

All Wales Medicines Strategy Group

Annual Report 2022–2023

*“Supporting prudent prescribing to obtain the best
outcomes from medicines for patients in Wales”*



*This document is available in Welsh
Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg*



YEAR
ANNIVERSARY

Contents

Chair's welcome	03
Milestones reached this year	05
2022–2023 in numbers	05
Profile of AWMSG	06
Top news stories	06
Celebrating 20 years of AWMSG	07
Delivering the recommendations of AWMSG's five-year strategy 2018–2023	11

Working in partnership	14
Involving patients and the public	15
Involving healthcare professionals	17
Involving the pharmaceutical industry	19

News	21
Latest collaboration in health technology assessment	21
New guide for collaborative working between NHS organisations, primary care contractors and pharmaceutical industry	23
Access to precision medicines and advanced therapies	24
A national biosimilar medicines strategy for Wales	25
Value-based prescribing	27
AWMSG and sustainability	28
AWMSG Training Day	30
Patient and Public Interest Group meetings	31
Best Practice Day – Environmental impact of medicines	32
Industry Open Days	34
Learning at Lunch	35

Spotlight on AW TTC	36
Research activities	36
The One Wales Medicines process	37
Kath Haines and Karen Samuels retire	38

Medicines optimisation	39
Prescribing guidance and resources	39
Acknowledged resources	41
Prescribing monitoring and analysis	42
National Prescribing Indicators	42

Health Technology Assessment	44
New medicines advice issued between April 2022 and March 2023	44
The changing medicines access landscape	45
Wales Patient Access Scheme	46

Membership	48
AWMSG	48
AWPAG	49
NMG	50

Chair's welcome



Professor Iolo Doull
AWMSG Chair

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Iolo Doull', written on a white background.

The last year has seen the NHS in Wales face unprecedented pressures. The need for independent expert advice on medicines to enable people to achieve the best possible health outcomes has arguably never been greater. Ensuring that NHS Wales gets the best value from its investment in medicines became both difficult but also important with more people taking more medicines. Despite these challenges, the All Wales Medicines Strategy Group (AWMSG) continued its role in advising Welsh Government on the best use of medicines, working collaboratively with key partners. This report highlights the guidance

and resources produced to assist healthcare professionals to inform discussions and decisions about medicines.

Across the NHS, demand for high-cost disease modifying medicines is increasing year on year. The competition in the biological medicines market, brought about by the entry of biosimilar medicines, has stimulated innovation and has encouraged manufacturers to increase the value of their offer to the NHS. Early adoption and widespread use of biological medicines offering improved value to the NHS can free up resources so that many more patients benefit from reinvestment in services and improved access to newer innovative therapies. AWMSG has published a multifaceted strategy that sets out the ten steps the NHS and its partners in Wales will take to support the conditions needed to create a strong, competitive biological and biosimilar medicines' market in the UK. This will benefit the NHS, patients and the economy of Wales. There is a need to understand the barriers or unintended consequences of switching people to a biosimilar medicine, and AWMSG will be exploring this in more detail. When people take a high number of medications there is an increased risk of harm and hospitalisation. The World Health Organization (WHO) describes polypharmacy

**"by working
together we will
achieve much more."**

as a major global problem and has set a global safety challenge to avoid medicine-related harm. Working with the All Wales Prescribing Advisory Group, the Care of the Elderly Team in Swansea Bay University Health Board developed guidance to support medicines optimisation in older patients who may be subject to inappropriate polypharmacy; the updated guidance was welcomed by AWMSG in March and the document has subsequently been published and is now available to prescribers.

In November 2022, AWMSG celebrated its 20th Anniversary at Cardiff City Stadium. We were thrilled that our Health Minister, Eluned Morgan, started the day off in person by welcoming everyone and acknowledging the work and support of AWMSG in advising Welsh Government. It was a fabulous day of interesting speakers and presentations, and gave us the opportunity to remember our late colleague Nicola Wheatley while reflecting on how far we've come in 20 years. It also gave the opportunity to look to the future and visualise where we want to be in the next 20 years. The day was memorable and the message clear – by working together we will achieve much more. You can read all about the conference on pages [7 to 10](#).

AWMSG is made up of NHS consultants, GPs, nurses, pharmacists, health economists, pharmaceutical industry representatives and lay members who combine their expertise and knowledge to agree on the best use of medicines. There is broad geographical and professional representation on both AWMSG

“I very much value the commitment of all of the dedicated members on our groups and appreciate that health boards continue to allow their staff time to do this important work.”

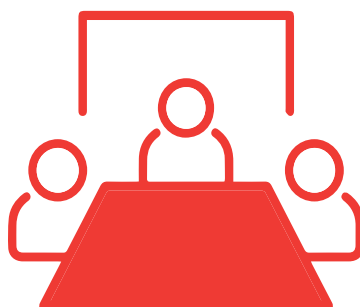
and the sub-committees. I very much value the commitment of all of the dedicated members on our groups and appreciate that health boards continue to allow their staff time to do this important work.

Finally, I would like to make special mention of Kath Haines and Karen Samuels, both of whom retired in 2023 after working for AWTTTC for more than fifteen years. During my time as Chair I have valued their judgement, guidance and enthusiasm for improving access to clinically effective and cost-effective medicines. I wish them both well in their retirement.

Milestones reached this year



20 years

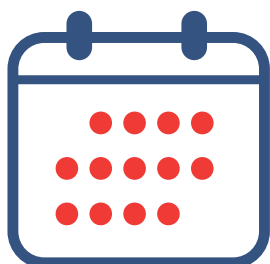


141 AWMMSG meetings



441 appraisals

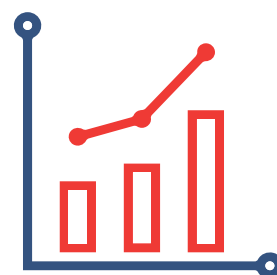
2022–2023 in numbers



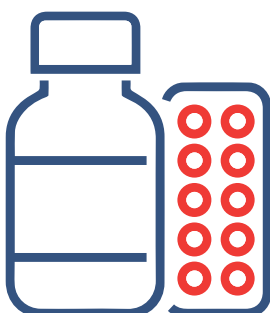
9 meetings held
([see page 6](#))



8 medicines
optimisation
publications
([see page 39](#))



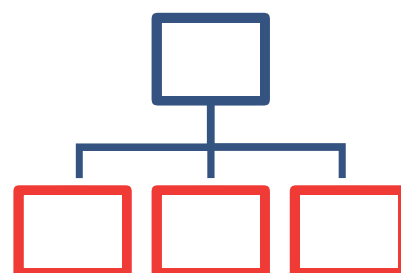
14 National Prescribing
Indicators monitored
([see page 42](#))



17 medicines
appraised
([see page 44](#))



100% positive
appraisals
([see page 44](#))



3 Wales Patient
Access Schemes
processed
([see page 46](#))

Profile of AWMSG

Our vision for Wales – “Achieve the best outcomes from medicines for the people of Wales”

Name:

All Wales Medicines Strategy Group (AWMSG)

Chair:

Professor Iolo Doull

Established:

2002

Role:

To advise Welsh Government on strategic developments in prescribing as outlined in the AWMSG five-year strategy

Accreditation:

AWMSG's health technology assessment process is accredited by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE)

Subgroups:

The New Medicines Group (NMG) and the All Wales Prescribing Advisory Group (AWPAG)

Members:

Doctors, nurses, pharmacists, academics, health economists, a pharmaceutical industry representative, a professional allied to medicine, lay members and a Director of Finance. See [page 48](#) for individual members.

