

Boy died after midwives failed to call a doctor

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HEALTH EDITOR

A TODDLER who died from injuries suffered during birth could have been born healthy had midwives followed national guidelines and called an obstetrician.

Medical evidence shows that if Syd Heyes had been delivered by caesarean section even 10 minutes before he was born naturally, he is likely to have lived as a healthy child.

Syd was born at Whipps Cross University Hospital birth centre, a midwife-led unit in east London, in September 2012. He had cerebral palsy after being starved of oxygen in the final stages of labour and died, aged two, in August last year from respiratory failure caused by the brain injury he sustained at birth.

An expert medical report found that if midwives had monitored his heart rate according to national guidelines and called an obstetrician when labour failed to progress, an emergency caesarean would have been performed, which would have saved him.

The Sunday Times Safer



Mim and Tom Heyes with Syd, who died last year

Births campaign is pressing for earlier intervention.

Syd's mother, Mim Heyes, 35, from east London, said: "What happened to Syd and to us could so easily have been avoided."

Barts Health NHS Trust, which now runs Whipps Cross, has paid £200,000 in damages to Syd's parents, but has not admitted liability for his death. It said it apologised for errors recording Syd's heartbeat, but "believes that there is no evidence of other failings in care ... which could have contributed to Syd's poor health". Syd's parents have donated the £200,000 to the hospices that cared for him.

Paul McNeil, of the law firm Field Fisher, said: "In Mim's case the hospital should have performed an emergency caesarean."

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