

Acute Training Solutions Safeguarding Adults - Article

Two members of staff at Ashbourne House nursing home in Middleton have been suspended after the M.E.N. took the evidence to managers

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Two carers have been suspended over claims they cruelly taunted dementia patients by snatching away and torturing their 'comfort dolls'.

A shocking video taken at Ashbourne House nursing home appears to show a member of staff throwing a doll to the floor in front of an elderly resident while shouting 'die baby, die!'

Pictures also appear to show dolls being boiled in a pan, strung up by the neck and put into a tumble dryer.

Doll therapy is increasingly used with dementia patients, some vulnerable residents at the home said to consider them to be 'like their own babies'.

In the video a colleague of the female staff member asks her: "How do you feel that you've just done that? How do you feel?"

The woman can be heard loudly laughing, then responding: "Great, because [resident's name] is upset."

Other images show dolls being boiled in a pan, dragged around by the neck or strung up from the neck. It is thought that the pictures and video were shared by some staff on WhatsApp.

The M.E.N has been told that the picture of the doll hung with rope around its neck was taken as the pensioner was sleeping after staff barged in and put the light on.

Bosses say they are stunned by footage and took 'on-the-spot' action within hours of being contacted by the M.E.N..

Two members of staff have been suspended pending an investigation. The home has reported the incident to the police and says it is now consulting employment lawyers.

Greater Manchester Police confirmed a complaint had been

made - but whether officers investigate remains to be seen. Care Quality Commission chiefs have been informed - and the matter has been passed on to the Health and Care Professions Council and the Disclosure and Barring Service.

A spokesman for the home said: "We take this very, very seriously. People like this should not be working in the care industry.

"We have taken immediate action and the appropriate authorities have been informed. We will ensure the people involved in this unfortunate incident are reported - and there will be a full investigation.

"Both members of staff have been suspended and will face disciplinary procedures.

"We would like to thank the M.E.N. for bringing this to our attention and working with us to investigate.

"The welfare of our residents is our highest priority."

The families of residents involved have been informed of the suspensions and told about action bosses intend to take.

The home was told to make improvements following a Care Quality Commission inspection in July last year, with inspectors identifying breaches of the Health and Social Care Act.

Officials said some people felt there were areas of improvement for staff regarding their 'attitude'. They said the service provided was 'not always caring'.