Organisational:

The AWMSG Steering Committee provides oversight and guidance on strategic initiatives, and the All Wales Therapeutics and Toxicology Centre (AWTTC) provides scientific, technical and administrative secretariat support

Meetings:

9 meetings held in 2022–2023 open to the public for observation

More information:

awttc.nhs.wales (English website)

cttcg.gig.cymru (Welsh website)

[@AWTTComms](https://twitter.com/AWTTComms) (English Twitter account)

[@AWTTCcymraeg](https://twitter.com/AWTTCcymraeg) (Welsh Twitter account)

Top news stories

Celebrating 20 years of AWMSG

A host of speakers, delegates and staff came together to celebrate 20 years of AWMSG, highlighting the positive impact of their work ([see page 7](#))

Delivering the recommendations of AWMSG's five-year strategy

A summary of work undertaken to deliver the recommendations of the AWMSG's Medicine Strategy for Wales 2018-2023 ([see page 11](#))

A national biosimilar medicines strategy for Wales

AWMSG endorsed a biosimilar strategy that supports the safe, effective and consistent use of all biological medicines in Wales, including biosimilar medicines ([see page 25](#))

AWMSG and sustainability

An update on AWTTC's and AWMSG's commitment to sustainability over the past year ([see page 28](#))

Celebrating 20 years of AWMSG

In November 2022, a host of speakers, delegates and staff came together to celebrate 20 years of AWMSG. AWMSG provides advice to Welsh Government on strategic developments in prescribing as outlined in the AWMSG strategy.

During the conference, a wide range of speakers shared their experiences of working with AWMSG and highlighted the positive impact of their work.



The Chair of AWMSG, Professor Iolo Doull, opened the day and reflected on the achievements of the last 20 years, including advising on more than 420 medicines. Wales' Health Minister Eluned Morgan, congratulated the organisation on their anniversary and complimented their work in helping to make medicines available to patients in Wales. Professor Phil Routledge, founder of AWMSG and AWTTTC, presented on 'Effectiveness and efficiency: 20 years of AWMSG' and recounted his passion for the organisation.

Other speakers gave insightful and motivating presentations about their work and involvement with AWMSG. They included: Meindert Boysen, Head of International



Affairs at the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence; Dr June Raine, Chief Executive of the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency; Sophie Howe, the Future Generations Commissioner for Wales; Dr Richard Torbett, Chief Executive of the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry; and Professor Dyfrig Hughes, Chair of the National Pharmacogenomics Group.

Jermaine Harris gave an uplifting and passionate speech about the impact of medicines on his son Fraizer, who was diagnosed with cystic fibrosis at just over three weeks old.

AWTTC staff also remembered their talented, much-loved and missed colleague Nicola Wheatley. Dr Laurence Gray, Director of the National Poisons Information Service, paid a heartfelt and touching tribute to Nicola for her outstanding achievements and dedication to Toxicology.

The day was well run and engaging. It was great to be a part of the 20th anniversary celebrations!



“

I enjoyed the whole day it exceeded my expectations. The surprise performance from Only Men Aloud was a great end to the day. It truly was a celebration.

”



360+ publications since 2006: books, journal articles, conference posters and talks



“

Congratulations to all those involved in the organisation. Great day - excellent location - fascinating presentations. Could ask for no more.

”





dashboard created to help visualise reductions in the carbon footprint associated with the use of inhalers in primary care.

The conference ended with a surprise performance from Only Men Aloud, who sang some classic Welsh hymns. Professor Iolo Doull closed the day by giving us a chance to look forward to the next 20 years and what we could achieve in the future.

See [videos of the presentations on the AWTTTC website.](#)



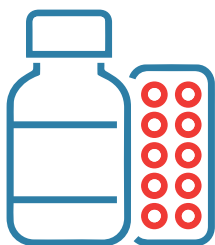
Good to see the great work the group have done over the past 20 years. The personal stories that were shared were fantastic

Excellent venue, excellent talks/itinerary, excellent hosts/speakers, you have done Wales proud!



Posters and videos were available for delegates to view and learn more about the work of AWMSG. Delegates were also given the opportunity to talk to AWTTTC staff about more recent initiatives, with a hands-on demonstration of the interactive data

20 years of quick and fair access to medicines



420+ medicines
appraised



375+ medicines
recommended

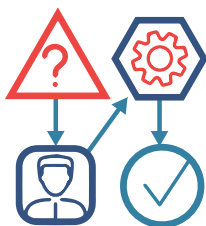


790+ pieces of
advice published

20 years of medicines optimisation and safety



135+ AWMMSG
endorsed resources



Medicines
Optimisation
Framework
published in 2021



7 data dashboards
hosted on SPIRA



40+ National
Prescribing
Indicator reports



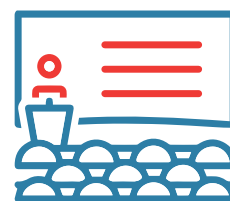
Therapeutic update
sessions launched
in 2022



30+ Patient
information leaflets
endorsed by AWMMSG



75+ AWPAG
meetings held



8 Best
Practice Days

Delivering the recommendations of AWMMSG's five-year strategy 2018–2023

AWMSG's medicines strategy for Wales for 2018–2023 identified four priority areas where AWMMSG would focus its work.

