

Submission
No 1380

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

I was living out west of New South Wales. to be exact.

I was expecting my first child and the year was 1989.

I had read ,researched and studied so much about pregnancy and birth. My husband and I attended prenatal classes and my expectations were written down. I felt we were on the break of New Horizons in regards to less intervention and the importance of babies staying with their mothers . Currently new born babies stayed in the nursery between the structure of four hourly feeds.

My experience unfortunately was distressing, resulting in a forceps delivery and a broken coccyx.

I went into Labor at 40 weeks gestation.

I awoke at 2am with contractions. I laboured easily , snatched sleep and only went into the hospital at 11am as contractions were roughly 3 mins apart.

We arrived and I was admitted. The ward was at capacity and they told me only a 4 room was available.

I was happy though and walked the corridors through contractions.

By mid afternoon I was approached by nurse saying they were going to break my waters as I wasn't progressing quickly enough.

I was taken aback as I was not in any distress and neither was my baby.

However the procedure was done.

My contractions became stronger . By 9 pm I was tiring. I was in the delivery room.

A nurse burst into the room and said

' Has this woman had her baby yet ?'

When the answer was no she wheeled out the birthing cot from my room.

I remember thinking ...what happens now ? What happens if my baby comes ?

My body shut down. I felt I was in trouble. I didn't know what to do. For 2 hours it was nothing!

Then contractions began but baby was having difficulties. Forceps were used. The strength needed by Dr to manoeuvre baby out was intense. My husband recalls him exerting great pressure.

He was finally delivered at 11.40 pm. He was in the posterior position. "Face to pubes" was written on my notes.

He was briefly placed on my chest before being whisked away and placed in a humidicrib. I didn't see him till the next morning.

During the early hours of that morning I struggled to take myself to the bathroom. To move into a sitting position was acutely painful. A nurse told me that she felt she heard a crack during delivery to me later that day.

I had suffered a broken coccyx.

My son was strong and was removed from the humidicrib the next day. . He did however have bruising and his left eye was closed, so he was physically traumatised.

I remember having to go up to the nursery to feed him. I just wanted him with me the whole time. I was not happy with care and so just wheeled him back to my room.

I would not let nurses take him away.

The following day was Mothers Day.

My report read that I was causing difficulties and suffering 3rd day blues .

Thankfully my husband packed me up and discharged us both.

My recovery certainly improved being at home . I could have my beautiful precious boy with me and breastfeed him without time restraints and criticism.

My broken coccyx was another matter . It was months before I could get from standing to sitting position comfortably. I used a special cushion that alleviated some pain.

Looking back I certainly question the intervention and the impatients of staff. The experience leaving me disillusioned about the future of birthing and post natal care.