

Enclosure No:	1/AWMSG/1024
Agenda Item No:	1 – Minutes of previous meeting
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All Wales Medicines Strategy Group (AWMSG)

**Draft minutes of the AWMSG meeting held
at 09:30 am on Wednesday, 11 September 2024 at Cardiff Metropolitan
University, Cyncoed Campus, CF23 6XD**

Voting members present:

**Did not
participate
in agenda
item:**

- | | | | |
|------------|------------------------------|---|-------------|
| 1. | Prof Dyfrig Hughes | Chair and Health Economist | |
| 2. | Prof Stephen Monaghan | Consultant in Public Health Medicine | |
| 3. | Mrs Rachel Gemine | NHS Wales Joint Commissioning
Committee | |
| 4. | Mr Tommy Price | ABPI (Wales) | 6, 8 |
| 5. | Mrs Claire James | Lay Representative | |
| 6. | Julie Wilson Thomas | Lay Representative | |
| 7. | Mr Dylan Jones | Community Pharmacist | |
| 8. | Ms Rafia Jamil | Senior Primary Care Pharmacist | |
| 9. | Mr David Fox | Senior Hospital Pharmacist | |
| 10. | Mrs Katherine White | Senior Nurse | |
| 11. | Mr Karl Jackson | Other healthcare professions eligible
to prescribe | |
| 12. | Dr Alison Thomas | Clinical Pharmacologist | |
| 13. | Dr Manjeet Singh | Hospital Consultant | |

Welsh Government:

Andrew Evans

AWTTC staff:

Ms Shaila Ahmed, Senior Pharmacist
Mr Richard Boldero, Senior Pharmacist
Dr Andrew Champion, Programme Director

Dr Katherine Chaplin, Senior Scientist
Dr Thomas Curran, Principal Scientist
Dr Paul Deslandes, Senior Pharmacist
Dr Clare Elliott, Senior Scientist
Dr Carolyn Hughes, Medical Writer
Mr Anthony Williams, Head of PAMS
Mrs Gail Woodland, Senior Pharmacist
Mrs Claire Thomas, Head of WAPSU and Medicines Optimisation

List of abbreviations:

ABPI	Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry
AWMSG	All Wales Medicines Strategy Group
AWPAG	All Wales Prescribing Advisory Group
AWTTC	All Wales Therapeutics and Toxicology Centre
OWMAG	One Wales Medicines Access Group
NPIs	National Prescribing Indicators

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:

Dr Jeremy Black, GP with prescribing lead role
Mr Chris Brown, Chief Pharmacist
Prof Iolo Doull, Chair
Mr Mark Francis, Medicines Values Unit
Mrs Pam James, Lay Representative
James Leaves, Medical Director
Dr Jim McGuigan, Medical Director
Mr Hywel Pullen, Director of Finance
Dr Richard Skone, Medical Director
Mr Jonathan Simms, Chief Pharmacist

3. Declarations of interest:

The Chair invited declarations of interest. Mr Tommy Price declared a personal specific interest in items 6 and 8 on the agenda; he left the meeting for item 6; for agenda item 8 he was present but did not take part in the discussion. There were no other declarations of interest.

4. Minutes of previous meeting

The draft minutes of the previous meeting held on 9 July 2024 were checked for accuracy and approved. There were no matters arising.

5. Chair's report (verbal update)

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and said that he hoped everyone had enjoyed the summer break.

The Chair reported that since the last meeting in July, the constitutions of AWMSG and its sub-committees have been updated. These documents are currently being circulated for comment and will come to the meeting of AWMSG in October. The AWMSG Constitution will be 'for endorsement' and

the sub-committee constitutions will be 'for information'. The Chair said that nominations have been received for all of the positions on the new AWMSG Scrutiny Panel, and these will be taken to the Steering Committee in September for approval.

The Chair announced that Mrs Alison Hughes has resigned from the Group after serving 12 years on the AWMSG as a member and deputy. He said that Alison's input as Senior Primary Care Pharmacist has been highly valued and she had brought a wealth of experience to the meetings. Ms Rafia Jamil will now step into the main member role, and AWTTTC is seeking a nomination for an alternate from the Directors of Pharmacy Peer Group.

The Chair reported that Dr Sam Cox has resigned as a Hospital Consultant member of AWMSG, due to changes within her team. She had served on the AWMSG for the past 3 years. The Chair said that we appreciate the time and input that members give, and the support from colleagues who nominate individuals and allow their staff to do this important work.

The Chair announced that the New Medicines Group is soon to be replaced by a new committee called the "Licensed One Wales Medicines Assessment Group (LOWMAG)". Existing members of NMG will be given first opportunity to join the LOWMAG so that their expertise can be retained.

AWTTTC is looking for nominations to fill all vacant positions. The Chair asked that if you know of a colleague who has expressed an interest in the work of AWMSG, then please put us in contact with them.

The Chair reported that a meeting of AWMSG's Patient and Public Interest Group was held on 10 July, and that the Group's next meeting will take place on Thursday 12 September. He invited patients, patient organisations, carers and members of the public to register for this event – the details are available on the AWTTTC website.

