

Enclosure number:	<b>1/AWMSG/0525</b>
Agenda item number:	<b>1 – Minutes of previous meeting</b>
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## **All Wales Medicines Strategy Group (AWMSG)**

**Minutes of the AWMSG meeting held at 9:30 am on  
Wednesday, 9 April 2025 at the All Nations Centre, Sachville  
Avenue, Cardiff, CF14 3NY**

**Voting members present:**

**Did not  
participate  
in agenda  
item:**

- |            |                               |   |
|------------|-------------------------------|---|
| <b>1.</b>  | <b>Prof Iolo Doull</b>        | <b>Chair</b>  |
| <b>2.</b>  | <b>Prof Stephen Monaghan</b>  | <b>Consultant in Public Health Medicine</b>                                       |
| <b>3.</b>  | <b>Mrs Eleri Schiavone</b>    | <b>NHS Wales Joint Commissioning Committee</b>                                    |
| <b>4.</b>  | <b>Prof Dyfrig Hughes</b>     | <b>Health economist</b>   |
| <b>5.</b>  | <b>Mr Tommy Price</b>         | <b>ABPI (Wales)</b>   |
| <b>6.</b>  | <b>Mrs Pam James</b>          | <b>Lay representative</b>   |
| <b>7.</b>  | <b>Ms Julie Wilson-Thomas</b> | <b>Lay representative</b>   |
| <b>8.</b>  | <b>Mr Dylan Jones</b>         | <b>Community Pharmacist</b>   |
| <b>9.</b>  | <b>Dr Jim Mcguigan</b>        | <b>Medical Director</b>   |
| <b>10.</b> | <b>Dr Richard Brown</b>       | <b>General Practitioner with an interest in therapeutics</b>                      |
| <b>11.</b> | <b>Ms Rafia Jamil</b>         | <b>Managed Sector Pharmacist – Primary Care</b>                                   |
| <b>12.</b> | <b>Mr David Fox</b>           | <b>Managed Sector Pharmacist – Hospital Pharmacist</b>                            |
| <b>13.</b> | <b>Mr Hywel Pullen</b>        | <b>Director of Finance</b>  |
| <b>14.</b> | <b>Mrs Susan Newport</b>      | <b>Senior Nurse</b>   |
| <b>15.</b> | <b>Mrs Cathy Wynne</b>        | <b>Other healthcare professions eligible to prescribe not already represented</b> |



**1. Welcome and introduction**

The Chair opened the meeting, welcomed members and observers, and explained the meeting protocol. The Chair confirmed that the meeting was quorate.

**2. Apologies:**

Mr Mark Francis, Medicines Value Unit  
Dr Richard Skone, Medical Director

**3. Declarations of interest:**

The Chair invited declarations of interest. There were no declarations of interest.

**4. Minutes of previous meeting**

The draft minutes of the previous meeting held on 11 March 2025 were checked for accuracy and approved. There were no matters arising.

**5. Chair's report (verbal update)**

The Chair reported that he had received a letter from the Welsh Government Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care, which set out a number of key objectives for the next three years against which AWMSG will be expected to deliver. He said AWTTTC has been asked to produce a comprehensive plan in response to each of these objectives. The Chair will share the letter with AWMSG members in advance of the next AWMSG meeting in May. At the May meeting the Chair would like to set aside some time for all members to discuss the key objectives, plan AWMSG's response and help prepare a set of performance measures. The Chair thought it would be easier to have a face-to-face discussion about this, and said he would be very grateful if members could attend the meeting in person at the Cardiff Metropolitan University in May.

The Chair said that he had attended the NICE Conference in Manchester on 27 March 2025, along with colleagues from AWTTTC. Dr Andrew Champion participated in the session "Driving creative solutions in health technology assessment" and explained how AWTTTC and AWMSG work with partners and stakeholders to create solutions to complex problems in HTA. The Chair said that it was an excellent day.

