



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, AGEING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES  
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Ms Caroline Le Couteur MLA

## Submission Cover Sheet

### Inquiry into Maternity Services in the ACT

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**From:**  
**To:** [LA Committee - HACs](#)  
**Cc:**  
**Subject:** Submission to the Inquiry into Maternity Services in the ACT  
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## Inquiry into Maternity Services in the ACT

To whom it may concern,

Please accept this as a submission to the Inquiry into Maternity Services in the ACT. We are writing this in the hope that no one else suffer as our family has.

On 18 October 2019, I gave birth to our daughter at the Centenary Hospital for Women and Children (CHWC). Due to complications with my pregnancy was born at 19 weeks and 6 days, she was stillborn. We left the hospital on Saturday 19 October 2019 in the afternoon. Saying goodbye to our baby girl and leaving her at the hospital was one of the hardest things we have ever done. I wrapped her up in the blankets provided by the hospital, completely covering her as I has seen the mid-wife unwrap her from this the day before. I was worried that if I didn't completely cover her, her skin would dry out. We left her neatly wrapped up in the 'cool' cot beside my hospital bed and were escorted out of the hospital by the specialist doctor who had treated me during my pregnancy.

We thought about visiting the following day, however the thought of having to say goodbye again was too much and so we decided not to.

At about 5pm on Monday 21 October 2019, my partner received a phone call from a staff member from the CHWC saying that they had something to tell us and that they would like to come to our house. Shortly after, two staff member from CHWC arrived at our home.

They informed us that the hospital was unable to locate                      remains. The mis-handling was identified early Monday morning 21 October 2019, at the time when an autopsy was supposed to take place.

We lived with the grief of not only loosing our daughter, but also that we would never get to lay her little body to rest for 24 hours. On the evening of Tuesday 22 October we accepted a phone call from CHWC to say that they had found                      . We were told that the linen service company had found her and she had been returned to the hospital. She was undamaged and still wrapped up in the blankets as we had left her. On Wednesday 23 October we visited                      at the morgue of the hospital to ensure she was safe and to say goodbye to her once again.

We would like to state that the hospital staff have been considerate and caring in their dealings of our situation. They have offered us counseling and have reassured us that they are continuing to look into how this occurred.

My fear is that this occurred due to a lack of staffing at the CHWC. While there I was informed by a mid-wife that they had lost 12 staff recently and were being forced to employ staff in the maternity ward who were not trained mid-wives or who were still completing their training and unfamiliar with the ward the their processes.

We would like you to explicitly recognise the highly quality of skills, care and support of the mid-wives on the ward; their care and support was exceptional. Without their dedication and compassion, our recovery from our loss would be much harder.

If you require more information on the above please let us know.

Kind regards,