The Chair reported on a meeting of AWTTTC's Industry Forum, held on 11 July, which focussed on sustainability. Dr Maryam Babba, Project Manager for CIPPA (Circularity in Primary Pharmaceutical Packaging Accelerator), gave an interesting presentation on 'Delivering nationwide solutions for problematic healthcare packaging'. If members were interested to learn more about this, the Chair suggested that they contact AWTTTC.

The Chair said that AWMSG and AWTTTC representatives manned a stand at the National Eisteddfod, held in Pontypridd at the beginning of August, to highlight the importance of medicines safety and to promote the "Your Medicines Your Health" campaign and the Yellow Card Scheme.

Finally, the Chair congratulated AWTTTC on their successful bid to be part of the VPAG Investment Programme, which was announced last week. The programme will involve the development of assessment processes to facilitate greater access to innovative medicines and improved outcomes for patients. It will also lead to greater collaborative working across the four nations of the UK.

The Chair concluded his report, and invited Dr Clare Elliott to present the One Wales re-assessments.

6. One Wales re-assessment:

Infliximab for ICI induced enterocolitis

Dr Clare Elliott stated that no queries had been received from members about the One Wales re-assessment of infliximab. She introduced and summarised the reasons for the re-assessment, the evidence considered by the One Wales Medicines Assessment Group (OWMAG), their discussions and recommendation.

The Chair thanked Dr Elliott and invited comments from members; there were none. The Chair recorded AWMSG's endorsement of OWMAG's recommendation.

7. One Wales re-assessment:

Vedolizumab (Entyvio®) for ICI induced enterocolitis

Dr Clare Elliott stated that no queries had been received from members about the One Wales re-assessment of vedolizumab. She introduced and summarised the reasons for the re-assessment, the evidence considered by OWMAG, their discussions and recommendation.

The Chair thanked Dr Elliott and invited comments from members. One member asked about the timelines and process for reviewing the recommendations, and asked how patient outcomes were collected. Dr Elliott explained the processes of review and data collection.

The Chair asked about the evidence report, which AWMSG members had not seen, and Dr Elliott said that the report would be available on the AWTTTC website when the recommendation was published. Members should contact AWTTTC if they wish to view the evidence report prior to the AWMSG meeting. A question was asked about using BlueTeq to collect the data; it was noted that BlueTeq is already used for One Wales recommended medicines that are commissioned through the NHS Wales Joint Commissioning Committee. It was suggested that using BlueTeq would be useful for other One Wales recommended medicines following the wider roll out of BlueTeq.

There were no further questions or comments, and the Chair reported AWMSG's endorsement of OWMAG's recommendation.

8. Back-up antibiotic prescribing: Good practice guide

Ms Meryl Davies, Lead Antimicrobial Pharmacist at Public Health Wales, joined the meeting. Ms Davies and Dr Katherine Chaplin, presented the guide to back-up antibiotic prescribing and explained the aims of these resources. Ms Davies outlined the history of the document and how it was developed, including the involvement of the AWPAG, and she highlighted the need for the guidance to be implemented across Wales.

The Chair thanked Ms Davies and invited comments from members. A lay member commented on the easy-read patient information leaflet, which would improve the accessibility of the leaflet. They asked if AWTTTC would develop versions of the patient leaflet in languages other than Welsh and

English, and about plans to develop different versions to support people with visual impairment. Mrs Claire Thomas replied that this is something that AWTTTC is looking in to.

The Chair asked Ms Davies to clarify some wording on page 5 of the patient information leaflet; he was happy with the explanation and said there was no need for any changes.

One member asked if the text describing who 'prescribers' are could be changed to mirror the wording in the original leaflet and include more types of prescriber. Ms Davies agreed to change the wording.

The Chair confirmed that AWMSG endorsed the guide and patient leaflets, with the agreed change made. Ms Meryl Davies left the meeting.

9. **National Prescribing Indicators 2023–2024: Analysis of Prescribing Data to March 2024**

Ms Shaila Ahmed introduced the report, and summarised the changes in prescribing. She also highlighted the examples of good practice in prescribing and described other prescribing trends.

Mr Richard Boldero presented the best-value biologics and low value for prescribing data, and how the data showed that changes for both indicators were in line with the intended direction.

Mr Andrew Evans commented on the improvement in reducing tramadol prescribing, and asked for a focus on addressing the increases of prescribing of gabapentinoids in Wales. An AWMSG member said that their health board was trying to address these problems.

Appendix A: Focus on gabapentin and pregabalin

Dr Katherine Chaplin introduced the Appendix A, and described the data showing the prescribing of gabapentin and pregabalin in Wales, and where targets are being achieved.

The Chair commented on the variance in prescribing, and the clear outliers in some health boards, and asked how the data could be used to identify these. Mrs Claire Thomas said that more detailed data were available in SPIRA.

