

Woman, 98, indicted in death of 100-year-old nursing home roommate

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(CNN) -- A Massachusetts grand jury has indicted a 98-year-old woman, accused of strangling her 100-year-old nursing home roommate, on a second-degree murder charge.

Prosecutors say Laura Lundquist killed centenarian Elizabeth Barrow, a resident of Brandon Woods Nursing Home in Dartmouth, after the two women had an argument over a table Lundquist had placed at the foot of Barrow's bed.

The suspect and victim were roommates at Brandon Woods Nursing Home in Dartmouth, Massachusetts

Barrow was found dead September 24 with a plastic shopping bag tied loosely around her head, according the Bristol County district attorney's office. An autopsy indicated Barrow had been strangled.

Barrow complained that the table obstructed her path to the bathroom, authorities said. When a nurse's aide moved it, Lundquist punched the aide and grumbled that her roommate "might as well have the whole room," prosecutors said.

District Attorney C. Samuel Sutter said Barrow repeatedly complained that Lundquist was making her life "a living hell" in the weeks leading up to the woman's death, and that Lundquist remarked that she would outlive her roommate.

A nursing home spokesman said the facility twice presented Barrow with the chance to change either rooms or roommates, but she declined each time. He compared the pair to "sisters," saying they took "daily walks together ... ate lunch together every day, and were heard at night saying, 'Good night, I love you,' to each other."

Lundquist's attorney, Carl Levin, contends his client was not involved in Barrow's death, saying, "We maintain her innocence." A superior court judge granted a motion to send Lundquist to a state hospital for a competency evaluation. An arraignment will be held only if Lundquist is found competent to stand trial.