

Enclosure No:	<b>1/AWMSG/0323</b>
Agenda Item No:	<b>1 – Minutes of previous meeting</b>
Author:	<b>Chair, AWMSG</b>
Contact:	<b>Tel: 029 218 26900 E-Mail: awttc@wales.nhs.uk</b>

**All Wales Medicines Strategy Group (AWMSG)  
Draft minutes of the AWMSG meeting held  
at 10.45am on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2023 at The Cardiff City  
Stadium, Leckwith, Cardiff, CF11 8AZ**

**Voting members present:**

**Did not  
participate in  
agenda item:**

- |                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <b>1. Prof Dyfrig Hughes</b>    | <b>Chair and Health Economist</b>           |
| <b>2. Prof Stephen Monaghan</b> | <b>Consultant in Public Health Medicine</b> |
| <b>3. Mr Farhan Mughal</b>      | <b>ABPI (Wales)</b>                         |
| <b>4. Mrs Claire James</b>      | <b>Lay Representative</b>                   |
| <b>5. Dr Richard Skone</b>      | <b>Medical Director</b>                     |
| <b>6. Ms Alison Hughes</b>      | <b>Senior Primary Care Pharmacist</b>       |
| <b>7. Mr James Leaves</b>       | <b>Director of Finance</b>                  |
| <b>8. Mr Stuart Rees</b>        | <b>Senior Hospital Pharmacist</b>           |
| <b>9. Mrs Mandy James</b>       | <b>Senior Nurse</b>                         |
| <b>10. Ms Cathy Wynne</b>       | <b>Other healthcare professions</b>         |
| <b>11. Dr Alison Thomas</b>     | <b>Clinical Pharmacologist</b>              |

**Welsh Government:**  
Mr Andrew Evans

**AWTTC staff:**

Dr Rob Bracchi, Medical Advisor  
Mr Trevor Brooking, Administration Manager  
Mr Richard Boldero, Senior Pharmacist  
Professor James Coulson, NMG Chair  
Dr Stephanie Francis, Principal Scientist  
Dr Thomas Curran, Principal Scientist  
Mrs Claire Ganderton, Senior Pharmacist  
Ms Kath Haines, Head of WAPSU  
Dr Bridget Ann Kenny, Medical Writer  
Mrs Karen Samuels, Programme Director  
Mrs Claire Thomas, Senior Pharmacist

**List of abbreviations:**

ABPI	Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry
ASAR	AWMSG Secretariat Assessment Report
ATMP	Advanced Therapy Medicinal Product
AWMSG	All Wales Medicines Strategy Group
AWPAG	All Wales Prescribing Advisory Group
AWTTC	All Wales Therapeutics & Toxicology Centre
BMA	British Medical Association
CAPIG	Clinical and Patient Involvement Group
CEPP	Clinical Effectiveness Prescribing Programme
CHMP	Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use
DHCW	Digital Health and Care Wales
DoH	Department of Health
EMA	European Medicines Agency
EMIG	Ethical Medicines Industry Group
EOL	End of life
FAR	Final Appraisal Recommendation
FDA	US Food and Drug Administration
GP	General Practitioner
HAC	High Acquisition Cost
HB	Health Board
HEIW	Health Education and Improvement Wales
HST	Highly Specialised Technology
HTA	Health Technology Assessment
ILAP	Innovative Licensing and Access Pathway
IR	Independent Review
MHRA	Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency
M&TC	Medicines & Therapeutics Committee
NICE	National Institute for Health and Care Excellence
NMG	New Medicines Group
NPI	National Prescribing Indicator
OWMAG	One Wales Medicines Assessment Group
PAMS	Patient Access to Medicines Service
PAR	Preliminary Appraisal Recommendation
PAS	Patient Access Scheme
PPRS	Prescription Price Regulation Scheme
QAIF	Quality Assurance and Improvement Framework
RCGP	Royal College of General Practitioners
SABA	Short-acting beta agonist
SMC	Scottish Medicines Consortium
SPC	Summary of Product Characteristics
SPIRA	Server for Prescribing Information Reporting and Analysis
TDAPG	Therapeutic Development Appraisal Partnership Group
T&FG	Task and Finish Group
UHB	University Health Board
WAPSU	Welsh Analytical Prescribing Support Unit
WeMeReC	Welsh Medicines Resource Centre
WG	Welsh Government
WHO	World Health Organization
WHSSC	Welsh Health Specialised Services Committee
WPAS	Wales Patient Access Scheme

**1. Welcome and introduction**

The Chair opened the meeting, welcomed members and observers, and explained the meeting protocol.

