**Press release**

**For immediate release**

**Charities lead health improvement across Norfolk and Waveney thanks to national grant**

This autumn, a series of charity funded projects across Norfolk and Waveney will start to benefit communities recovering from the pandemic, thanks to a national grant of nearly £500,000 from NHS Charities Together.

At a local level, the Norfolk Community Foundation has been working with grass roots organisations to use the two-year funding towards a series of projects, with finances administered by the Norfolk & Norwich Hospitals Charity on behalf of the Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care System.

Local NHS organisations have been working together to ensure the projects meet health needs with the aim of protecting the most vulnerable from Covid-19, supporting people with mental health issues related to the pandemic and promoting healthier communities.

Earlier in the year, bids were encouraged from across Norfolk and Waveney with ten organisations being selected to run projects covering support for older people, vulnerable communities and those with physical and mental health issues.

The successful projects will be run by Caring Together, EPIC Norfolk, DIAL Great Yarmouth, Age UK Norwich, Menscraft, New Routes, Norfolk & Waveney Mind, Norfolk Deaf Association, The Big C, and the Magdalene Group.

**Ellie Orton OBE, Chief Executive of NHS Charities Together, said:**“With our health service facing its most difficult winter ever, ongoing support for the NHS has never been more important. And because healthcare doesn’t begin and end in hospital, we are so proud to be working in partnership with our members to deliver additional support in local communities.

“These projects will create meaningful health benefits for people across Norfolk and Waveney – including addressing mental health needs and protecting groups most affected by COVID-19. Together, we can help the NHS go further and achieve better health and care for us all.”

**Rt Hon Patricia Hewitt, Chair-designate of Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care System and the new NHS Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Board (ICB)** which is set to become a statutory body in April 2022, said: “We are very grateful to NHS Charities Together for this generous amount which is great news for the people of Norfolk and Waveney. The pandemic has impacted all of us, but people in our community who are vulnerable and the community charities who support them have been hit particularly hard.

“This is a great example of how health and social care, voluntary groups and charities can work in partnership to make a real difference to the lives of local people.”

**John Paul Garside, Director of the Norfolk and Norwich Hospitals Charity, says**: “We are delighted to be supporting this important work to help the vulnerable communities in Norfolk and Waveney. Our hospitals have seen at first hand the devastation that the pandemic has brought to people’s health and we want to do everything we can to support the recovery.”

**Claire Cullens, Chief Executive of Norfolk Community Foundation, says:** “During the Covid-19 pandemic, our fantastic charities and community groups have been the glue that has held communities together and offered a vital lifeline to many, helping people to cope day to day, or with an urgent response to sudden crisis. We're proud to champion their innovation and determination as they continue to tackle the physical and psychological impact of a global crisis.”

**Kathryn Ellis, Executive Director of Strategy and Partnerships at Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust and Senior Responsible Officer for Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Assembly, Norfolk & Waveney Integrated Care System, said:** “Through this investment we have an opportunity to test new approaches to deliver health and care and embed the prevention agenda into the heart of our integrated care system. Over the next 2 years, we will have opportunity to illustrate how health and social care partners can work collaboratively with VCSE colleagues in support of our most vulnerable communities”.

**Chair of the Norfolk and Waveney VCSE Assembly, Emma Ratzer commented** how positive the funding was for our integrated care system’s partnerships, saying: “This funding is a very exciting opportunity to further demonstrate the benefits the voluntary sector provides to individuals and communities, whilst concurrently forging new relationships and understanding with system partners. This fund will work to the strengths of our local VCSE sector to support those who are most affected by the pandemic and where possible help prevent further impact on individuals health and wellbeing.”

**Notes to editors**

Details of the projects funded:

**Age UK Norwich** is leading a pilot to enhance the NHS Social Prescribing delivery within Norwich, specifically to support older people to improve their physical or mental health.

**Dial Gt Yarmouth** is working in partnership with Great Yarmouth Borough Council, East Suffolk District Council and James Paget Hospital, seeks to provide supportive and preventative non-medical support to those who are awaiting elective orthopaedic surgery and are at risk of worsening physical and mental health.

**EPIC Norfolk** is finding a new way of supporting patients to rehabilitate in the community following discharge from the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital.

**Menscraft** will be supporting men who are waiting for a range of clinical interventions, especially mental health, through engaging in positive activities provided by weekly local pop up Pit Stops.

**New Routes** will be employing a new Health and Wellbeing Coordinator to support asylum seekers, recently resettled refugees and other ethnic minorities through promoting social inclusion and preventing people from becoming socially excluded.

**Norfolk and Waveney Mind** will be offering a nature-based, physical activities programme in across Norfolk and Waveney to establish self-sustaining running and walking groups for those experiencing or at risk of poor mental health because of the impact of the pandemic.

**Norfolk Deaf Association** will be using the Cuppa Care mobile facility, which is equipped with a range of information and facilities for making refreshments, from which members of staff and volunteers will engage with the local community, providing a listening ear, appropriate support, information and advice.

**The Big C** will pilot a 12-week nutrition and physical activity programmes for cancer patients aimed at lifestyle and behavioural change, including advice on healthy eating, weight management and “mood and food”, plus health walks for mental

Wellbeing and cooking demonstrations.

**The Magdalene Group** will fund a specialist Women’s Worker to be based within the Doorways Womens Project and will form trusting relationships to deliver a range of support including 1:1 sessions and advocacy, street outreach, prison support

and COVID-19 and other healthcare awareness.

**Caring Together** will address an unmet need for a counselling service in the system focused primarily on carers and recent former carers. The project will prevent carer crisis and breakdown by providing a professional counselling and talking

therapy service.

**About NHS Charities Together**

NHS Charities Together is the national, independent charity caring for the NHS. We support a network of 240 NHS charities and, together, provide the extra help needed in hospitals, health boards, and ambulance, community, and mental health trusts across the UK.

We’re here to support the people of the NHS, in every part the country, every day of the week. And we make sure funds get to exactly where they are needed and will make the most impact.

To date, NHS Charities Together has allocated £140 million in a range of projects supporting NHS charities, staff, patients and volunteers. These include counselling services, helplines, and intensive psychological support for NHS staff, plus patient focused initiatives like training for emergency responders, research into long COVID, and specialist equipment. And we’re investing in projects that make access to healthcare more equal – so the best of NHS care is available to everyone, both now and in the future.

But the NHS is facing the most challenging time in its history – and NHS resources have their limits. With pressures on services mounting, our support has never been more vital. Together, we can help the NHS go further and achieve better health and care for us all.

To find out more visit [www.nhscharitiestogether.co.uk](http://www.nhscharitiestogether.co.uk)