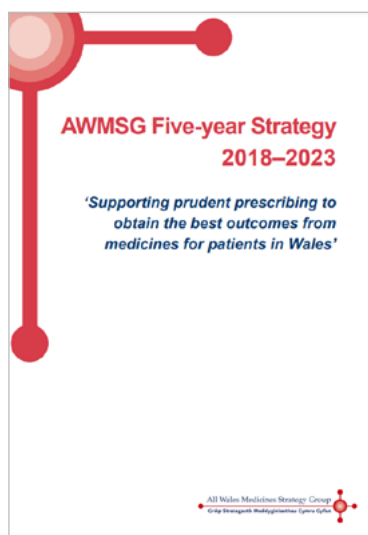
1. Achieve health and wellbeing with the public, patients and professionals as equal partners through co-production.
2. Care for those with the greatest health need first, making the most effective use of all skills and resources.
3. Do only what is needed, no more, no less; and do no harm.
4. Reduce inappropriate variation using evidence-based practices consistently and transparently.

AWMSG set out recommendations for each area and identified outcomes to help successfully deliver its strategic goals. The table below gives an update on the recent work (April 2022 to March 2023) of AWMMSG and its partners to implement the recommendations.

Task	Type	Strategy recommendation
Value-based prescribing – Strategy	Strategy	3.6 Resource reallocation 4.3 Improving prescribing and medicines optimisation within NHS Wales
Value-based prescribing – Biological medicines for severe uncontrolled asthma	Medicines optimisation resource	2.1 Workforce development 4.3 Improving prescribing and medicines optimisation within NHS Wales
Care home medicines optimisation toolkit	Medicines optimisation resource	2.1 Workforce development 3.2 Medication review 3.4 Medicine-related harm 4.3 Improving prescribing and medicines optimisation within NHS Wales
Tramadol educational resources – Patient information leaflets	Medicines optimisation resource	1.1 Partnership with the public 3.4 Medicine-related harm
All Wales guidance for prescribing intervals	Medicines optimisation resource	2.1 Workforce development 4.3 Improving prescribing and medicines optimisation within NHS Wales
Resources for pharmacological management of pain	Medicines optimisation resource	2.1 Workforce development 3.4 Medicine-related harm 4.3 Improving prescribing and medicines optimisation within NHS Wales
Maximising the opportunity presented by biosimilar medicines – A national strategy for Wales	Strategy	3.6 Resource reallocation 4.3 Improving prescribing and medicines optimisation within NHS Wales

Task	Type	Strategy recommendation
Polypharmacy in older people: A guide for healthcare professionals	Medicines optimisation resource	2.1 Workforce development 3.2 Medication review 3.4 Medicine-related harm 4.3 Improving prescribing and medicines optimisation within NHS Wales
National Prescribing Indicators (NPIs) 2022-2023: Quarterly reports	Report	3.4 Medicine-related harm 4.3 Improving prescribing and medicines optimisation within NHS Wales 4.5 National Prescribing Indicators 4.8 Using data to improve patient outcomes
AWMSG Acknowledgement: Antibiotic Review Kit (ARK) Hospital Medication Record	Medicines optimisation resource (Acknowledgement)	2.1 Workforce development 3.3 National prescribing and administration chart 3.4 Medicine-related harm 4.3 Improving prescribing and medicines optimisation within NHS Wales
NHS Wales inhaler carbon footprint reports	Report	4.5 National Prescribing Indicators
AWMSG and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act	Report	1.1 Partnership with the public 1.3 Ensuring fair and equitable provision of healthcare
Learning at Lunch: Rapid Therapeutic Updates	Virtual training sessions	2.1 Workforce development
Updated process for reviewing orphan and ultra-orphan medicines and medicines developed specifically for rare diseases	Process update	4.6 Ensuring the appraisal process is reviewed and meets the developing needs of NHS Wales
Implementation of Equality and Health Impact Assessment (EqHIA) forms for AWMSG projects and policies	Process update	1.1 Partnership with the public 1.3 Ensuring fair and equitable provision of healthcare
Guide to collaborative working between NHS organisations, primary care contractors and pharmaceutical industry	Resource	2.1 Workforce development 4.3 Improving prescribing and medicines optimisation within NHS Wales
Update to AWMSG recommendations review process including publication of new static list	Process update	4.6 Ensuring the appraisal process is reviewed and meets the developing needs of NHS Wales
Review of the Free Medicines Supply process	Process update	1.3 Ensuring fair and equitable provision of healthcare 4.2 Nationally available medicines list

The past five years



AWMSG's work programme for 2018–2023 covered a wide range of topics. You can read our [previous annual reports](#) for summaries of this work. Many of the projects were developed by AWTTTC in collaboration with partners; some highlights are listed below.

- Enabled health boards in Wales to access and monitor their prescribing information, set targets and improve their prescribing performance by continuing to develop the Server for Prescribing Information Reporting and Analysis NPI dashboards.
- Developed and endorsed the National Patient Safety Indicators.
- Increased the lay membership on AWMSG and its sub-committees to strengthen the patient and public voice.
- Introduced a virtual format for Patient and Public Interest Group meetings, resulting in a 95% increase in the number of registrations.

- Supported the development of the Common Ailment Scheme formulary as part of the Choose Pharmacy system.
- Developed and endorsed NPIs that have increased the reporting rates of adverse drug reactions from GPs in Wales; Yellow Card Centre Wales achieved the highest reporting rates of all the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency regional monitoring centres in the UK.
- Delivered the Invest to Save project, Maximising Opportunities from Patient Access Schemes; identifying savings of approximately £3.4 million, of which 97% was recouped by NHS Wales.
- Launched the inhaler decarbonisation dashboard, to measure the potential carbon footprint of inhalers supplied in primary care in Wales.

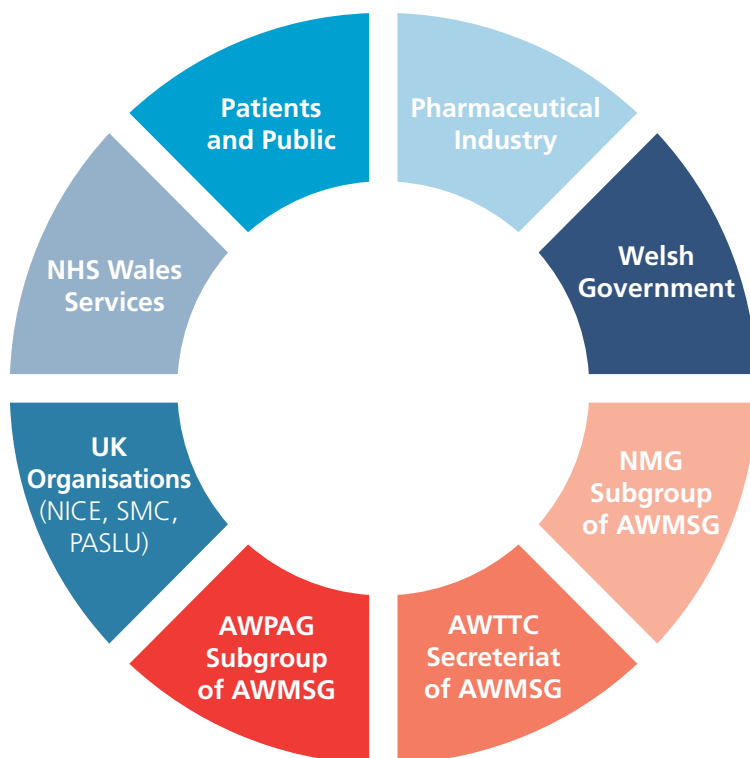
Looking forward

Over the past five years, AWMSG has benefitted significantly from valuable collaborations with external stakeholders and partner organisations. With this strong foundation of working in partnership, AWMSG is in an ideal position to define a new 'AWMSG medicines strategy for 2023–2028'.

