

# Nurturing Birth Book Review: The AIMS Guide to Resolution After Birth

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**Book review by Natalie Stringer**

***“An absolute must-have resource.”***

This book from the Association for Improvements in the Maternity Services (AIMS) is an absolute must have resource guide. It will point you in the right direction to find answers and peace following a challenging birth where you have experienced traumatic events.

All information provided in this book is completely up to date being published in 2020, therefore all signposting to relevant websites are accurate and still in practice.

There are so many different, confusing avenues you may need to explore when wanting to raise a concern or make a formal complaint after birthing a baby. This book very easily allows you to recognise and guide you towards the best route for your individual circumstance. It is UK specific and highlights the different organisations in England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales, so you can contact the relevant people in your country. There are some time limits when making a formal complaint within the NHS Maternity system, and these are highlighted in the book. Therefore having this guide to hand to dip in and out of when you feel comfortable, will help you piece together what you need in a time frame that suits you, but does not exceed the cut off point.

There are template letters provided in the book that you can work with to raise a concern or make a formal complaint. Numerous support organisations and charities are listed throughout the book, enabling you to seek out who can help guide you through this process, if necessary.

The book also provides a great insight into how to prepare for a subsequent birth and who to liaise with, as this will help ensure certain traumatic events do not reoccur again. Guidance on how to write your ‘birthing decisions’ is a great resource and will give you the foundations to make this birth better and more in-line with your own personal needs. It provides different options for you to choose the best support for you throughout your next pregnancy, labour and birth. This will help ensure you

can feel more emotionally and physically in control of your decisions and your autonomy.

Exploring how you feel about your difficult birth experience and/or the care you received is discussed in Chapter 3 of this book. I know this will be so comforting for many mothers and birthing people who decide to put pen to paper and allow their experience to be validated. This may just be a starting point that encourages you to recognise that you do indeed wish to raise a concern or make a complaint. For others it may provide enough emotional release and your resolution may end there.

The language used in the book can be a little difficult to digest in some places. Although written thoroughly and very clearly, some areas can be a little heavy on abbreviations and putting a sentence together in places may need re-reading a few times to help it sink in or understand which organisation or charity has been written about.

Ultimately, many readers will be looking to find much needed answers and therefore it can be used as a reference book. So it may be a case of finding the relevant chapter(s) for their individual needs rather than reading the book from cover to cover. The contents pages at the beginning make it easy to navigate through whilst missing out sections that are not relevant to you. However, I believe every birth worker should read every page of this book and refer to it often, not only to recommend to their clients who need to seek resolution after birth but also to locate relevant information very quickly.

As part of 'The AIMS Guide To' series of books I believe this one will help many, many birthing people find their inner strength and courage to explore not only what happened during and following the birth of their babies, but also find the light to indeed seek resolution.

The main success of this book is giving parents the permission to find a way to raise their concerns or make formal complaints about their birth experiences. Together, if more people feel listened to, respected and supported when choosing to revisit their difficult experiences in order to find answers, they will be paving the way for a better maternity system for birthing people now and for the next generation.