

# Whorlton Hall



In 2011 Panorama uncovered the abuse at Winterbourne View Hospital in Bristol.

The shocking exposure of abuse led to the hospital being closed. The Government committed to closing down other specialist hospitals, saying care should be provided closer to home instead, most still remain open, although bed numbers have reduced from 3,400 to 2,300.

Winterbourne View and Whorlton Hall were previously owned by the same company, Castlebeck Care.

Following the Winterbourne View scandal, another company called Danshell bought Whorlton Hall and last year Danshell was bought by Cygnet - one of the country's biggest learning disabilities and mental health care providers.

Whorlton Hall is a 17-bed hospital unit for adults with learning difficulties and autism.

In May 2019 the BBC's Panorama broadcasted an investigation into alleged abuse at Whorlton Hall.

A reporter worked undercover as a carer at Whorlton Hall between December 2018 and March 2019, she was investigating claims by numerous whistle-blowers of the mistreatment and poor care of patients.

During the shifts the reporter filmed appalling deliberate behaviour by staff -

- \* offensive language directly aimed at patients
  - \* intentional taunting
  - \* threats of violence
- \* numerous inappropriate physical restraints
  - \* patients being mocked
  - \* intimidation by staff

One clip from the programme features a woman with autism who is scared of men, she is routinely bullied by staff. In the footage a care worker says he's going to press "the man button" to bring male co-workers into the room

Another clip shows a care worker admitting to banging a patient's head against the floor, while another describes flooring a patient with an outstretched arm, with pride

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-48388430>

It is estimated that in the three months leading up to the broadcast of the Panorama show approximately 100 professionals visited the hospital, including Social Workers from the Safeguarding Team, district nurses, GP's, healthcare professionals, commissioners and the police. There were multiple visits from at least 10 different councils and local NHS bodies

The scale of the mistreatment was not spotted

A previous CQC inspection in March 2018 highlighted that some staff were working 24-hour shifts and there were some inappropriate training and supervision, overall Whorlton Hall was rated as 'good'

All patients have now moved out of Whorlton Hall as a result of the investigation, 16 members of staff have been suspended.

A police investigation is still ongoing, however a total of 10 care workers have been arrested.

# Group discussion