The new strategy will present a focused set of objectives and set clear expectations for what AWMSG views as the priorities related to medicines access and improving patient outcomes from medicines across NHS Wales. Keep an eye on the [AWTTTC website](#) for the new five-year strategy, to be published in Autumn 2023.

Working in partnership

AWMSG works with patients and the public, healthcare professionals and representatives of the pharmaceutical industry, as well as Welsh Government and relevant UK organisations, to issue recommendations on new medicines, and guidance on optimising medicines use.



In the next few pages we introduce our three key partners:

- patients and the public;
- healthcare professionals; and
- the pharmaceutical industry.

We summarise how each has been involved in the work of AWMSG and what we have achieved together over the past year.

In this report we use icons to represent each partner, to highlight the news stories relevant to that partner.

Look out for these icons for stories you might be interested in.



Patients and the public

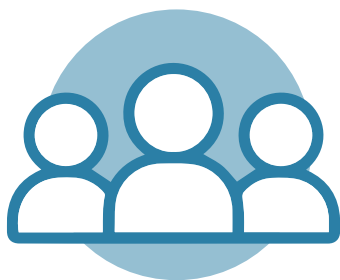


Healthcare professionals



Pharmaceutical industry

Involving patients and the public



Patient and Public Interest Group

Our Patient and Public Interest Group (PAPIG) was set up to help AWMSG involve patients and patient organisations in our work. We hold regular PAPIG meetings for anyone interested in our work – your input is vital. Everyone is welcome to join – [find out more about PAPIG on the AWTTTC website](#).

Patient and carer views about new medicines

AWMSG asks for views from patients, and their families and carers, during all its medicine assessments. AWMSG's committee members consider these views when making their recommendations.

The AWTTTC website has more information on [how to submit your views and the medicines currently undergoing AWMSG assessment](#).

Patient and public consultation responses

AWMSG encourages patients, their families and carers, and the general public to take part in its consultations when we develop resources about the best use of medicines. We consider every response and address them all before the resource is finalised, endorsed and published.

On the AWTTTC website you can read more on [how to comment on consultations that are currently open](#).

Lay members of our committees

Lay members are full voting members of AWMSG and its subgroups: the New Medicines Group and the All Wales Prescribing Advisory Group. The lay members present all views received from patients, their families and carers, and the general public of Wales. AWMSG and its subgroups each have two lay members.

Find out more about [lay member opportunities and register your interest](#) on the AWTTTC website.

Website and social media

The AWTTTC website and Twitter channel are two important ways we communicate with our stakeholders.

Visit our website at awttc.nhs.wales and cttcg.gig.cymru and follow us on Twitter at [@AWTTTCcomms](https://twitter.com/AWTTTCcomms) and [@AWTTTCcymraeg](https://twitter.com/AWTTTCcymraeg).

AWMSG meetings

AWMSG meetings are open to the public. We publish the [minutes of previous meetings and dates of future ones](#) on the AWTTTC website.

2 PAPIG meetings

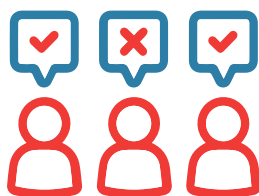


14 speakers



68 attendees

31 submissions received from individual patients and patient organisations for 17 medicines assessments

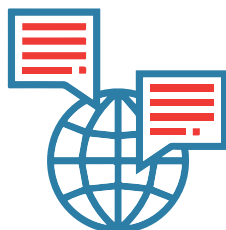


6 consultations

7 responses from patients, public or representatives of patient charities

144,000

separate website visits



77,000

users viewing 4 pages per visit on average

40,076

tweet impressions



>25,000

profile visits

2 lay members on each committee



9 AWMMSG meetings

Involving healthcare professionals



Committees

The members of AWMSG and its subgroups come from a range of different healthcare professions from all areas of Wales. If you would like to volunteer to join, please email awttc@wales.nhs.uk.

Project proposals

Healthcare professionals working in Wales can propose a project to bring their work through AWMSG's robust endorsement process, which includes consultation with key stakeholders.

Consultations

AWMSG produces prescribing guidance and other medicines optimisation resources to help patients and healthcare professionals. Contact AWTTTC to comment on these resources or visit the [consultations page](#) on the AWTTTC website.

Sharing best practice

AWTTTC hosts Best Practice Days to give healthcare professionals in Wales a chance to share local initiatives that had positive outcomes for people. Read about the Best Practice Day held in July 2022, and future Best Practice Days, on the [AWTTTC website](#).

In October 2022, AWTTTC launched '[Learning at lunch](#)': a series of virtual training sessions for a range of healthcare professionals. The sessions included updates on therapeutic areas, a round-up of national prescribing news, and changes in clinical practice.

Clinical experts

We encourage any clinicians to contact AWTTTC to find out more about AWMSG's work and [ways that you can get involved](#). Contact AWTTTC if you want to get involved in horizon scanning, medicines optimisation projects and improving access to medicines.

One Wales medicines process

Clinicians can ask for a medicine to be considered for the One Wales process by completing a [medicine request form](#).

Collaboration with clinical networks

AWTTTC presented at the Royal College of General Practitioners Wales' webinar in April 2022, in association with Greener Practice Wales, focusing on sustainable primary care. Topics included the eco-inhaler launch and guidelines, the primary care carbon calculator, and AWTTTC's dashboard to measure the carbon footprint of inhalers in primary care in Wales.

AWTTTC strengthened its links with the Welsh Cancer Network, including collaborating with the Medicines Management and horizon scanning cancer subgroups and promoting the latest guidance endorsed by AWMSG as well as other resources relevant for Wales.

