

Norfolk Care Association Subgroup Meeting  
5<sup>th</sup> February 2026, 10:00am – 11:30am  
**Supported Living, Housing with Care, Shared Lives**

**Chair:** Christine Futter MBE – Chair, Norfolk Care Association

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

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 discussion covered experiences of PAMMS visits, where providers described mixed experiences. While some found the process supportive and constructive, others raised concerns about inconsistency between assessors and an overemphasis on minor issues rather than positive outcomes.

The group also discussed collective purchasing and benchmarking opportunities, with providers expressing interest in sharing supplier intelligence to manage cost pressures. Commissioning updates were provided, including a live supported living tender and proposals relating to payment of one-to-one hours on actuals, which prompted questions and concerns from providers.

## **Discussion Topics**

### **Supporting Positively**

Providers discussed their experiences of the locally funded Supporting Positively programme.

- The programme was described as practical and impactful, helping teams better understand restrictive practice, behaviour as communication, and reflective practice.
- Staff confidence and consistency had improved as a result of training.

### **PAMMS**

Participants shared recent experiences of PAMMS visits.

- Providers reported positive and constructive visits, with clear action plans and supportive assessors while others described inconsistency in approach between assessors.
- There were concerns that reports often emphasise minor environmental or documentation issues without adequately reflecting positive practice.
- Several providers felt there was limited opportunity within the process to highlight strengths or outstanding elements of care.
- The emotional impact on managers and staff following particularly critical visits was noted.
- A suggestion was raised that PAMMS reports could include a clearer “what went well” section to provide balance.

### **Collective purchasing**

The group discussed the potential for collective purchasing and shared benchmarking to manage cost pressures.

- Interest was expressed in exploring collective arrangements for training, utilities, fuel, software systems, and consumables.
- Providers highlighted the value of understanding what others are paying for comparable services and products.
- There was general support for progressing this work if viable opportunities are identified.

### **Commissioning updates and engagement**

Matthew Mallett – Commissioning Manager - joined to provide updates and respond to any provider questions.

- A supported living tender in North Walsham (learning disability and physical disability provision) is currently live. [Supported Living for Adults with LD/PD in North Walsham - Find a Tender](#)
- Matthew outlined a proposal to move to paying actual hours delivered for one-to-one support (voluntary opt-in). Providers raised questions regarding administrative burden, flexibility, and how this would operate in practice. Matthew noted that market engagement sessions are planned to discuss the proposal further. Dates have not been finalised but will be sent out to providers and NorCA in advance.
- Changes relating to the Norfolk Medicine Support Service (MAR chart support) were referenced as this service has now been decommissioned. Providers were advised to check communications if affected.

### **May in-person provider event**

Details were shared about a planned in-person event on 14th May in Norwich, run by Norfolk Care Association. The event will follow a peer-led, discussion-based format rather than traditional presentations.

- Providers will help shape the agenda on the day.
- The event is intended to strengthen cross-provider collaboration across supported living, domiciliary care, and residential care.
- Further details and booking information will be circulated.

## **General feedback**

- Providers value opportunities to share positive practice and feel this helps counterbalance ongoing sector pressures.
- There are mixed experiences of PAMMS; while some visits are constructive, inconsistency and perceived overemphasis on minor issues can affect morale.
- There is appetite for more balanced quality monitoring processes that recognise strengths as well as areas for improvement.
- Cost pressures remain significant, and there is strong interest in collaborative approaches such as collective purchasing.
- Commissioning changes, particularly around payment mechanisms, require clear communication and meaningful engagement to ensure workability in practice.
- Providers welcomed direct commissioner engagement within the subgroup format.