

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Reproductive, Maternal and Paediatric](#)
Subject: Birth In Tasmania
Date: Sunday, 15 September 2024 6:20:42 PM

To whom is willing to listen,

I gave birth to my first baby in [REDACTED] by emergency caesarean.

I live in a rural area in the [REDACTED] approx. [REDACTED] drive from Launceston General Hospital. My closest Doctor is located in [REDACTED] which is a clinic of locum Doctors. The closest hospital to me that you are able to birth a baby is the LGH.

I had lots of trouble booking in for my dating scan and my 12 week scan due to nothing being available. The closest place for me to get this done was Launceston. For the dating scan I had to call two separate places to get a booking. For my 12 week scan I had to call three different places and the earliest that they could get me in was when I was 13 weeks and 3 days which was two days before the cut off.

I had the NIPT blood test done at the [REDACTED] medical centre. A day later I had a call from the Launceston Pathology to say that I would have to have my blood test done again as the initial one hadn't been completed correctly. The person working in pathology had taken my blood wrong for the test.

I have full private health cover and full hospital cover which I never used throughout my pregnancy or during my hospital stay. I wasn't made aware of all pre-birth/birth/post birth options available to me. I asked two separate Doctors and a midwife about this making them aware that I had full cover. The doctors (being locums) didn't know the answer to my questions and quickly fobbed them off. Satellite Midwife had a biased opinion and didn't discuss my options either.

My water's broke 9 days before my due date at home in the morning and we travelled in to the LGH that afternoon to be checked over. Mild contractions came on during the drive in the car but nothing painful or unmanageable. I was then checked over and asked how close together my contractions were (I had been trying to time in the car but didn't time them at the hospital). They said that until I'm having three contractions within 10 minutes that I didn't need to be there and for us to go home (fully aware of how far away we live). If I wasn't back prior they wanted me to be back by 7.00am and they would decide whether to induce me. My partner and I decided that we would stay the night in Launceston at the Hotel across the road from the hospital. Being that they didn't seem to be concerned and emphasised the fact that these things take time we left and went to check in to a room. Within 20 minutes of us leaving I was pacing around and in too much pain to sit, lay or stand. My partner called the maternity ward and they said for us to come back straight away. As soon as we got back to the hospital I was taken to a birthing suite

and they asked if I wanted something for the pain and gave me some nitrous oxide. They then asked again if I wanted something more to which I replied yes which they then checked how dilated I was to find that I was fully dilated so I wasn't able to have anything else. I don't believe in this case that we should have been sent home, perhaps taken to a room to wait for a while at least and that they should have checked the exact timing of my contractions rather than relying on me 'the person in labour' to know how much pain I was in considering it was my first child and to also be trying to monitor the timing of my contractions.

My baby was posterior which we didn't know until I was in active labour. I had been told at my 36 week scan that he was head down but not that he was posterior.

During my time at the LGH I had a midwife that I would request not to have again. I had her for the 4 days that I was in hospital. When I was taken to the birthing suite they offered to take me to one with a bath if I was interested in a water birth and I heard her say to the other midwife that she had never done one before. She wasn't very good at giving instructions during the birth and extremely frustrating to have in the room.. Leaning on my drip connected to my arm and not being very prompt with things. During the shifts on the days following the birth I found her to be very rude when I had a visitor and gave me no privacy, she was quite rough handling my baby and very forceful, to the point of making him hysterical trying to get him to breastfeed. I had a caesarean and on the first day getting out of bed she helped me up and walked me to the bathroom. I nearly fainted so I sat on the toilet holding onto the handrail taking deep breaths and trying not to pass out. She then left me in there and went to talk with someone at the door, she then allowed for someone to come into the room to talk to me finding me sitting on the toilet with the door wide open pale and doing my best not to faint and they then proceeded to try and ask me questions. I moved my hand in a 'go away motion' and then asked if someone could please check my baby as I could hear him crying in the room. After yelling for someone to check my baby the midwife returned a few minutes later saying that she got distracted.

I often had to ask her to do one thing at a time as she seemed to get side tracked and then not complete the task that she was doing correctly.

On the day before I went home she came in and told me that I wouldn't see much of her that day as she was snowed under. I had a lactation specialist come and see me and upon talking she asked if my son's second weight had been done and his heel prick in which I replied no. They all knew that I was ready to leave the next day so she personally went and found my midwife to ask when these two things were being done. My midwife sent another midwife to do the weight for her (weight was never recorded in the blue book which was an issue after discharge).