**2. Apologies:**

Prof Iolo Doull, Chair

Dr Jeremy Black, GP with prescribing lead role

Dr Andy Champion, Welsh Health Specialised Services Commission

Dr Sam Cox, Hospital Consultant

Mr Hywel Pullen, Director of Finance

Dr Manjeet Singh, Hospital Consultant

Mr Dylan Jones, Community Pharmacist

**3. Declarations of interest:**

The Chair invited declarations of interest. There were none.

**4. Minutes of previous meeting**

The draft minutes of the previous meeting held on 6 December 2022 were checked for accuracy and approved. There were no matters arising.

**5. Chair's Report**

The Chair provided feedback from the training session held on 11 January and confirmed that Dr Rob Bracchi would outline the achievements of AWMSG against the objectives set out in the 2018-2023 Medicines Strategy.

Members were informed that the process for ratifying One Wales advice had changed with recommendations being presented to AWMSG for endorsement before going to Welsh Government for ratification. The Chair asked members to note the inclusion of denosumab (Prolia®) for the treatment of osteoporosis in men at increased risk of fractures in national guidance and the retirement of One Wales advice.

The Chair highlighted the invaluable and exemplary support provided to AWMSG by Mrs Karen Samuels and Ms Kath Haines during their tenures at AWTTTC and, as both are retiring within the coming weeks, thanked them for their contribution on behalf of AWMSG.

**6. Electronic Prescribing in Wales**

Professor Hamish Laing, Senior Responsible Officer for the Digital Medicines Transformation Portfolio, updated AWMSG on developments. It was noted that the Portfolio brings a collection of projects and programmes together with the aim of realising a fully digital prescribing approach across Wales. The Portfolio comprises four elements, Primary Care Electronic Prescription Service Programme, Secondary Care Electronic Prescribing and Medicines Administration Programme, Patient Access Project, and Shared Medicines Record Project. The Shared Medicines Record Project was signalled out as being particularly innovative and transformational, as there are few such projects in operation worldwide. Following a technical proof of concept in Spring 2023, the Primary Care Electronic Prescription Service Programme is

expected to begin roll out in Autumn 2023 dependent on readiness of GP system suppliers, EMIS and Cegedim Vision. The multi-vendor framework for the Secondary Care Electronic Prescribing and Medicines Administration Programme was established in November 2022 with Cardiff and Vale University Health Board being first to implement. All health boards and Velindre are welcome to a springboard event to be held late February/early March 2023 with the aim that roll out will occur at the same time across Wales. The Patient Access Project, enabling digital services to patients and public (with English and Welsh language options), is undergoing agile development during a phase of beta testing with a phase of public beta testing expected to launch in March 2023 and a technical proof of concept expected later in the Spring. The Shared Medicines Record Project is expected to deliver a technical proof of concept in March/April 2023. It was noted that the Shared Medicines Record Project had received investment funding from Health Data Research UK. Professor Laing welcomed any feedback or questions.

A member queried potential geographical inequality due to differences in readiness of GP system suppliers. Professor Laing acknowledged that this might be a problem initially and reassured members that the issue would be resolved as roll out is expected within a short timeframe. A member queried the impact of the digital divide in Wales and expressed concerns with regards to equity of access. A concern was also noted for people who are visually impaired. Professor Laing disclosed his involvement with the Digital Inclusion Alliance Wales and explained that there was nothing a patient would have to do digitally to benefit from the system. It was noted that a GP or pharmacist will be able to amend details. A member asked whether the system may improve Yellow Card reporting. Professor Laing indicated that Yellow Card reporting is on the list for inclusion within the technology and invited representation from the Yellow Card Centre team on the group. Professor Laing relayed a concern that use of different suppliers between Health Boards may introduce variance in the system's use. Professor Laing acknowledged the merit in this observation and highlighted the responsibility of the Health Boards at implementation to be mindful of health care professionals who may frequently move between Health Boards as this could potentially undermine standardisation of the system. The Chair thanked Professor Laing and welcomed future updates. Professor Laing invited input and involvement of an AWMSG member on the Shared Medicines Record Project group.

