year medical student attempt a cannula 6 times. She suffered from haematomas and pain in both her arms which resulted in her not being able to hold or manage her baby post birth.
- Dismissive language and behaviour towards pregnant women and women in labour who have expressed needle phobia and a fear or dislike of needles.

Having reflected upon this, I believe that several factors contributed to these situations, including a lack of protocols surrounding needle phobia and patient management and a non- adherence to existing protocols that a maximum of two attempts should be undertaken per clinician. It is also worth noting that there is not currently any formal training via any curricula for nurses, doctors and pathology collectors in Australia.

Drawing from my personal journey, I would like to propose specific solutions and changes to enhance maternity care in Australia, with the aim of preventing future instances of birth trauma. The following are the changes I advocate for: A national and standardised needle phobia management protocol for all hospitals, mandatory training for all clinicians who administer needle procedures, needle phobic patients to be identified prior to any needle procedure, all adverse events to be documented and entered into the relevant system (IMMMS/Riskman).

Thank you for considering my submission. I am grateful for the opportunity to contribute my experiences and viewpoints to the committee's ongoing inquiry. If necessary, I am willing to provide additional evidence during a hearing to further support my perspective

Yours sincerely,