

## Sue's Story

Been trying to think of a way of cutting down my story so it won't fill up the whole internet. This is the best way I can sum it up. I was admitted to hospital with labour pains that were very strong right from the onset. My waters broke very early and I was told that the baby had to be out in 24 hours so I wasn't worried. Over the next 3 days I began the trauma that wrecked my life.

I have a huge pile here of hospital notes which say that I was 'distressed' but not 4cm dilated therefore not in full labour. I spent 2 days at 1cm dilated with various methods of pain relief...mostly a bath and I walking round and round the wards day and night until I passed out with lack of sleep and hallucinations. I had the baby induced at some point which gave me back to back contractions, this lasted for a whole night, but they lost my notes and forgot to continue the treatment. This put me back to square one. I had very little sleep and was not spoken to or communicated with for the best part of the 5 days that my labour took. I was put on a drip for god knows how long and given an epidural which was in for 15 hours. This worked on one side so I had to hang on the side of the bed to get full pain relief. The whole thing ended in a section whilst I was awake. They pumped me full of penicillin, which I am allergic too. I was surrounded by 12 or more people all panicking about me dieing and loosing the baby. When the baby did come out, I was strapped to the table so I couldn't move or see him. They took him off and I never thought that he was mine.

After being dragged on my toes through the ward and thrown into a bed 20mins after my op, I slept for 12 hours and awoke to a jaundiced baby and a very ill me. I had problems bonding, and breastfeeding, I was threatened with a blood transfusion amongst many things. Too many things to list went wrong. The whole thing ended with me trying to leave the unit via a window. I eventually got home and things got worse.

I don't recall the next 9 months. I lost my memory, had no idea who I was and cried every day. I tried several times to kill myself and the baby. I believed that cot death was my only release. I am lucky to have my child today. I was sent to a PND group and made the leader physically sick when I told her of my birth. I was lucky; she got me in touch with a cognitive therapist and a psychiatrist on that very day. I was diagnosed with PTSD and put on a high dose of medication and sedation. I struggled with this and when my son was 2 my husband walked out, as I was not the woman he married. I was no fun anymore. My marriage was over. I could no longer work as there were times and still are when I can't even leave the house.

I am to this day still in therapy and see the nurse and the psychiatrist. It has opened my mind to mental illness and I do believe that I am lucky to have the help that I have. I am still on full medication, and I have tablets to help me sleep and calm me down. I am still phobic but I fight it every day of my life.

I could have sued the NHS for what they have done to me but I was not competent to stand in court as I have a mental condition and I am not 'stable' enough.

I am more than happy to tell my story to the world. I am off the opinion now that if I can change the experience for even one person then it is worth it. The hospital involved have changed their policies now. We had several meetings at my house and it is good to know that I have changed something at least. It is sad that I can't have now what I want, which is for it never to have happened.

I have a good relationship with my son who is now nearly 6 but I still struggle with this disorder and am told that I always will. At times I sit here and cry. At other times I feel like I could change the world. Childbirth should be the most natural thing in the world. There are no words to describe how I feel about it. You only get to live this life once, and I have lost a lot of mine already.