The Chair reported that the One Wales Medicines Assessment Group (OWMAG) held a virtual consultation in March 2025 to review the One Wales advice for the off-label use of bevacizumab 7.5 mg/kg for the treatment of advanced ovarian, fallopian tube, or peritoneal cancer at high risk for progression. He asked AWMSG members to note that the decision of OWMAG is to continue to support use, with this advice to be placed on the new One Wales static list. One Wales advice placed on the static list will continue to be internally reviewed by AWTTTC and any information identified during the process that could affect the advice is flagged to OWMAG to decide whether further action is necessary.

The Chair made members aware of the planned consultation for the 'All Wales Shared Care Framework' which is expected to commence in the next week or so. The Chair also made members aware of AWTTTC's annual Best

Practice Day, which is being held on 2<sup>nd</sup> July at the All Nations Centre, in collaboration with the Yellow Card Centre Wales.

**6. Constitution of the Commercial Arrangement Scheme Wales Group (CASWG) (for information)**

Mrs Helen Adams informed members that the AWMSG Steering Committee had approved the CASWG constitution at their last meeting, and there had been a training day for members of the group. She said the first meeting of CASWG would take place later today at the All Nations Centre.

**7. CASWG Membership (for information)**

Mrs Helen Adams also provided an update on membership of CASWG, saying that although group membership was complete, there were still a couple of outstanding places for alternate members. She said AWTTTC will continue to flag those to their networks.

The Chair invited comments and questions about CASWG. One member asked if the group were looking for a specific type of prescriber. Mrs Adams said they were looking for nominations for any type of healthcare prescriber.

**8. All Wales Common Ailments Service Formulary – Monograph for Allergic Rhinitis (for endorsement)**

Ms Shaila Ahmed and Mrs Diane Burnett presented the monograph for allergic rhinitis, which had been updated. Ms Ahmed introduced the monograph and explained the changes made to it and the process of updating it, which included consultation.

The Chair invited comments from members. One member commented that the monograph had been much improved and is now much clearer. The Chair questioned a link within the document, and Mrs Burnett explained that the link would be working subject to endorsement by AWMSG. AWMSG members endorsed the document.

**9. The Voluntary Scheme for Branded Medicines Pricing, Access, and Growth (VPAG) investment programme**

Dr Andrew Champion presented a series of slides to explain the history and current status of the VPAG investment programme, how it will benefit NHS Wales, and how AWTTTC plans to use the investment.

Dr Champion explained that VPAG was agreed by the UK Government, NHS England and the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry in 2023; the programme started on 1 January 2024, and will run until the end of 2028. He explained the aims of the scheme, which focuses on three key areas: clinical trials (75% of investment funding), manufacturing (20% of funding) and HTA (5% of funding). The £400 million invested in the scheme is across the four UK nations, and AWTTTC is already working closely with colleagues in Scotland and England.

The 5% investment for HTA is for developing innovative approaches to HTA, to improve pre- and post-assessment methods and processes for access and uptake of new medicines. Aiming to make the process faster and more

effective, but maintaining quality.

Dr Champion outlined the work now going on in AWTTTC, including the recruitment of new staff, and organising four workstreams to focus on: horizon scanning and financial forecasting; the medicines ecosystem (assessment of medicines); implementation (aiming to provide more support post-assessment); and unlocking data (having better, higher quality data; better access to data and better linkage of data). He described progress to date: a VPAG programme manager is now in post, and AWTTTC leads appointed for the four workstreams. He also outlined some of the current work in each workstream, including the development of a new All Wales horizon scanning database.

The Chair thanked Dr Champion and commented about holding health boards to account and said that data is very important. He invited questions and comments from members.

One member commented that the investment programme offers significant opportunities for Wales, in terms of data capture and complex commercial arrangements and that some connectedness in Wales is already in place. One member commented about health policies and industrial policies in the VPAG goals, that these might be in opposition, and also mentioned the debate around the calculation of cost/quality-adjusted life-year. Dr Champion said that the VPAG goals had been set in 2023, and were presented here for information.

One member asked if the VPAG programme in Wales is similar to the work programmes in the other UK nations, and how much would we liaise with and learn from them, as well as sharing our knowledge with them. Dr Champion said there were different approaches between the four nations, and each nation has autonomy in what it does, but there is commonality as well. AWTTTC is working with NICE and SMC to understand what their work programmes will include. He said the HTA lab at NICE is a big opportunity for AWTTTC, because NICE has access to data and other information. He also said that implementation is a common area across all the nations.

