

31 March 2017

Submission for Transvaginal Mesh Inquiry

To whom it may concern,

I wish for my name and personal details to remain confidential.

I am on the Age Pension I am not in a medical fund so I have to rely on the Public System I have been seeing the Dr's at the [REDACTED]

I have had the transvaginal mesh procedure three times, with two failed attempts. I am still suffering in pain from the complications.

Below is an account of the last ten years.

Procedure 1:

- I had numerous visits and tests at the [REDACTED] under Dr [REDACTED], between 2007-2008, for the treatment for incontinence of the bladder.
- After she left I was put under the care of Dr [REDACTED].
- On 19th January 2009 I was told they were going to do a simple procedure of putting a Mesh in through the vagina to support the Bladder, just day surgery they said.
- At no time did anyone say there could be a problem with the Mesh. The medical staff at no time did they discuss side effects or complications.
- They also did not discuss if they received any financial or other incentives to promote these products.
- I had my Pre- Op at the [REDACTED] on 23 June 2009. I had my 1st Mesh operation at the [REDACTED] on the 10th July 2009. The side effects of this operation were that I was left with the mesh protruding into the back wall of my vagina, exposing sharp metal. This sharp metal caused damaging and scarring to my vagina, constant bleeding and pain and also damage to my husband's penis. This was a traumatic experience.

- I phoned the [REDACTED] the next day being the 28th August 2009 they couldn't fit me in till the 28th September 2009, that meant I had to walk around with this Mesh cutting into the wall of my vagina for a month before someone could see me. I was in great pain.
- On the 29th September during an outpatient appointment, it was found to have the mesh exposed. This was discussed like it was the fault of the Dr's workmanship and never discussed that this has happened to others. I was given no other option but to have it replaced.

Procedure 2:

- They couldn't fit me in to do my 2nd operation till 11 December 2009 that meant that I had to walk around and function as best I could for 22 weeks while that Mesh was cutting into the walls of my vagina. I was pretty much just lying in bed unable to do anything because the pain was so severe and because of the bleeding.
- I had my second Pre-op at the [REDACTED] on 9 November 2009. I spoke to the Registrar Dr that had done the 1st Mesh Operation. I asked her what went wrong? Why was it not successful? She said she had done it all correctly. I said I was not happy about her doing it again she said she was confident that she could do a good job of it and it would be successful. Again she did not discuss any side effects or complications on these products or the procedure.
- So I had my 2nd Operation at [REDACTED] on 11th December 2009 to have the 1st Mesh removed from my vagina and another Mesh in to hold the bladder, same procedure, same doctor, and same day surgery.
- After 5 weeks the sharp piercing pain returned with severe bleeding.
- About 7 weeks after my operation I went to the [REDACTED] on 1st February 2010 for my check up, I told the Dr I thought the Mesh had come down again as I had been having terrible pain and bleeding for the past 2 weeks.
- The Dr said the Mesh had come down again and was piercing the wall of the vagina. I was told once more I would have to have another operation to rectify this problem the 3rd one in 7 months, all for a simple procedure.
- I have endured years of pain, bleeding, trauma operations and anaesthetics
- My life had been taken away from me it was so bad it sent me into a state of full on Depression.

Procedure 3:

- The thought of having to have a 3rd Operation terrified me. No one was listening to me.
- So I paid to go and see Dr [REDACTED] in his rooms, (sometime between 2 February and the 15th February) as it was his name that was the Head Dr in charge of my operation at the [REDACTED]. (But I have to say he was not present at either of my two previous operations.) When I spoke to Dr [REDACTED] telling about my Bad experiences of my two past operations and telling him I was not happy about the Registrar Dr doing my operation a 3rd time as at that time I was blaming her for not doing the operation correctly even though she said she had. Dr [REDACTED] said to me I would have to put up with it as it was a teaching Hospital and she had to learn. I said could he at least be there to supervise her. He said he would try to be there.
- I had my Pre-op at [REDACTED] on 15 February 2010. At no time was I given any information about what they were going to do to me.
- I had to withstand another 10 weeks of the mesh cutting into my vagina wall affecting my quality of life with constant bleeding and extreme pain.
- So I had my 3rd Operation at the [REDACTED] on 19th February 2010, conducted by Dr [REDACTED].

Present Day Complications:

- Over the years I have had continual severe pain that is slowly increasing to very severe pain in my Vagina my bladder and bowel.
- I have had increasing pain from constant bladder infections.
- My GP has sent me back to the [REDACTED] with these symptoms in the past year.
- I have been under Dr [REDACTED] she has diagnosed me with Dyspareunia severe nerve pain.
- Prescribed me with medication Amitriptyline used for Nerve pain.
- Plastic tubes for insertion into the vagina with cream.
- I was then sent to the [REDACTED] where I was given heaps of exercises to do and also Laser treatment into the vagina all this for the pain in the vagina this was unsuccessful.

- At my last visit to the [REDACTED] I was given a series of Anaesthetic needles into the scar tissue at the back wall of the vagina (very painful procedure) in the hope of taking away the pain in the vagina this also was unsuccessful.
- Sexual intercourse is extremely painful and this has caused more feelings of low self-worth, depression and has grossly affected the intimacy in my marriage.
- I am worried about the pain I am experiencing it is getting worse every day. I have asked the Drs at the [REDACTED] was the last operation I had 19th February 2010 was the Mesh put back in they looked up their records and said No Mesh it was a Sling. But that terrifies me is "Is this Sling part of the Products that are a problem". If so what do I do about it? But I don't know what the Product is that is in my body now.
- I am in great pain now in my vagina my bladder my bowel, I have an appointment at the [REDACTED] on the 18th April 2017

Recommendations for the committee:

- Review and treatment plan for all women involved, including myself;
 - I wish for a clear discussion on the impact these products have had on my body and a treatment plan.
 - I also need to know if the sling that is still in my body is dangerous and what will be the treatment plan.
- I also wish for this product to be removed from the Australian market so that no other woman has to endure what I have.

Thank you for your support and help,

[REDACTED]