The Chair said that health boards in Wales should be tackling the prescribing of gabapentinoids and that it should be a priority for them. Mrs Claire Thomas said that AWTTTC are currently preparing the indicators for next year, and that gabapentinoids will likely continue to be included and that a discussion at AWPAG might highlight what health boards want to help tackle the problem. She added that AWTTTC is gathering examples of good practice in prescribing and making these available on the AWTTTC website. Mr Andrew Evans said that a task force should be established to tackle the problem. Mrs Claire Thomas and Dr Chaplin said that AWTTTC is starting a project to use SAIL data to look at gabapentinoid prescribing across Wales.

The Chair also asked how prescribing in Wales compared with other countries, such as England, and how other countries tried to manage and

reduce prescribing of gabapentinoids. Dr Chaplin said that prescribing in Wales is slightly higher than in England, and higher than the comparator region of North-East England. Mr Andrew Evans asked how helpful it is to compare with North-East England, because socio-economic deprivation is not a factor in gabapentinoid prescribing. He said it was imperative to do something about the prescribing in Wales.

Dr Chaplin asked for suggestions for the next in-focus report. The Chair asked members to send their suggestions to AWTTTC.

10. NHS Wales inhaler carbon footprint report – May 2024

Mr Richard Boldero presented the report and said the changes shown were in line with NHS Wales decarbonisation strategy. He reminded members that these monthly reports were publicly available on the AWTTTC website.

The Chair invited members to comment. He asked about not meeting the delivery plan target, and whether targets are being revised. Mr Boldero said that the current target was forecasted to be met by late 2027 or early 2028. However, these targets are being reviewed, as they were set before the data were available. Mr Boldero noted that it was positive that these data were continuing to move in the right direction, and significant credit should be given to all health boards in achieving this.

The Chair asked about the carbon footprint of other medicines and if there was a plan to go beyond measuring the carbon footprint of inhalers. Mr Boldero said that there was a need for consistent measurement, which is available for inhalers. He knew of projects to measure the carbon footprint of other medicines, which can be complex to calculate. The Chair mentioned the Medicine Carbon Footprint (MCF) Formulary. Mr Boldero said he had enquired about accessing it, and that MCF were reviewing how they make the data available. He also mentioned that work on nitrous oxide is ongoing.

11. Patient information leaflet – Questions to ask your prescriber about antipsychotic medicines

Dr Paul Deslandes and Dr Katherine Chaplin presented the patient information leaflets, available in English, Welsh and easy read. Dr Deslandes described the background to the project to develop the leaflets, which are intended to be put on the AWTTTC website next week.

Members commented on the length of time taken to produce the leaflets, and the layout of the standard leaflet, suggesting that the questions be put on the left side, to make reading easier. The Chair asked for the layout to be looked at. He also asked if the leaflet had been tested in patients, and said that it should be tested in patients. A member commented that the wording had been tested in patients, but the layout had not, and that this would be useful.

Mr Andrew Evans said that he preferred the easy read version, and asked if the leaflet was aimed at carers as well as patients. He asked how, once a final version had been agreed, the leaflets would be disseminated; he suggested doing a print-run of the leaflets. The Chair agreed that printed leaflets would be useful.

12. Endocrine management of gender incongruence in adults

Dr Thomas Curran presented recently published updates made to the guidance to align with current specifications of commissioned services as determined by NHS Wales Joint Commissioning Committee. The changes were published following approval by AWPAG.

It was suggested that it be made more clear in the document that prescribing of gonadotrophin-releasing hormone treatments requires endorsement with 'SLS'. Dr Curran agreed that this could be taken forward as a further minor update.

13. Minutes of AWPAG Meeting held on 26 June 2024

Mrs Claire Thomas outlined the main points of the minutes of the AWPAG meeting in June. The next AWPAG meeting is on 18 September.

14. Primary care antimicrobial guidelines

Dr Thomas Curran summarised the recently published updates made to the Primary Care Antimicrobial Guidelines, and the reasons for making them. Changes had been made to the monographs for Acute Sore Throat, Acute Cough/Bronchitis, Ophthalmic Shingles, Infectious Diarrhoea and Traveller's Diarrhoea. Prior to publication the updates had been proposed by the All Wales Antimicrobial Guidelines Group and were approved by AWPAG.

The Chair commented that the full document is very comprehensive and it is important to maintain it and keep it up-to-date. Dr Curran said that while these smaller incremental updates would continue, a more significant overarching review of the document is planned for 2026. The Chair asked about the availability of the documents and how GPs would use them in practice, and Dr Curran confirmed that the advice is replicated and primarily accessed via the online Microguide application.

15. Any other business

The Chair raised an item about the National Pharmacogenomics Group (NPGG) which has issued a statement about genotype testing for *CYP2C19* in Wales. *CYP2C19* genotype testing has been recommended by the NICE guidance for prescribing clopidogrel, but this testing is not yet available in Wales.

The NPGG is working with AWTTTC on routes to disseminate pharmacogenomic testing information for prescribers – both while a test is being developed, and for when the test becomes available in Wales. The Chair said that both sets of documents will be brought to the next AWMSG meeting.

The Chair thanked AWMSG members and confirmed the date of the next meeting on Tuesday, 8 October 2024.

Venue: The All Nations Centre, Cardiff.