



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, AGEING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Ms Bec Cody MLA (Chair), Mrs Vicki Dunne MLA (Deputy Chair)

Ms Caroline Le Couteur MLA

Submission Cover Sheet

Inquiry into Maternity Services in the ACT

Submission Number: 15

Date Authorised for Publication: 05.02.2019

From: [REDACTED]
To: [LA Committee - HACs](#)
Subject: Submission for the committee
Date: Wednesday, 16 January 2019 9:19:43 PM

Hi,

My husband forwarded me the Canberra times article highlighting this enquiry. I am relieved that I am finally speaking about my experience during the birth of my daughter. [REDACTED] it has always played on me that I had not made a formal complaint of what I understand was negligence.

My name is [REDACTED] and my daughter [REDACTED] was born in the [REDACTED] through the birth centre. My care in the lead up to the birth was excellent and I really appreciate the support and information provided by the midwives. Unfortunately the entire birth experience was traumatic and put my daughter and my life at risk. I began having regular contractions on Friday [REDACTED] at 2am. I did not deliver [REDACTED] until 6am on the tues. I was over 10 days overdue at the time and was told I was in Spurious labour. My Gp [REDACTED] requested my notes after the birth when I spoke about my experience with him - he told me that many of the actions taken by the midwife caring for me in the final stages put my life and the life of my daughter at risk. My understanding is this includes the amount of time I was left to labour with absolutely no progress without any assistance being offered to move labour along, the amount of time I was asked to push without intervention, the signs of my daughter's distress (high heart rate) given the length of my labour, the length of time I pushed (almost 2 hours) with no progress.

My daughter ended up in the special care nursery following this for five days. She had been so distressed during the drawn out labour and delivery she had used all her sugars and released meconium into the waters which they were concerned she had ingested. She also had a significant injury to her head. I was given an episiotomy which caused me significant issues in healing - infection, popped stitches etc.

One of the most traumatic aspects of the whole experience was seeing the fear in the doctors face when she finally entered the room after my extended pushing and declared that this baby had to come out immediately - asking for the OR to be prepped for an emergency c section. [REDACTED] and I were given a last push with the vacuum for assistance before we would have been wheeled up. Thankfully she came out at that point despite being posterior (which was never identified). She was not breathing however and her apgar was very low.

She was understandably whisked away and my husband went with her - the room then cleared out and I was left completely alone. No baby, no support and no understanding of what had just happened. I do not remember being checked for bleeding or any intervention being provided to me for at least 45 mins after the birth. There was a long delay before I was able to see her due to staffing constraints (or so I believe).

I wanted to breast feed and had prepared colostrum prior to delivery to assist if needed. I felt I was actively discouraged from feeding her in those first few days (although there were nurses who were amazing). I knew she needed to be given formula for her health however no attempt was made to incorporate my feeding her also. I had to push (in a very vulnerable state) to do this.

I was in huge amounts of pain and was provided very little assistance despite being admitted to the post-natal ward.

I have subsequently had a second child at the Canberra hospital - [REDACTED] [REDACTED] I was very apprehensive after my last experience at TCH and did experience symptoms of trauma in the lead up to having another baby. Although this birth was much less traumatic and dangerous I believe we were still put at risk and gold standard care not provided due to staffing issues. I was again 10+ days overdue and asked to be induced (as I did not want a repeat of last time). I had to push to have my waters broken and refused to leave the hospital to have him. I believe if I had not been assertive I would have been sent home and would have again been in a dangerous position.

Please look up my record - I will sign and provide any permissions to do so. I am very concerned particularly by the judgement of the midwife [REDACTED] who provided me care on the final night of labour. I believe she was negligent and my GP indicates from the records she was. It scares me that other woman may be trusting her judgement and putting their babies at risk.

I am not someone to complain - [REDACTED] I know the issues facing services. I truly believe however that I was traumatised by poor care (particularly being left alone in a room with no baby after a traumatic birth) and that my babies health was put in danger by negligence. Please look into my case. I am happy to be contacted on [REDACTED] at anytime. My only want is for the system to improve and for staff to be adequately trained to care for woman and babies as they should.

Sincerely