Examples of collaborations include working with the:

- Welsh Health Specialised Services Committee to provide Advanced Therapy Medicinal Products information;
- All Wales Genomics Oncology Group to develop an All Wales horizon scanning process for haemato-oncology and precision medicines to treat solid tumours;
- All Wales Antimicrobial Pharmacist Group; and
- Respiratory Health Implementation Group.

Healthcare professionals on our committees:

11

AWMSG

11

NMG

17

AWPAG



6

medicines
optimisation
consultations

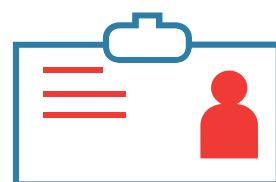
81

consultation
responses



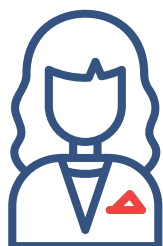
1

Best
Practice
Day



93

attendees



27

clinical experts involved
in health technology
assessments



8

clinical experts

+



6

expert groups

involved in developing medicines
optimisation resources

Involving the pharmaceutical industry



AWTTC Industry Forum

The AWTTC Industry Forum (AIF), formerly known as the Therapeutic Development Assessment Partnership Group, provides a forum for representatives from the pharmaceutical industry (comprising the Association of British Pharmaceutical Industry [ABPI Cymru Wales], and the Ethical Medicines Industry Group [EMIG]) to meet with staff from AWTTC to discuss issues relating to medicines access in Wales. Topics covered include:

- improvements relating to the AWMSG health technology assessment process (HTA);
- monitoring the adoption of medicines approved for use within NHS Wales; and
- other areas of shared interest, such as prescribing guidance, audits and best practice projects.

Horizon scanning for new medicines

AWTTC's horizon scanning team gathers information on new medicines, indications and formulations in the pharmaceutical pipeline. [UK PharmaScan](#) is the team's primary source of information. [Find out more about horizon scanning](#) on the AWTTC website.

Early engagement for commercial arrangements

Companies are encouraged to engage early with AWTTC's Commercial Medicines Access Team to ensure equitable and timely access for patients in Wales to medicines that are associated with a commercial arrangement.

Medicine appraisals

Companies are encouraged to engage in AWMSG's appraisal process as soon as regulatory submission timelines are confirmed. AWTTC will confirm if a medicine meets the AWMSG criteria for appraisal. If it does, pharmaceutical companies are invited to take part in an AWMSG meeting. [Information on the appraisal process](#) is on the AWTTC website.

Consultations on medicines optimisation resources

[Visit our consultations page](#) on the AWTTC website to read the documents and give us feedback.

Industry Open Days

At our Industry Open Days, held in June and November 2022, pharmaceutical companies had the opportunity to meet representatives from AWMSG and AWTTC and to learn more about our work. Access content from [previous Industry Open Days](#) and [find out the dates of future ones](#) on the AWTTC website.

AWMSG meetings

AWMSG meetings are open to the public. We publish the [minutes of previous meetings and dates of future ones](#) on the AWTTC website.



4 Industry
Forum
meetings



119
new medicines/
indications identified

6 consultations



110

responses from
pharmaceutical
industry

24

medicines
considered
for AWMMSG
appraisal

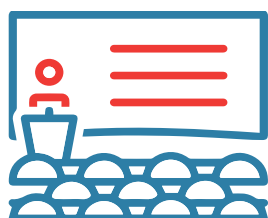
2 Open
Days



7 topics

17

appraisals



12 speakers



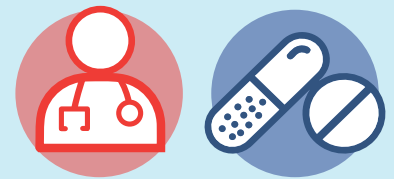
95 attendees



9 AWMMSG
meetings

News

Latest collaboration in health technology assessment



Who do we work with in Wales?

AWMSG appraises medicines for use in NHS Wales, supported by AW TTC. Health Technology Wales (HTW) assesses non-medicine health technologies, such as medical devices. AW TTC and HTW have collaborated on health technology assessment (HTA) since 2020, when they agreed a Memorandum of Understanding. The agreement promoted sharing expertise and access to networks of experts.

The AW TTC–HTW partnership has benefited from two-way peer reviews and quality assurance processes, which have supported appraisal work. The partnership was renewed in October 2022, showing the commitment of both organisations to work together to improve quality in HTA in Wales.

Who do we work with in the UK?

AW TTC has an established partnership with the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE). NICE's HTA guidance applies in England and in Wales. A Memorandum of Understanding between AW TTC and NICE underpins their collaboration and aims to join up strategic planning, development and delivery of HTA guidance in England and Wales. The agreement also ensures that HTA processes align between the two organisations and that the needs of patients in NHS Wales are represented.



Aligning AWMSG's HTA methods with those of NICE allows seamless application of NICE guidance in Wales and a consistent approach to assessing medicines in England and Wales. After NICE updated its HTA methods and processes in 2022, AWTTTC reviewed and updated AWMSG's appraisal methods and processes to include [a new policy for appraising medicines to treat severe conditions](#). AWTTTC also updated [AWMSG's policy for appraising medicines developed to treat very rare diseases](#).

AWTTTC continues to input into national workstreams connected to COVID-19 and is involved in NICE's multiple technology assessment of COVID-19 therapies.

Who do we work with internationally?

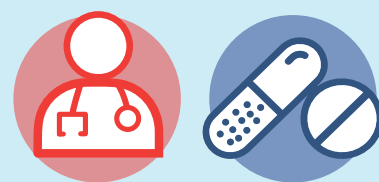
AWTTTC is a partner in the [Innovative Licensing and Access Pathway \(ILAP\)](#), which aims to accelerate a medicine's time to market and to facilitate patients' access to medicines. The ILAP is open to commercial and non-commercial developers of medicines, based anywhere in the world. It comprises an Innovation Passport designation and a Target Development Profile, and access to a toolkit to support all stages of the design, development and approval process.

An increased willingness to collaborate on shared challenges has led to six HTA bodies on three continents joining forces to benefit people accessing healthcare around the world in the [AUS-CAN-UK Collaboration Arrangement](#). AWTTTC is representing NHS Wales on this international platform, helping to drive the first five priority areas:

- COVID-19;
- future-proofing HTA systems;
- collaborating with regulators;
- work-sharing and efficiency gains; and
- digital and artificial intelligence.



New guide for collaborative working between NHS organisations, primary care contractors and pharmaceutical industry



AWMSG updated its guidance on collaborative working. This sets out the requirements and key considerations for successful collaborations between NHS Wales, primary care contractors and the pharmaceutical industry, and it replaces the previous partnership working document.

