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Darlington care home worker admits abuse of Newbus Grange patients



By Julia Breen @juliabreenEcho Deputy Chief Reporter (Tees Valley)



Darlington care home worker admits abusing two vulnerable men

A DARLINGTON care worker has admitted the abuse of two vulnerable men at the Newbus Grange Hospital.

Sean McNulty, 36, of Finchale Crescent, Darlington, appeared before magistrates in **Newton Aycliffe** this morning and pleaded guilty to two charges of ill treatment or wilful neglect, in February and March of this year at Newbus, a hospital close to Neasham, Darlington, for adult men with autism and other complex needs.

Management at the Cygnet Health Care-run home raised concerns with police in March about the staff member's conduct, The Northern Echo understands.

He was interviewed by police and later summonsed to court. He will appear at **Teesside** Crown Court for sentencing, on a date to be fixed.

Newbus Grange's care rating has since been suspended by the Care Quality Commission.

A statement on the Newbus Grange section of the CQC website said: "We have suspended the ratings while we investigate concerns about this service."

A spokeswoman for Cygnet health care said: "We are deeply shocked and saddened by the actions of Mr McNulty.

"As soon as we were alerted to his behaviour we informed all the relevant authorities, including the CQC, social workers, and the police. He was immediately suspended and then dismissed following an internal inquiry.

"“The safety and care of our service users, some of the most vulnerable in our society, is of paramount importance and we have zero tolerance of unprofessional conduct towards them.

"We have a robust and clear whistleblowing policy in place across all our services whereby any member of staff with any safeguarding concerns can report them in complete confidence.

"Any concerns raised are dealt with immediately and escalated to the highest levels of the organisation.”

Cygnet also operated Whorlton Hall hospital in County Durham, which was closed earlier this year after allegations of abuse and mistreatment surfaced.