

# Murder inquiry at hospital

The death of a grandmother at a hospital stroke unit is being treated as a possible murder, police have said.

Valerie Kneale, 75, died at Blackpool Victoria Hospital on November 16. Lancashire police were then told about allegations of mistreatment and neglect on the unit. Two women and a man were arrested on suspicion of poisoning patients.

They were granted bail as detectives ordered a series of post-mortem examinations. An "unexplained injury", which police believed to be suspicious, was found on the body.

Police said that the cause of death

had not been established but a murder inquiry had been started. No arrests have been made.

Mrs Kneale's family said that they were "devastated and heartbroken". They added: "She was the most precious wife, mother and grandmother, our constant friend and problem solver who we will miss dearly."

Detective Chief Inspector Jill Johnston said: "A dedicated team of detectives are working on the investigation and we are still at the early stages of gathering evidence."

Anyone with information is asked to contact police on 101.

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