



Norfolk and Suffolk Health and Care Awards 2026

Hospital to Community Award

EEAST Advanced Practice Team

East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust

The EEAST Advanced Practice Team is recognised for transforming pre-hospital urgent care across Norfolk and Suffolk through the introduction of Point of Care Testing (POCT). By equipping Advanced Paramedic Practitioners with portable diagnostic devices, the team enables rapid, hospital-grade blood testing—including CRP, D-dimer, and NT-proBNP—directly in patients' homes. This innovation shifts essential diagnostics out of hospitals and into the community, allowing timely, personalised care while avoiding unnecessary hospital admissions. Patients who would previously have required conveyance to Emergency Departments can now be safely assessed and treated in familiar surroundings, supporting those with conditions such as infections, suspected blood clots, or heart failure.

The initiative represents a significant evolution in ambulance service care, moving from a traditional "treat and transport" model to one of advanced clinical assessment and decision-making. Team members have undergone extensive training to interpret complex results independently, ensuring safe and effective care in community settings. Their work strengthens neighbourhood-based care by sharing results digitally with GPs, community teams, and district nurses, promoting continuity and coordinated support.

The impact on patients and the wider system has been substantial. Hundreds of patients have avoided stressful and potentially harmful hospital admissions, particularly those who are frail or vulnerable. Rapid diagnostics allow targeted treatment decisions, improving outcomes while preserving patient dignity and comfort. The approach has reduced avoidable hospital conveyances, eased pressure on acute services, and improved system flow. Overall, the programme represents a sustainable and scalable shift in delivering urgent care closer to home.