

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Reproductive, Maternal and Paediatric](#)
Subject: Birth trauma
Date: Sunday, 15 September 2024 10:57:43 PM

Good evening,

I am writing to add my birth story to your inquiry, I birthed my first child in the Launceston General Hospital on the [REDACTED] at 10:15pm.

My care with the midwives leading up to my birth was ok, nothing out of the ordinary, but my birth at the LGH maternity ward was a whole different experience.

I awoke on the [REDACTED] to my waters breaking, I noticed the mucus plug & called the maternity ward to ask how to proceed, I was informed to come in immediately. Once I arrived I was monitored & a cannula placed in my hand, when I asked why this was necessary right now they answered "because we want it in there" a trainee dr had an extremely hard time placing it & it felt uncomfortable in my hand from the moment it was placed adding discomfort to me from the beginning, I asked several times if it would be possible to have it removed & placed again to avail.

I then ate some breakfast at 6am & that was the last meal I was allowed to eat. Once the contractions started to ramp up around 8am I was moved into a room but requested to be in the bath for some pain relief. I was able to have a small amount of relief in there & I was asked if I wanted some morphine, I accepted as I had zero minutes between my contractions beginning. This was administered whilst I was in the bath & then the midwife left the room. I felt unable to stay in the water as I wasn't able to stay alert. Once back in the birthing suite my husband & I were left with a male student midwife. Although he was kind, he was very softly spoken, unable to answer any of my questions & I felt he was out of his depth, this being my first birth made me feel very vulnerable.

As time progressed on I felt an overwhelming urge to push, [REDACTED] (the student midwife) had to go & get a midwife to check me before I was allowed to proceed, it took 45mins for someone to come back to our room to assess me, in that time I had fought my urge to push so much I was in agony.

After they arrived I was informed I wasn't dilated enough & then I was told they were inserting a clip on babies head to monitor them more, I was then confined to the bed & unable to move around, when I asked if I could walk around I was told no.

I was in an extreme amount of pain in my lower back & unable now move to attempt to relieve it. After a while I felt the urge to use the bathroom, I accidentally pulled the clip from his head as I stood up with the monitors around me.

An older midwife was present & as I stood up made a comment that I was a "stupid fat woman" for pulling it out. After using the bathroom I felt like a might need to push again, the dr had decided to stay on & was watching Carlton vs Geelong on the tv in my room whilst I pushed. After sometime I was falling asleep as I had been withheld all food since 6am & after having zero minutes between my contractions for the 11hrs I was physically exhausted. After being able to finally move into a different position (up on my knees leaning over the back of the bed) a midwife made a comment about the haemorrhoids that had formed from trying to push my son out "oh my, they are the biggest set of arse grapes I've ever seen darl" . I became increasingly anxious about my bodies image as the night went on.

After much effort but not being able to get past just his head out, I was briefly informed I would receive an episiotomy, but told there was no time for any pain relief as my baby was flat & to just go to a “happy place”. I didn’t know what an episiotomy was.

The emergency button was pushed & I had at least 12-15 staff or what felt like it in my room.

What happened after that was nothing short of a nightmare, having had no pain relief other than some gas my son’s head was pushed back up the birth canal whilst I was cut. I let out a blood curdling scream after trying to keep it in & the midwife beside me grabbed my thigh with such incredible force she left a hand print bruise on my thigh in the days to come & placed her face in front of mine & said words I’ll never forget.....”shut the fuck up, other people are actually trying to have their babies”. I was so shocked to have been spoken to like that in that moment I didn’t say anything. Moments later my son was dragged out of me, placed briefly on my chest before being checked. He obtained a green stick fracture to his arm that wasn’t picked up for 2 days as they performed the x ray on the incorrect arm.

I was then pushed on aggressively by the midwife who had screamed in my face whilst she attempted to get my placenta out. I told her she was hurting me, she said “having babies is painful love”. After my placenta was removed I was stitched by a student dr & a snarky comment was made by the same midwife about making sure to make it tight because it’s a bloody mess.

I couldn’t wait to be away from her. Once everyone had left the room I had a quick shower as I felt horrible & was told off by the same midwife for not asking permission to shower.

Once we were moved into our room the same midwife kept coming in & insisting she would take my baby so I could sleep. I didn’t want him taken, but she took him anyway, when I woke up she had him at the midwife station & was reluctant to let me have him back in the room with me as “I should be asleep”. She eventually allowed me to take him back to my room. But I felt like I wasn’t in control of what I wanted for my baby or myself.

In the next few days I was humiliated after my son wouldn’t latch, instead of showing me techniques of how to get that to happen, I was “milked” by two midwives & a joke was made about it when someone came to visit that they were just milking mumma. It wasn’t until the evening shift that I was finally shown how to get him to latch & stay awake by a wonderful midwife.

I wanted to leave the LGH as quickly as I could & likely went home a little early. After a few days I woke up to a massive haemorrhage with large cricket ball sized clots. I presented to emergency, a swab was taken but because I was no longer bleeding (it happened every time I breastfed) I was sent home. Upon arrival home another haemorrhage occurred when I fed my son & I returned to emergency where my labs had shown an infection.

I was admitted & a drip placed in my arm, my husband stayed on the couch & in the early hours of the morning I had a massive haemorrhage that was caused by retained placenta, the blood loss was horrific, I had to sign documents to state I was ok to have a hysterectomy one week post first baby, I had a double breast pump pumping milk whilst midwives sorted through bags of blood to find the problem. I feel like the aggressive nature of my body expelling my placenta could have been the problem though.

I ended up needing an emergency D & C and blood transfusions. Thankfully [REDACTED] was a saving grace that day & I will always be thankful for her help to my boys whilst I was in surgery. I was then kept on to have antibiotics via a drip & still on the maternity ward. When I asked a midwife to assist me with my son who was crying in his cot she replied "you are the patient now, he's the boarder, I'm here for you, not him" and left. The drip had also been placed in the crease of my arm, making it almost impossible to breastfeed correctly on that side. I was denied it being moved again & when I accidentally came out I was told "princess got her wish for the drip to be out". I felt so unsupported as my family had returned to the mainland & my husband had to return to work. I was exhausted & knew that I couldn't even ask a midwife to pick up my baby & pass him to me.

Once I was home it took me a very long time to be able to speak of my sons birth without crying, I still can get quite overwhelmed thinking of how I felt in a moment that is supposed to be one of your most precious. I suffered extremely severe postpartum depression as a result of my birth trauma that took almost 2yrs to recover from. That deeply impacted my relationship with my son. My experience at the LGH left me with very little faith in midwives after I was made to feel uncomfortable & not safe around them.

The LGH also caused me a lot of anguish when I moved back to qld to birth our second child, as the midwifery clinic wouldn't send my birth files to my new hospital for a better understanding of how my next birth might go.

Thank you for reading my story.

Regards,

[REDACTED]