

Norfolk Care Association Subgroup Meeting
18th February 2026, 10:00am – 11:30am

Learning Disability, Autism, Mental Health and Physical Disabilities

Chair: Bob Pritchard

Facilitated by: Caitlin Moll – Operations Manager, Norfolk Care Association

Speakers: Ann McCormack - Contracts Manager, Norfolk County Council

Louise Brosnan - Assistant Director, Brokerage and Quality, Norfolk County Council

For our 2026 subgroups, we're trialling a new, provider and discussion-led subgroup model. We're shifting away from presentations towards peer discussion, shared problem-solving, and direct engagement with commissioners. The intention is to increase participation and value for providers.

Summary of discussion

The meeting focused on shifting toward a provider-led model, with Providers sharing detailed feedback on their experiences with PAMMS inspections, noting both the value of collaborative auditors and concerns regarding consistency across regions. Discussions on collective purchasing explored models for co-location and collaborative resource sharing to reduce costs. Commissioners provided updates on proposed changes to care plan billing, moving toward more simplified CPLI's to better evidence the delivery of additional 1:1 and 2:1 care. The meeting concluded with planning for an in-person event in May and a call for ongoing provider feedback.

Discussion Topics

PAMMS experiences

Participants shared recent PAMMS experiences and were invited to reflect on positive outcomes as well as challenges.

- Positive experiences often stemmed from open communication and a cohesive approach with the assessor.
- Providers felt there is significant overlap and duplication between PAMMS, internal quality audits, and CQC inspections.
- There have been some issues regarding historical DBS and police check requirements for long-term international staff due to changing rules.
- Concerns regarding variability and consistency; providers feel the level of scrutiny depends heavily on the individual assessor.
- Some assessors are seen to be being stubborn and narrow-minded – with some judging an entire service based on one bad day. At times they can then refuse to listen when they are shown proof that things are normally done correctly.

Collective Purchasing

Providers were invited to explore and share their thoughts on opportunities for providers to collaborate on purchasing to achieve better economies of scale.

- Small organisations struggle to negotiate deals compared to multi-million pound organisations.
- Co-location of services could allow for resource sharing and "cross-pollination" of ideas.
- Providers viewed collaboration as a "win-win" compared to competing against one another and thought collective purchasing could enhance this.

Commissioner Update

Speakers:

- Ann McCormack - Contracts Manager, Norfolk County Council
(ann.mccormack@norfolk.gov.uk)
- Louise Brosnan - Assistant Director, Brokerage and Quality, Norfolk County Council
(louise.brosnan@norfolk.gov.uk)

Ann McCormack and Louise Brosnan from presented proposed changes to commissioning and billing arrangements.

- Simplifying Care Plan Lines (CPLIs) to clearly identify additional care (1:1/2:1) and core costs.
- Starting 1st April 2026, providers will be asked to confirm commissioned hours for additional care via the portal.
- The change aims to better evidence safeguarding and ensure commissioned care is being delivered.

Providers noted the potential for billing anomalies and appreciated the improved rationale shared during this session compared to previous meetings.

General Feedback

- There is a strong desire for more pragmatism and consistency in the PAMMS process.
- Providers value opportunities for peer support and collaborative resource sharing to lower overall costs.
- Positive outcomes for individuals receiving care remain a primary motivator for the sector.
- Save the date: Norfolk Care Association will be holding an event on the 14th of May, in Norwich, with lunch included. More details to follow.