

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Pregnancy and Birth story RHH [REDACTED]  
**Date:** Sunday, 8 September 2024 12:33:25 PM

---

I came to Hobart in April, start of my third trimester. I was too late to get into MGP or KYM, but was on waitlists.

My second and third visits to wellington clinics was with the same person, otherwise I never saw the same person twice which led to terrible consistency of care.

I was diagnosed with gestational diabetes, but came down with a cold the day after I got my meter so my levels were all over the place. After having incorrect information given to me by the diabetes educator on zoom corrected (test two hours after start of meal not end of meal; having a snack in the middle of the night isn't allowed because I need an 8 hour fasting window) at the end of the first week my levels were still high (and I still had a cough) so at the start of the second week I got a call asking me to attend an insulin information class. I said I didn't want to be on insulin until I have bsl data from when I'm not sick, and I wanted to speak to an endocrinologist.

That was booked, by then I was past my cold, and my levels had stabilized to within acceptable limits and I was told I did not need insulin. Had I not fought this I would have been on insulin unnecessarily.

My ultrasounds showed a baby in the 21st then 31st centiles, so when Dr [REDACTED] at around 34 weeks said we would discuss induction at 39 weeks next visit I was surprised. Said I didn't want induction, especially if he was already small, and she said we would go through positives and negatives and various circumstances i could say yes or no to, which sounded good to me. I went home and researched and next visit came armed with information and answers, which I didn't need because the next doctor simply agreed that there wasn't a need to induce for such a small baby, and put down my wishes in my notes. So I thought that was done with. Next visit, 38 weeks, I was told I would need to have an induction the following week because of my GD. I told her what the last Dr had said, and she said that there's also a risk the placenta may be deteriorating. Wouldn't we notice that with a blood sugar drop? Or have seen signs of that on the ultrasound? Not necessarily, she said. I reiterated that I did not want an induction just because of my GD diagnosis, I wanted there to be real evidence of medical reasons why I personally needed to be induced. Because she didn't have any we agreed to no 39 week induction. Then she said I would have to be induced at 40 weeks because of my age. I was confused, no one had said this to me yet, and she spent 10 min telling me about increased stillbirth rates among women my age for every day over 40 weeks. I asked for the data on that, she didn't have it so got [REDACTED] who oversees the ward, to come tell me the numbers. As she was talking I kept hearing "40" and it took me a bit to realize she was saying over 40 weeks AND over 40 years... so I interrupted her and said I only just turned 39, I'm not over 40. She looked at the other doctor, who looked at the computer, and said she made a mistake, I'm 39. 20 minutes of being stressed and talking about stillbirth rates because she read my chart wrong.

After that conversation, we talked about the birthing bath - a major part of my birth plan and the reason i pushed back so hard on insulin and my motivator for staying strict about my diet. She said that wouldn't be an option for me because they would want extra monitors on me because of the GD. I again disagreed and complained that no one had told me this yet, and I had asked if GD impacted by ability to use the bath. I said if that was the case, I would decline the monitoring. She said I might not have that choice, it depended on the medical staff in the room. This is the first I'd heard of me "not having a choice" in how

my labour went and it threw me. In the end she checked with someone else and discovered that as diet controlled GD, I could indeed use the bath. More unnecessary stressful conversation at 38 weeks.

I went into spontaneous labour at 39 weeks, and after 32 hours of pre labour my water broke at 7:20am [REDACTED] with contractions 7-10 min apart. I hope into the shower abs cleaned up. At 7:45am my contractions were suddenly 2-3 min apart and we started getting ready for the hospital. We arrived at PAC at 9:20am, they listened to baby's heart and felt my abdomen, and sent me through to a birthing suite without checking my dilation. I was introduced to the midwife and I consented to a student midwife being present. I had a doula as well, but she was moving cars and bringing in bags for us at this time. Between PAC and the birthing suite things changed, and it went from Period pain type contractions to an urge to push. I told the midwife several times I felt "pushy", and that I felt needed to poop, she directed me to the toilet but I felt like I might have a toilet baby that way so stopped. It was in my birth plan which we had handed out on arrival to have the bath ready, so after some time I noticed that wasn't happening and asked for it to be filled. I had a shower, I roamed the room, and finally the tub was full. I asked the midwife if I could get in, but after checking she said no, it was too cold. I later came to understand that she had given the job of monitoring the tub temp and filling to the student midwife, who was 4 hours into her first ever shift on the ward. She should not have had to do this, and the midwife should not have been so overworked that she needed to ask. Tub was drained halfway, and midwife monitored temp as it filled. I was on all 4's on a mat working through a contraction and exclaiming that I could feel the baby in my vagina, when the midwife said the bath was ready. My doula had arrived a couple minutes earlier, and explained that the baby will be working his way down my vagina for a while. The midwife left the room after saying the bath was ready, and my husband and doula helped me towards it. I later found out the midwife left because the thermometer probe wasn't working and she needed to monitor my temperature before and during the bath. My husband and doula were walking me to the bath when another contraction hit, and I leaned against the tub until it passed. Halfway through I felt his head crowning, then the whole head popped out. The midwife wasn't in the room, the student midwife was, so she positioned herself behind me ready to catch. The baby came fast. The student midwife, unprepared, not wearing gloves, without a towel and completely out of her depth, caught the baby but without a good hold, and he slipped from her hands onto the floor, shoulder first. My doula promptly hit the call button and got a towel, the student midwife picked up the baby and passed him to me, and he was placed on my chest and covered with a towel. (I have a video of most of this.) Baby was born at 10:20am, 2.5 hours after contractions became regular and an hour after i got to the hospital- a precipitous birth, highly unusual for a first time mum.

The midwife came in very promptly after the call button was pressed and was obviously surprised that the baby had been born, heard what happened, and recommended a paediatrician come take a look at him (this is also captured on video) then helped me to the bed.

The midwife seemed distant over the next hour or so, and didn't answer my husband and I's questions about how common that is, what happened, etc. "Speedy vaginal delivery" was written in my baby's book, not a medical term, which didn't yield results when we googled it. It was my husband, not the hospital, who explained the term precipitous birth, and the internet told us how rare it is and that if I had it one it's likely I'd have it even faster for future babies. The hospital never at any point during my stay explained this to me.

We had good medical care, me with my stitches and my baby with ensuring there was no trauma from the fall. But there was no debrief offered to me until I pushed for it over the



next couple weeks and finally got a debrief appointment two months after the birth. I had PTSD symptoms my second night at home, startling awake and having flashbacks of imagining my baby hitting the floor, and spent hours after waking googling precipitous births. I also never felt that endorphin high and overwhelming love, possibly because of the stress immediately after birth rather than the relief and relaxation?

The midwife clearly needed more support. If there was extra staff she could have offered me a dilation check. The bath could have been ready much earlier (which would have made the entire situation different - it may have slowed things down, it may have reduced my tearing, and it definitely would have stopped by baby from being dropped onto the floor), and most important the midwife could have stayed in the room and sent someone else to get the thermometer probe, and I would have had a medical professional in the room when I had my baby.

I have videos and an incident report number from the hospital if required for followup.

Cas [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]