A nurse has been found guilty of ill-treating patients on a hospital stroke unit by giving them sedatives to ‘keep them quiet and compliant’. Catherine Hudson drugged two patients for an ‘easy life’ while she worked shifts at Blackpool Victoria Hospital between February 2017 and November 2018. Sentencing is due to take place on 14 and 15 December at Preston Crown Court.

In brief:

**FLEXIBLE WORKING**

**Dismissal for refusing shifts deemed ‘fair’**

A community nurse who was sacked after claiming she could not meet flexible working arrangements with her employer due to childcare issues has lost an unfair dismissal claim.

Gemma Dobson was dismissed by the Cumbria Partnership NHS Foundation Trust – now North Cumbria Integrated Care NHS Foundation Trust – in 2017 after she said she could not work weekends or bank holidays to comply with new flexible working arrangements.

Ms Dobson was employed as a band 5 nurse at the trust to work 15 hours a week on Wednesdays and Thursdays because she had caring responsibilities for her children who had disabilities. These hours had been agreed in 2008.

In 2016 the trust brought in a flexible working system with a requirement that all community nurses work some weekends. Ms Dobson said she was unable to meet these requirements or other suggestions put forward by the trust. She was dismissed in 2017.

Ms Dobson took the trust to an employment tribunal in 2018 which ruled she was not unfairly dismissed. She won an appeal against the decision which found the tribunal failed to take the issue of ‘childcare disparity’ into account.

But a second tribunal in May this year also ruled she was not unfairly dismissed.

In meetings with her employers Ms Dobson said she was unable to meet the requirements because of her caring responsibilities. Giving evidence, she said the children’s needs were ‘too much’ for her husband on his own.

But an employment judge at the second tribunal said managers were ‘conscientious’ in weighing up the issues Ms Dobson raised and gave her ‘plenty of notice’ about weekend work.

**QUEEN’S GALLANTRY MEDAL**

**Bravery award for nurse after knife attack**

A nurse who was stabbed while trying to stop a knife attack has been awarded a medal for bravery.

Lisa Way was one of three people who confronted a woman who was wielding a knife in a Co-op in Penygraig, South Wales in May 2020.

John Rees, who died in the attack, and Ayette Bounouri also stepped in.

All three were awarded the Queen’s Gallantry Medal – the last three to be approved by the late Queen Elizabeth II – at a ceremony at Windsor Castle on 4 October. The medal is awarded for exemplary acts of bravery.

Ms Way, who works at Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board, was presented her medal by the Prince of Wales. ‘Although the award is tainted by sadness from the death of Mr Rees, it is amazing to be recognised for what happened during that awful day,’ she said.

Ms Way was in the Co-op store when Zara Radcliffe, who has schizophrenia, entered the store and began trying to stab people. Mr Rees grabbed Radcliffe’s arm and placed himself between her and another customer, but he then fell backwards. Ms Way grabbed the woman’s arm, holding the knife, while Ms Bounouri tried to drag Mr Rees out of harm’s way. Ms Way was stabbed during the attack.

Radcliffe later pleaded guilty to manslaughter and was detained indefinitely under Sections 37 and 41 of the Mental Health Act.