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RAF Menwith Hill and St James's Hospital**



Hospital Worker Found Guilty of Planning to Attack RAF Menwith Hill and St James's Hospital

2 July 2024



Mohammad Farooq, 28

Mohammad Sohail Farooq (18/10/1995) has today (Tuesday, July 2) been convicted of preparing for an act of terrorism, contrary to Section 5 of the Terrorism Act 2006, following a three-week trial at Sheffield Crown Court.

Prior to trial, he had already pleaded guilty to possessing an explosive substance with intent to endanger life, firearms offences, and the possession of terrorist material.

Farooq will be sentenced for all offences on a future date, yet to be fixed.

The 28-year-old Clinical Support Worker from Leeds was found in the grounds of St James's Hospital in the early hours of Friday, January 20, 2023, in possession of an improvised bomb, knives and an imitation firearm.

Farooq was discovered by Nathan Newby, an inpatient at St James's. He engaged with Farooq, who was clearly agitated and very open about his plans to detonate a bomb at the hospital. Despite being on the premises for some time he appeared conflicted and had not yet acted on his intentions. Mr Newby had been in the grounds by chance and was able to calm Farooq before calling 999 to seek the help of West Yorkshire Police.

The investigation that followed showed Farooq had radicalised himself online. Detectives from Counter Terrorism Policing North East discovered he was self-motivated and heavily inspired by Daesh propaganda. Farooq had procured weapons and successfully manufactured a viable explosive device in readiness for an attack.

Farooq had identified two potential targets for an attack. RAF Menwith Hill in North Yorkshire and St James's Hospital in Leeds. He had conducted reconnaissance at the RAF base on three separate occasions, before shifting

his focus to St James's to pursue a long-standing grievance against staff at the hospital.

Head of Investigations for Counter Terrorism Policing North East, Detective Superintendent Paul Greenwood, said: *"This trial clearly evidenced Farooq's intent to act on his beliefs and carry out an attack. He'd researched and prepared for his actions, building an improvised explosive device and prioritising his targets.*

"He was primarily motivated by a Daesh-inspired ideology, but also by his own, deep-seated grievances. It was these extreme, personal grievances which ultimately led him to St James's in January last year.

"We are sincerely grateful for the actions of Nathan Newby that morning, whose bravery and willingness to calm Farooq prevented him from fully realising his plans. Had he not intervened the outcome could have been devastating.

"We'd also like to acknowledge the strength and resilience of staff at St James's Hospital, who acted swiftly to the potential threat to ensure the safety of their patients and staff, while maintaining business as usual throughout the incident.

"The commitment of these people to protecting others forever changed the course of events that day. I hope they are immensely proud of their actions and are reassured by today's verdict."

Chief Executive of Leeds Teaching Hospitals, Professor Phil Wood, welcomed the verdict.

"This was an extremely difficult time for staff and patients, and I am immensely proud of the calm and professional way in which they responded on the day to keep everyone safe.

"I would like to thank the police for their support during the incident and throughout the investigation to get us to this point and I am extremely grateful to Nathan Newby for his courage and initiative that morning".

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