**Action**

**AWMSG to nominate a representative for the Shared Medicines Record Project group**

**7. Appraisal - paediatric licence extension**

Sofosbuvir/velpatasvir (Epclusa®) film-coated tablets and coated granules in sachet for the treatment of chronic hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection in patients from 3 years of age to < 18 years of age

Submission by Gilead Sciences Ltd for a paediatric licence extension where there is existing NICE advice.

Claire Ganderton, the appraisal lead, explained that AWMSG members had received a copy of the assessment and draft recommendation prior to the meeting. Claire Ganderton confirmed that no comments or questions had been received from members. For the purposes of transparency, and prior to requesting confirmation of AWMSG's approval, Claire Ganderton read out the draft recommendation. The Chair asked members to confirm that there were no outstanding issues and for their agreement with the recommendation; there was unanimous support.

The following recommendation, for ratification by Welsh Government, was subsequently confirmed:

**Sofosbuvir/velpatasvir (Epclusa®) is recommended as an option for use within NHS Wales for the treatment of chronic hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection in patients from 3 years of age to < 18 years of age, in line with the National Institute of Health and Care Excellence recommendation for the use of sofosbuvir/velpatasvir for treating chronic HCV infection in adults (TA430).**

The availability of treatment for this indication for patients under 3 years of age was queried, noting the availability of curative treatments for this indication for patients under 3 years of age in England. It was confirmed that the licensed indication for sofosbuvir/velpatasvir (Epclusa®) did not extend to the under 3 years age group. It was also noted that there are clinical situations when a clinician may consider the off-label use of a medicine or the use of an unlicensed medicine and that this is common practice in paediatrics.

## 8. Polypharmacy Review

Mr Emyr Jones, Miss Sheridan Court and Miss Harriet Price presented the updated document, Polypharmacy in older people: a guide for healthcare professionals, to AWMSG for endorsement. The Chair invited comments from members.

The availability of Easy Read patient information for people who may be visually impaired was questioned. Consideration of the differences in demographics, specifically racial differences in relation to diseases such as sickle cell disease, was also recommended. The Chair queried whether these points had been raised in the consultation. Mr Jones acknowledged that they had been noted but were considered to be outside the remit of the document review, which was to provide a general overview and to signpost to other relevant guidance. The Chair suggested including a general statement alerting healthcare professionals to consider differences in demographics.

Mr Jones acknowledged that the updated document was originally published in 2014. Mr Jones noted potential future opportunities for collaboration as Northern Ireland and Scotland were joining forces on similar documentation, acknowledging multi-morbidity and polypharmacy as ongoing issues. A member asked what actions are being taken to address the problem of polypharmacy. Mr Jones agreed to seek feedback from healthcare professionals on how the document will be used to tackle this problem. A separate need exists for this information to be conveyed to people on

multiple medications. Mr Jones confirmed that there is planned collaboration with Age Cymru to develop patient-facing materials to better enable patients to seek a medication review. Mrs Karen Samuels asked the committee what further could be done to facilitate uptake and suggested that AWTTTC's own Patient and Public Interest Group could be a useful forum for discussion on topics such as tackling polypharmacy. It was noted that medication reviews are incentivised within NHS England. Ms Kath Haines thanked the speakers and acknowledged the timeliness of the review and the opportunities presented by the digital developments around electronic prescribing in Wales. The Chair thanked the speakers and confirmed AWMSG's endorsement subject to the inclusion of a general statement alerting healthcare professionals to consider differences in demographics.

#### **9. National Prescribing Indicators update and review process**

Mrs Claire Thomas provided an overview of National Prescribing Indicators update and review process. It was noted that, following AWMSG's agreement in September 2022, the National Prescribing Indicators will now be renewed and updated on a three-yearly cycle. Mrs Claire Thomas highlighted that the update and review process had been to AWPAG for discussion and was being presented at AWMSG for endorsement. The Chair confirmed AWMSG's endorsement of the process.