In other comments, members mentioned the issue of NICE's high threshold for cost-effectiveness, and the potentially huge implications for pharmaceutical products in Wales. One member said that it would be fantastic to have an All Wales horizon scanning database, and asked about having confidential information stored on the database. Mr Anthony Williams said that AWTTTC was looking carefully at access to the database and to confidential information.

## **10. Pharmacogenomics delivery plan**

The Chair welcomed Dr Sophie Harding, All Wales Consultant Pharmacist for Pharmacogenomics, and Ms Lisa Bassett, Programme Manager for Genomics at HEIW, to the meeting to present the pharmacogenomics delivery plan for Wales.

Dr Harding presented the pharmacogenomics delivery plan, developed by the National Pharmacogenomics Group for Wales (NPGG) in response to a

key aim of the Genomic Delivery Plan for Wales, which is to establish a pharmacogenomics service for Wales. The presentation described the history of pharmacogenomics strategy in Wales, including the formation of Genomics Partnership Wales (GPW) in 2018, and also highlighted current work, such as exploring and implementing the use of single gene tests. She described the aim to move towards a future in which a pharmacogenomic test result is present in a patient's electronic health record to be accessed by all healthcare staff prescribing medicines for that patient, with the aim of improving treatment outcomes by reducing the risk of adverse drug reactions and maximising efficacy, achieved by prescribing the right medicines at the right dose at the right time.

Dr Harding outlined the role of the NPGG to progress and implement pharmacogenomic services in Wales, and her own role in that group. She described her work with a team in University Hospital Wales to implement testing for *CYP2C19* prior to prescribing clopidogrel in a 6-month pilot project, and talked about another project under way for point-of-care genetic testing prior to prescribing aminoglycoside antibiotics to neonates, and other ongoing projects and collaborations. She also outlined 9 principles which the group believes are key to clinical implementation.

The Chair thanked Dr Harding and Ms Bassett and invited questions and comments from members. One member commented on the interesting work ongoing and asked how pharmaceutical manufacturers might engage with the delivery of their plan. Dr Harding said that they needed to have more clarity around that and would reach out to the industry to discuss. Another member asked about patient education and consent, and issues around holding genetic information about people. Dr Harding said that the pharmacogenomic data is focused on the use of medicines, rather than on hereditary disease, but that they would be mindful of data issues for the future.

- 11. Phenoxymethylpenicillin prescribing in Wales** (for information)  
Dr Katherine Chaplin presented data on phenoxymethylpenicillin (Pen V) prescribing in health boards across Wales, beginning with some caveats around the data, such as not being able to get prescription data by indication, and using quantity of tablets to identify treatment courses as being either 5 days or 10 days. The Chair invited comments from members.

Members discussed the length of a course of treatment, and the possibility that Pen V is being prescribed for a 7-day course. Guidelines recommend courses of 5 days or 10 days, but in their guideline summary NICE refers to 5 to 10 days, which could be misinterpreted. It was suggested to contact NICE about misinterpreting the dose information in their guideline.

Dr Chaplin mentioned some of the additional work she was planning to do around the Pen V prescribing data, including presenting this paper at wider antimicrobial meetings, and working with Public Health Wales and HEIW to host a joint event for healthcare professionals, regarding appropriate course duration of antibiotics. The use of ScriptSwitch was discussed; other suggestions included raising patient's awareness about course durations e.g. creating a poster of common antibiotic course durations, and working with

Your Medicines, Your Health.

**12. Any other business**

The Chair said that this meeting would be Mrs Eleri Schiavone's last meeting as she was leaving the AWMSG. He thanked Mrs Schiavone for all her hard work for AWMSG.

The Chair thanked AWMSG members and confirmed the date of the next meeting on, Tuesday, 20 May 2025 at Cardiff Metropolitan University, Cyncoed Campus, Cardiff, CF23 6XD.