

Enclosure No:	1/AWMSG/0924
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 Tuesday, 9th July 2024 at
The All Nations Centre, Sachville Avenue, Cardiff, CF14 3NY**

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 Eleri Schiavone	NHS Wales Joint Commissioning Committee	
4. Mr Tommy Price	ABPI (Wales)	6
5. Mrs Claire James	Lay Representative	
6. Mrs Pam James	Lay Representative	
7. Dr Jeremy Black	GP with prescribing lead role	
8. Ms Alison Hughes	Senior Primary Care Pharmacist	
9. Mr James Leaves	Director of Finance	
10. Mr David Fox	Senior Hospital Pharmacist	
11. Mrs Susan Newport	Senior Nurse	
12. Ms Cathy Wynne	Other healthcare professions eligible to prescribe	
13. Dr Alison Thomas	Clinical Pharmacologist	
14. Mr Chris Brown	Chief Pharmacist	

Welsh Government:
Ms Emma Hincks

Medicines value unit:

Mr Mark Francis

AWTTC staff:

Mrs Helen Adams, Senior Pharmacist

Prof James Coulson, NMG Chair

Mrs Rachel Jonas, Medical Writer

Dr Stuart Keeping, Senior Scientist

Ms Rosie Spears, Senior Scientist

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
IR	Independent review
JCC	NHS Wales Joint Commissioning Committee
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.

2. Apologies:

Dr Andy Champion, AWTTC Programme Director

Dr Sam Cox, Hospital Consultant

Prof Iolo Doull, AWMSG Chair

Mr Dylan Jones, Community Pharmacist

Dr Jim McGuigan, Medical Director

Dr Manjeet Singh, Hospital Consultant

Dr Richard Skone, Medical Director

3. Declarations of interest:

The Chair invited declarations of interest. Tommy Price declared a personal specific interest with regards to agenda item 6 in that his employer manufactures a medicine in the same class. The Chair confirmed that Mr Price would not be permitted to participate in the discussion or vote and would be expected to leave the meeting.

4. Minutes of previous meeting

The draft minutes of the previous meeting held on 11th June 2024 were checked for accuracy and approved. It was confirmed that the final version will not contain any comments or tracked changes.

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

The Chair informed members that AWTTTC hosted the Yellow Card Centre Annual Training Day on 25 June 2024 at the Park Plaza and on 2 July AWTTTC welcomed over 120 delegates to the annual Best Practice Day at the All Nations Centre. The feedback from these events was excellent.

The Chair informed members that Professor Doull and representatives from AWTTTC had recently attended the Annual HTAi Conference in Seville. This event provided opportunity to showcase the work of AWMSG and AWTTTC and network with colleagues in other health technology appraisal bodies.

The Chair informed members of documents due to be circulated for consultation and asked that they be shared with colleagues:

- National Prescribing Indicators 2025-2028
- All Wales Medicines Management Guidelines for Integrated Community Based Services
- Prescribing of Branded Generics in Primary Care – Position Statement

6. **Evidence Status Report:**

Cytisine for smoking cessation and reduction of nicotine cravings in smokers who are willing to stop smoking

Tommy Price left the meeting at the start of this agenda item due to a conflict of interest.

The Chair welcomed Chris Emmerson, Consultant in Public Health Wales who assisted AWTTTC with the evidence status report.

The Chair stated AWMSG advice has no impact on the licensed status of the technology and the inherent implications associated with this. A negative recommendation will not impact on the clinical freedom of the prescriber. A positive recommendation by AWMSG, subsequently endorsed by Welsh Government, places an obligation on Health Boards to fund accordingly. AWMSG advice is interim to NICE guidance, should this be subsequently published.

The Chair reminded members not to repeat the detailed discussions held at NMG but to raise any outstanding issues relating to clinical effectiveness and cost-effectiveness. He confirmed the broader remit of AWMSG including consideration of wider societal issues, budget impact and issues relating to equity of access.

The appraisal lead, Dr Stuart Keeping relayed the key aspects of the report. The evidence summary report was directed by the AWMSG Steering Committee to provide guidance to NHS Wales.

Professor James Coulson summarised the discussions held at NMG. He confirmed NMG's recommendation to AWMSG is that cytisine be recommended as an option for use within NHS Wales for smoking cessation and reduction of nicotine cravings in smokers who are willing to stop

smoking.

Members noted that varenicline has currently been removed from the market. Dr Keeping confirmed there are several new licences for generic formulations of varenicline on the MHRA website and due to the published NICE recommendation, it is anticipated it would be introduced via the normal access routes when stock becomes available. There were no list prices available for these generics at the time of the meeting.

Members were informed that the smoking population is becoming more complex; many have struggled with previous treatments and cytisine provides another option. Varenicline was found to be an effective option until its withdrawal and cytisine is expected to benefit the same population. Dr Chris Emmerson highlighted the health inequalities associated with smoking and the complex smoking population which is emerging in Wales.

The licenced duration of cytisine is 25 days, which was noted to be short by members in comparison to other smoking cessation aids. Members discussed the interest in prescribing off-label. Members also discussed the smoking cessation services across Wales and noted there are ongoing discussions to consider dispensing the 25-day course over three events to encourage clients to obtain the full behavioural support offered.

Professor Dyfrig Hughes outlined the cost-effectiveness evidence.

Members discussed the difficulty of calculating the true costs of introducing cytisine due to uncertainty about the comparators and eligible population. Members considered the budget impact scenarios presented in the report. Mrs Claire James provided input from the patient and public perspective and members discussed the significant wider societal benefits associated with smoking cessation.

The Chair concluded discussions and asked observers to leave the room whilst members vote in private. The Chair confirmed that the recommendation will be announced when the meeting re-opens to the public and would be forwarded to Welsh Government for ratification

The following recommendation was subsequently confirmed:

Cytisine is recommended as an option for use within NHS Wales for smoking cessation and reduction of nicotine cravings in smokers who are willing to stop smoking.

An additional note was included to highlight cytisine should normally be prescribed only as part of a programme of behavioural support.

**7. One Wales Assessment:
Nivolumab for the treatment of dMMR/MSI-H gastro-oesophageal cancer.**

Ms Rosie Spears, the assessment lead, gave a summary of the re-assessment of nivolumab monotherapy as a first-line treatment for patients

with deficient mismatch repair (dMMR) / high microsatellite instability (MSI-H) oesophageal and gastric cancer.

Mrs Spears clarified the process and confirmed that no queries had been received with regards to the recommendation or decision rationale prior to the meeting. Members agreed that the decision-making process had been robust and consistent. The Chair asked members to seek clarification of any outstanding issues.

It was noted that the introduction of the Covid guidelines had permitted the interim use of nivolumab as monotherapy without combination treatment with chemotherapy and, following the removal of this guidance, access to treatment would be via individual patient funding requests (IPFRs). Mrs Woodland explained why it was not possible to confirm how many patients had received treatment via an IPFR. A query was raised regarding licensing and Mrs Woodland confirmed this is an off-label indication. No further questions were raised.

The Chair concluded the discussion and confirmed AWMSG's endorsement of the recommendation made by One Wales Medicines Assessment Group.

8. Any other business

There was no other business.

The Chair confirmed the date of the next meeting on Wednesday 11th September 2024. Venue: Cyncoed Campus, Cardiff Met University.



Dyfrig Hughes
11 July 2024