#### **10. NPIs 2022-23 – Analysis of prescribing data to Sep 22**

Mrs Claire Thomas and Mr Richard Boldero presented the NPI data to AWMSG for information. The Chair commented on the positive changes reported in the paper and associated good practice spotlights and asked how this could be shared. Mrs Thomas suggested the Best Practice Day and the AWTTTC newsletter as two options where these successes could be highlighted. A member suggested including a note of the positive changes within the executive summary. A member asked if contact details could be included in the paper to allow readers to identify the relevant contact(s) in order to obtain further information. A member queried whether it would be possible to exclude certain patients within the atrial fibrillation indicators who had declined or were unsuitable for anticoagulation. Mrs Thomas noted that a proposal had recently been submitted to DHCW for use of a Read or SNOMET-CT code to exclude patients from some searches, the outcome of which was still pending.

Mr Boldero made members aware that due to potential errors identified by Digital Health and Care Wales (DHCW) in the Medusa Data Warehouse, where the data for reporting on the Best Value Biological Medicine NPI is taken from, AWTTTC we unable to report on this NPI in the current quarterly report. This issue had also resulted in the temporary taking down of the biosimilar dashboard on SPIRA. AWTTTC are awaiting further information from DHCW and members will be updated on the magnitude and planned resolution of this issue at future meetings.

#### **Action**

**AWTTTC to consider ways to continue to share good practice.**

### **11. Primary Care Antimicrobial Guidelines updates**

Dr Tom Curran provided an overview of the Primary Care Antimicrobial Guidelines update to AWMSG for information. The updates pertained to three conditions only. A member queried the recommendation of a slow-release formulation of doxycycline for blepharitis that tended to be less available than a standard formulation included previously. Dr Curran acknowledged that the decision was made following discussion at the All Wales Antimicrobial Guidelines Group and clarification would be sought with them and fed back to the member directly.

### **12. Amikacin guidelines**

Dr Tom Curran presented the Amikacin guidelines to AWMSG for acknowledgment. A member questioned the dosing schedules and how they had been referenced. The Chair confirmed AWMSG's acknowledgment of the guidelines, with a request to be passed on to the authors that clarity be added to how the dosing recommendations are referenced.

### **13. AWMSG Medicines Strategy**

Dr Rob Bracchi presented a summary report on the 2018-2023 medicines strategy and reminded members of the four priority areas. Members were asked to note the delivery of the objectives over the five-year period.

Dr Steph Francis described a draft framework for the AWMSG strategy for 2023-2028 and invited comments.

Dr Tom Curran outlined the planned next steps for the development of the 2023-2028 strategy. The Chair opened the discussion.

Members were reminded that as an advisory committee AWMSG's strategy sits separately to AWTTTC and the unique and supportive role undertaken by AWTTTC underpins the delivery of some but not all of their objectives. Members were reminded of AWMSG's role - to make decisions on what should be done, to define the ideal scenario, to set objectives, and challenge organisations with the appropriate expertise to fulfil the aims and achieve the goals.

The Chair highlighted the potential contribution of the Digital Medicines Transformation Portfolio in facilitating such change. A member queried whether social prescribing may be considered as an area of focus for the future strategy, and it was acknowledged that such approaches were important in deprescribing and reducing medicines related harm. A member queried the suitability of one of the four currently proposed ambitions - to ensure that people can access the right medicines at the right time. A member reflected on maximising value, suggesting the importance of also promoting the value of particularly cost-effective medicines. Dr Curran explained that the production of the new strategy document would be a reactive process and reliant upon the input of the committee, and that more detail on the proposed next steps would be presented at the March 2023 meeting. The Chair asked members to email AWTTTC with any further comments outside of the meeting.

**14. Feedback from AWPAG meeting held 14 Dec 22**

Ms Kath Haines provided feedback from the AWPAG meeting held in December 2022. Ms Haines referred members to the minutes of the meeting and drew attention to the key issues of note.

AWMSG members were reminded that there were three resignations and three new appointments.

Ms Haines confirmed the next AWPAG meeting will be 15<sup>th</sup> March 2023.

**15. Any other business**

Mr Andrew Evans acknowledged the exceptional service that had been provided to his office and Welsh government by both Mrs Karen Samuels and Ms Kath Haines over many years. He thanked them both for their invaluable contribution to patient safety and wished them both well in their retirement.

The Chair confirmed the date of the next meeting on Tuesday, 7<sup>th</sup> March 2023 in Cardiff and closed the meeting.