Collaborative working, in this guidance, refers to pharmaceutical companies working with NHS organisations, including Primary Care Clusters and Community Interest Companies, on initiatives that enhance patient care or benefit patients or the NHS and, as a minimum, maintain patient care.

“Successful collaborative working must ensure there is trust and reasonable contact between those working together”

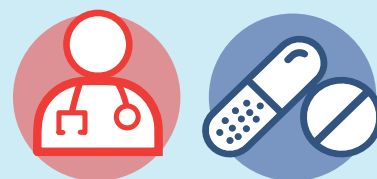
Members of the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI) should comply with the [ABPI Code of Practice](#) when undertaking collaborative arrangements; as should other pharmaceutical companies who abide by the ABPI Code of Practice. ABPI Cymru Wales and the Welsh NHS Confederation have developed [a collaborative working and joint working toolkit for industry and NHS Wales](#). The toolkit takes into consideration the five core values of NHS Wales. NHS employers and primary care contractors who are involved in a collaborative or joint working project should follow relevant legislation and appropriate professional codes of conduct.

Successful collaborative working must ensure there is trust and reasonable contact between those working together, whether from NHS Wales or from the pharmaceutical industry. Such relationships, if properly managed, may mutually benefit the organisations involved.

You can view the guide on the [AWTTC website](#).



Access to precision medicines and advanced therapies

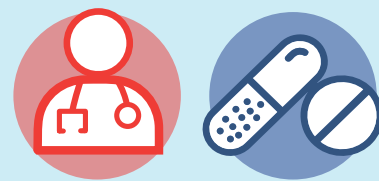


AWTTC's horizon scanning team collaborated with the All Wales Genomics Oncology Group (AWGOG) to support patient access to precision medicines to treat cancer. This work builds on AWTTC's horizon scanning work and links with the Wales Cancer Network Systemic Anti-Cancer Therapies Group. An agreement between AWGOG and AWTTC was established to formalise the arrangements for sharing information. In the first set of data, 22 cancer medicines that require a genomic test were identified in the NICE appraisal workplan (in progress or awaiting development).

The Welsh Health Specialised Services Committee (WHSSC) currently commissions all advanced therapy medicinal products (ATMPs) in Wales. AWTTC continues to inform WHSSC and other key stakeholders about ATMPs in the pipeline, to support the planning and implementation of these therapies in Wales. Two reports have been provided, detailing over 140 cell-, gene- and tissue-engineered therapies in development.



A national biosimilar medicines strategy for Wales



AWMSG endorsed a [biosimilar strategy](#) in January 2023. The strategy supports the safe, effective and consistent use of all biological medicines in Wales, including biosimilar medicines.

Biological medicines

The use of biological medicines is now widespread in the NHS and demand is increasing. Biological medicines are challenging and expensive to develop. Many of the earliest biological medicines (reference medicines) have since lost their patent protection and this means that cheaper, biosimilar versions of those medicines are now available.

Competition in the biological medicines market, caused by the entry of biosimilar medicines, stimulates innovation and encourages all manufacturers to increase the value they offer to the NHS. Costs in secondary care have increased by £100 million over the past six years. This was fuelled by wider use of high-cost medicines, including biological medicines. In 2021-2022, 16 of the top 25 medicines by spend in secondary care in Wales were biological medicines. Their combined cost was approximately £120 million.

AWMSG's biosimilar strategy

The strategy sets out the steps that AWTTTC, NHS Wales and its partners will take to support the conditions needed to create a strong market for biological and biosimilar medicines, which:

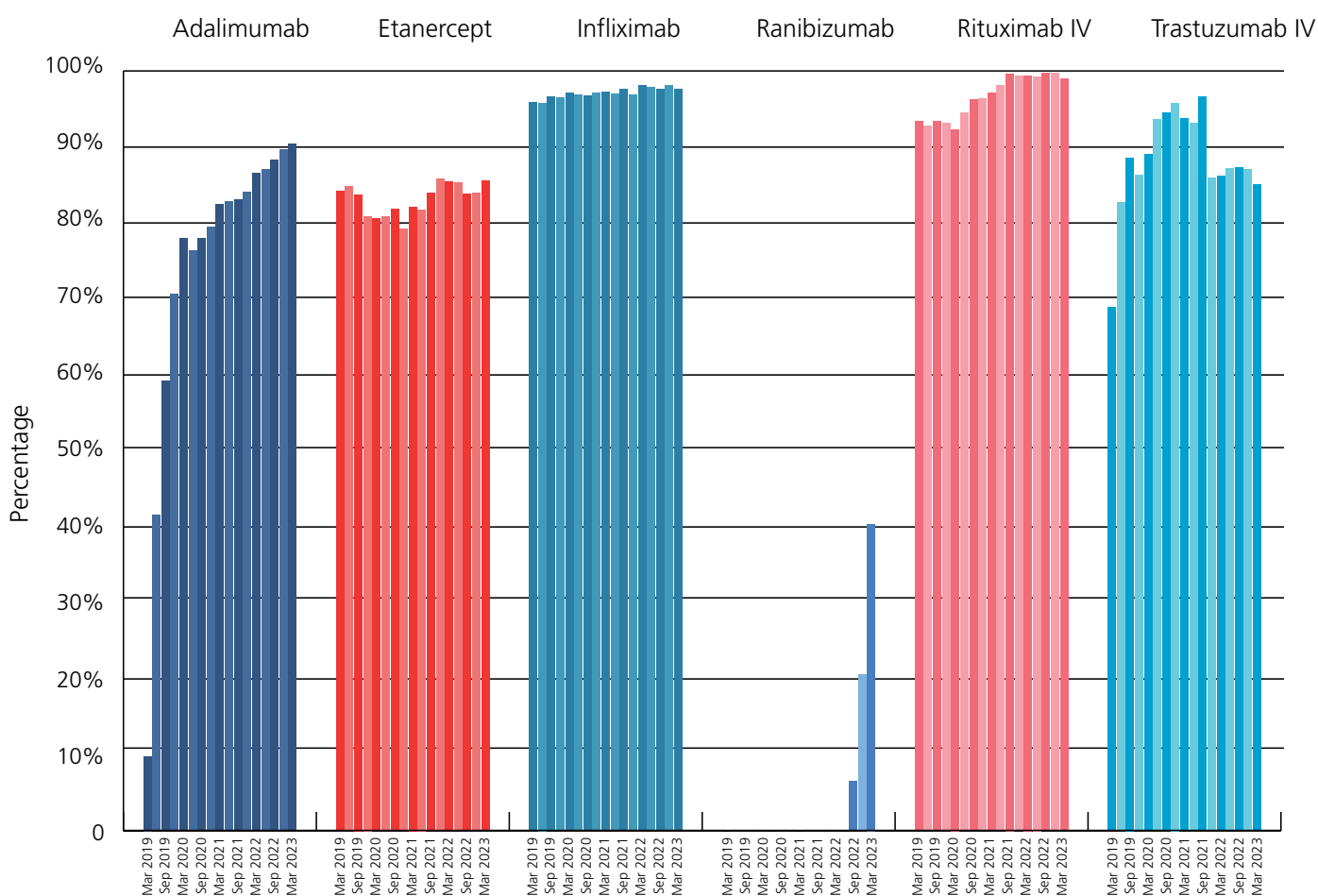
- drives commercial competition;
- lowers prices; and
- offers a greater choice of affordable biological medicines.