After I was discharged I was told to have my baby weighed in two days. I was given a pamphlet/print out by the midwife of options local to me for an open clinic at the [REDACTED] Doctors surgery which ended up being old information. Through my own resourcing I ended up seeing a nurse at the [REDACTED] hospital to get my baby weighed.

When looking in the Bluebook it was then that we found that my sons second weight taken in hospital hadn't been written in there. The Nurse then called the LGH asking for the weight. We waited approx. 20 mins and the LGH called back to say that they couldn't find it anywhere. Being told by that nurse that we would have a home visit from the Extended Midwifery Service the next week we decided that if my son was weighed then it should be ok. That afternoon I received a phone call from that nurse to say that upon speaking with the midwife we weren't having a visit from EMS as a referral hadn't been done by the LGH. She said that it looked as though I hadn't been discharged correctly. After this I called the LGH and spoke with the Midwife in charge. She looked into things and after approx. 5 hours gave me a call back saying that she didn't know why the referral hadn't been done but admitted that there is a gap for North East patients and a lack of communication between the LGH and the NESM. She said that she would look into it but she was able to send a referral through to me and also found my son's second weight documented in a computer system.

Results from my son's heel prick didn't come back until 11 weeks postpartum and it found that my child has a Cystic fibrosis gene. My son was then booked in for a Sweat Test to confirm if he had Cystic Fibrosis or not the next week. We arrived at our appointment at the LGH Pathology on time and notified front desk. We waited 20 mins to see someone and then they advised that the test couldn't be done that day as the person doing it had gone home sick that morning. We were sent home with no information as to when we could book in for this again. After me phoning and requesting a new time we then attended the LGH Pathology the next week to have the test done and upon completion they hadn't collected enough sweat. We were then told to come back in three weeks to have the test done again in which the test was able to be completed and results received within an hour of us leaving the hospital. I knew that this gene ran in my family and had been very upfront with the midwife and any doctors that I saw pre-birth and pre-conception. None of them suggested a genetic blood test for myself or partner. I was extremely worried throughout this ordeal as our son was having a lot of trouble putting on weight which can be an indicator of CF. We were offered no support and the only communication we received regarding this was phone call's from the assistant of the Doctor requesting the Sweat test. I had quite a few sleepless nights worrying which wasn't good for me (my milk supply) or my son and could have somewhat been avoided.

From birth my breastfed son didn't seem to be putting on as much weight as what he should have been. We would attend our CHAPS appointments and then they would request that he come back in two weeks. At times due to the clinic nurse being sick or unavailable the weights could be drawn out to as long as three or four weeks. After my sons eight week check (which was done at 10 weeks) it was noted that he was sitting below the 3rd percentile. They then sent me away and asked for me to come back the next week which due to the nurse being unavailable this was drawn out to 12 weeks. At this appointment he was noted to be in the 1st percentile and she requested that I go to the Doctor to get a referral to a pediatrician ASAP. I saw a Dr the next day and he asked me what I had been supplementing with? I had told the Clinic nurse that I was happy to try

and give my son formula but she didn't want me to risk losing my milk supply. I was that stressed about the possibility of him having CF that at this point I was willing to try anything to make my son classify as 'healthy'. The Doctor said that he would get me a referral to a pediatrician but that prior to this he would've thought that they would suggest a supplement. From the day of seeing the Doctor we introduced formula to trial mixed feeding and my son put on 460 grams in one week. My son is now on track and sitting close to the 25th percentile. I'm still yet to hear from a pediatrician in regards to the referral so it was lucky that the doctor could give me the advice that I really needed from my CHAPS nurse. I don't think that it is good enough that when your specific clinic nurse is sick or unavailable that your appointment just gets cancelled particularly in the case where weight is being monitored closely.

I appreciate your time and the opportunity to share my experiences. I realise that others have experienced things far more traumatic than me but as a first time Mum I have witnessed and experienced first hand some massive gaps in our health system. I have experienced stressful situations unnecessarily and no longer have trust that we as patients and our children's welfare are a priority. There is a great lack of services to people living in the North and North East of Tasmania. We have no 'Private Hospital' for birth and therefore even the Private Healthcare providers are confused as to what they are offering us. I do hope that speaking up can implement some form of positive change for future Mums. Even though I have had some poor dealings and disappointment within our health system I do have a healthy beautiful baby boy which I am forever grateful for.

Thanks,



Happy to be contacted or answer further questions if helpful.