



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, AGEING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES  
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## Submission Cover Sheet

Inquiry into Maternity Services in the ACT

**Submission Number: 02**

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**From:** Nicole O'Connor  
**To:** [LA Committee - HACs](#)  
**Subject:** Inquiry into Maternity Services - Submission 02 - N. O'Connor [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]  
**Date:** Monday, 12 November 2018 1:51:19 PM

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Hi Josephine

Please find below my story in relation to the maternity ward.

Thank you for listening to me about my Canberra hospital experience.

I was admitted on April 18 2018 to have a c-section the next day.

The first night, I was moved from post natal up to birthing as they didn't have the staff to cover me. Even though I wasn't giving birth until the next day.

After having my c-section, i was moved into anti- natal ward. On the Friday, I asked if I could please go see my twins. I had only seen [REDACTED] for 30 minutes and I still had not seen [REDACTED]. I was told no. They weren't able to be brought to me as I had asked. I still had the epidural in my back and was told they didn't have staff to escort me to see them.

Pain team were called to assess this and got told "your epidural will stay in all weekend and so you won't see your kids at all as you need to stay in bed". the explanation was as I was on endone, i had to keep it in. This is after me walking around the ward and only having panadol.

After a lot of tears from me and arguing from my partner, it was finally taken out and i got to see my babies.

While i was in special care, they had moved me into another room. This room had the lifting machine. We asked why and was told "in case you fall, you are a lot larger then our nurses can handle." That's something a new mother doesn't really want to hear. That she is rather large.

Saturday, I knew I would loose blood as I was informed this was normal after birth. The first time it had gone all over the floor and the bathroom. I called the nurse and apologised for the mess. The 2nd time it happened, 2 hours later, blood was all over the bed sheets and toilet seat. I called again. The nurse (who's name does escape me. She was an older lady) came in and said "sigh. For [REDACTED] sake, we aren't John James hospital, we don't have the staff, sheets or time to clean up after you".

I didn't sleep at all that night as I was scared it would happen again.

I finally got discharged Sunday 22 April. However the kids were in special care for 2 weeks. We were there every day bar 2.

Special care wasn't much better.

The day we took our babies home, we went over their discharge papers. They both had thrush which we were never told about. [REDACTED] was born with a 2.5mm hole in his heart which we were never told about. Both had clicky hips which we were never told about.

We were told we would need to do a rooming in night. The kids would be in

with us so we could learn their sounds, feed etc.

There are 2 rooms. 1 with a queen bed and 1 with 2 single beds. There was a rather young single girl in the queen room so we were put in the single bed room. The young lady didn't want to move. My partner is 6'9 with a severe back injury and didn't sleep all night. He hung well over the end of the bed. The kids were never put in the room with us. When we got there, the nurse told us they HAD to stay in the nursery. The day we took them home, we were told it was only voluntary and we didn't have to do it.

The night we did rooming in, i had finally got my confidence up with holding the kids, changing and feeding them. At one feed, the night nurse got up me so much, I lost all my confidence. I was holding them wrong, I wasn't changing them properly. Anything I did, it was wrong.

I would express breast milk to take up, but was only expressing 30ml each day as I wasn't producing any at all. each day I was ridiculed for not trying hard enough, or doing it enough.

My stitches were removed 4 days after surgery. They should have been in for minimum 7 days. 3 days later, during a shower, my scar popped open with blood every where. My partner rushed me to TCH for us to sit for 12 hours. All they did was here's some dressing, you'll be right.

I just don't want new mothers treated like how I was. Some nurses were wonderful. Just those few nurses ruined the whole experience to the point we don't want to use the Womens and children's hospital if we have to.

If you need anymore info please let me know.

Thank you  
Nicole