Using new biosimilar medicines that offer better value to the NHS, as soon as possible, will free up resources. This means that more people will benefit from the reinvestment in services and improved access to innovative medicines. AWTTTC will play an active role in facilitating and supporting the key actions identified in the biosimilar strategy.

Prescribing of biosimilars in Wales

National Prescribing Indicators will continue to measure the uptake of best-value biological medicines (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Prescribing in Wales of biosimilar medicines as a percentage of total prescribing ('reference' medicine plus biosimilar medicine) of six widely used biological medicines



For five of the biological medicines shown, biosimilar medicines accounted for 80–100% of all prescriptions. A biosimilar version of ranibizumab only became available in May 2022. AWTTTC will monitor and report the use of new biosimilar medicines as they start to be prescribed in NHS Wales.

Value-based prescribing



AWMSG encourages the prescribing of medicines that offer the best health outcomes to improve the quality of life for patients in Wales. The value-based prescribing programme aims to optimise the use of medicines to deliver increased value, and the associated [value-based prescribing strategy](#) document sets out the background, structure and approach of the proposed work within the programme.

The value-based prescribing programme incorporates the AWMSG-endorsed [low value for prescribing](#) work, and takes a wider focus. It covers prescribing in all of NHS Wales, including:

- medicines stated in 'All Wales' treatment pathways;
- recent innovations and new 'game-changing' medicines; and
- medicines that align with Welsh Government's action to 'drive a community- based model of healthcare delivery'.

Medicines included in the value-based prescribing programme are grouped into five areas:

1. optimal prescribing for increased patient safety;
2. optimal prescribing for increased efficiency;
3. optimal prescribing for higher health gain;
4. optimal prescribing for environmental benefit; and
5. optimal prescribing for increased equity.

One of the new areas is 'optimal prescribing for higher health gain'. This is intended for medicines that can have a considerable benefit on the health of individual patients or populations of patients.

Biological medicines to treat asthma

The first medicines to be included in the value-based prescribing programme, in the 'higher health gain' area, are [biological medicines to treat severe uncontrolled asthma](#). AWMSG [guidelines](#) place treatment with biological medicines towards the end of the treatment pathway for severe, difficult-to-treat asthma. However, these medicines are currently underused. In Wales, estimates suggest that only around 20% of eligible patients receive biological medicines. AWMSG recommends that patients with severe uncontrolled asthma should be reviewed for suitability for treatment with biological medicines, if appropriate.

Data for the 'low value for prescribing' work, which forms part of the value-based prescribing programme is available through the [Server for Prescribing Information Reporting and Analysis \(SPIRA\)](#).



AWMSG and sustainability



AWTTC's Sustainability Group

AWTTC's Sustainability Group aims to support:

- AWTTC staff to address the climate change emergency by reducing our carbon footprint; and
- AWMSG to develop best practice medicines guidance for NHS Wales that takes sustainability, inequality and environmental issues into account.

The Sustainability Group drafted a pledge of AWTTC's and AWMSG's commitment to sustainability, which AWMSG endorsed in April 2022. See our sustainability pledge and resources on the [AWTTC website](#).

During 2022–2023 the Sustainability Group started working on a Sustainability Strategy for AWTTC: developing local action plans and also supporting national actions for decarbonisation in NHS Wales. One national action is to support the development of a strategy in Wales for inhaler prescribing, use and disposal.

Reports from the Server for Prescribing Information Reporting and Analysis (SPIRA) inhaler decarbonisation dashboard are published monthly on the [AWTTC website](#). These show the progress made in reducing the carbon footprint of inhalers used in primary care in Wales.

The Sustainability Group has also raised the profile of sustainability in relation to medicines

– organising a [Best Practice Day in July 2022](#) focused on the environmental impact of medicines ([see page 32](#)), and also a [PAPIG meeting in October](#) on the same theme ([see page 31](#)).

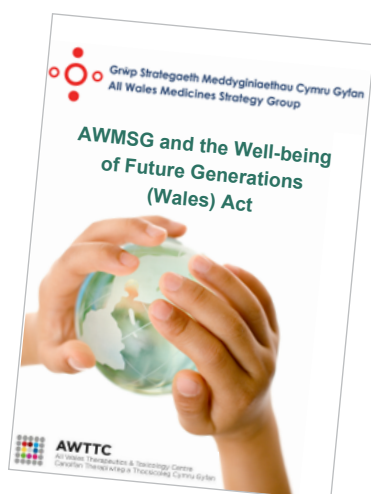


AWMSG and the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act

In 2022, AWTTTC published a report outlining how AWMSG and AWTTTC are working to achieve the 7 well-being goals set out in the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act.

The report outlines how AWMSG's work and objectives relate to each of the 7 goals. It highlights past and ongoing work, as well as planned new work and proposed actions.

AWMSG endorsed the report at its meeting in April 2022. See the report on the [AWTTTC website](#).



Equality and health impact assessments

AWTTTC's Equality and Health Impact Assessment (EqHIA) template and guidance notes were presented to AWMSG in April 2022. An EqHIA form is filled in when we start to develop any resources that will go to AWMSG for endorsement. The form accompanies the project documents throughout our process and is updated as needed. At consultation, the EqHIA form is put on the AWTTTC website with the project

documents, and all stakeholders are invited to comment on both. We published four EqHIA forms during 2022–2023.

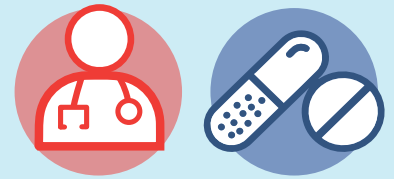
Feedback we received on our published EqHIA forms identified the need to make sure that our patient leaflets are accessible for all, including in Easy Read formats. As a result, AWTTTC is currently working with Learning Disability Wales to develop our skills in producing Easy Read materials.

A shorter form, an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA), is completed for each new medicine appraised by AWMSG. The EIA form is sent to AWMSG when they appraise the medicine, and is also published on the AWTTTC website.

In 2022, AWTTTC started setting up an Equalities Group, which aims to:

- regularly quality-check a sample of EqHIA and EIA forms published; and
- make sure that the EqHIA and EIA processes are followed, including for AWTTTC's internal policies.

AWMSG Training Day



In September 2022, AWMSG held a training day at Cardiff City Stadium for all its committee members. Attendees enjoyed the opportunity to meet in person and network with colleagues.

After an introduction and welcome by AWMSG Chair Professor Iolo Doull, the morning session, 'Leadership on Ice', was delivered by Ian Govier from Academi Wales. This interactive and energising workshop related the true story of Sir Ernest Shackleton and his remarkable Antarctic expedition of 1914. The workshop highlighted and motivated members on important aspects of leadership, such as practising solid values and establishing enduring relationships.



The Leadership on Ice talk was excellent and such a brilliant speaker – very inspiring and thought provoking

Really enjoyed the energy of the day, seeing people face-to-face and the positivity in the room

Great to have a face-to-face event which sparked great discussions and collaboration

The afternoon focused on value in AWMSG's decision making and in health technology assessment, in two workshops delivered by Professor Dyfrig Hughes from Bangor University. This was followed by Heidi Graham from the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry, who gave an update on Disclosure UK. The day ended with a session on the National Prescribing Indicators, given by Kath Haines and Richard Boldero from AWTC.

Patient and Public Interest Group meetings



We held two virtual Patient and Public Interest Group (PAPIG) meetings this year and both reached out to a wide audience. People from all areas of Wales and other parts of the UK attended. We were pleased to see the familiar faces of our regular PAPIG members and to welcome many new ones.

Throughout the meeting everyone is encouraged to share their views, ask questions, suggest ideas and to give feedback on our work.

The theme for our PAPIG meeting in October 2022 was the environmental impact of medicines. AWTTTC staff summarised the work that AWTTTC and AWMSG are doing to support the medicines sustainability agenda. Guest speakers highlighted:

- a community pharmacy initiative to recycle inhalers;
- the pharmaceutical industry's perspective on sustainability relating to medicines; and
- patients' views on reducing the environmental impact of the medicines they take.

Our AWTTTC colleagues from the Welsh National Poisons Unit gave an interesting and informative overview of their work as part of the UK National Poisons Information Service.

Thank you so much for the PAPIG meeting last week which I found super helpful and insightful - a really fantastic group to be part of and I look forward to being more involved going forward.

Ren Renwick
CEO, The Pituitary Foundation.

The PAPIG meeting in February 2023 focused on pharmacy in the community and in General Practice. A clinical pharmacist working in a GP surgery shared the work of her practice in developing and implementing a new process to manage medication reviews for people with chronic diseases. The results of the new process benefitted patients and the practice team.

A representative from Community Pharmacy Wales gave us an informative overview of all the services that local pharmacies in the community deliver to the people of Wales.

[Click here for more details and videos of the presentations from our October 2022 and February 2023 PAPIG meetings.](#)

The PAPIG meeting programme for 2023-2024 is under way. Details and dates are available from the [AWTTTC website](#).

Best Practice Day – Environmental impact of medicines



On 19 July 2022, AW TTC hosted a virtual Best Practice Day focused on the environmental impact of medicines. Presenters shared examples of some of the excellent medicines optimisation work going on in Wales to support NHS Wales' Decarbonisation Strategic Delivery Plan. There was also opportunity for discussion and questions.

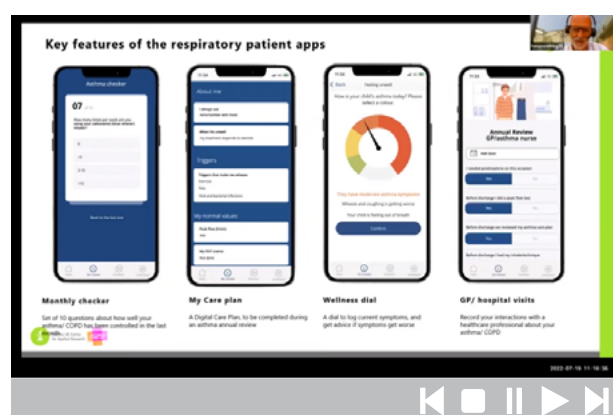
We had 10 presentations from a range of speakers.

- Natalie Proctor (Welsh Government) introduced the theme: environmental impact of medicines. She explained the critical role of the NHS in Wales in working towards decarbonisation, and the Strategic Delivery Plan published in 2021.



- Steve Hoare (Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry) spoke about how the pharmaceutical industry is helping to tackle climate change.

- Sian Evans and Angharad Woolridge (Public Health Wales) presented the Greener Primary Care Wales Framework and Award Scheme. They explained how primary and community care can start the journey towards environmental sustainability and decarbonisation.
- Dr Simon Barry (Respiratory Health Implementation Group) presented the digital innovations implemented in Wales to transform the care of patients with respiratory conditions, such as asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. Those innovations also aim to drive a move towards using inhalers that are more environmentally friendly.



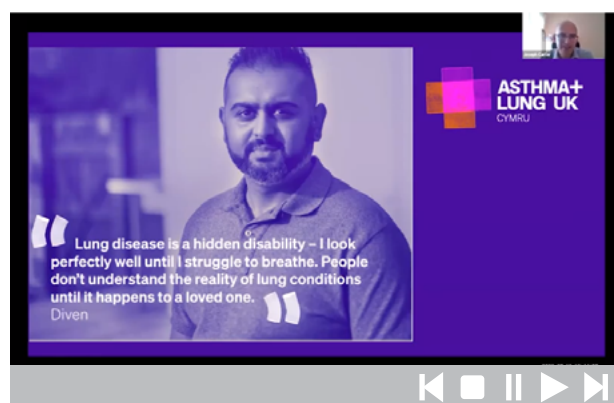
- Dr Richard Thomas (Swansea Bay University Health Board) talked about a Greener Practice Wales initiative - to drive decarbonisation in the management of asthma in primary care.

- Jackie Reynolds and Vicki Richards-Green (Aneurin Bevan University Health Board) presented the work done in their health board to reduce the over-use of short-acting beta antagonist (SABA) inhalers. The work resulted in significant potential carbon savings. They also spoke about a related project to develop an app that simplifies and supports inhaler reviews.
- Elaine Lewis and Dr Charlotte Oliver (Cardiff and Vale University Health Board) spoke about an anaesthetics decarbonisation initiative in their health board. This work addresses the significant carbon impact associated with the use of nitrous oxide.

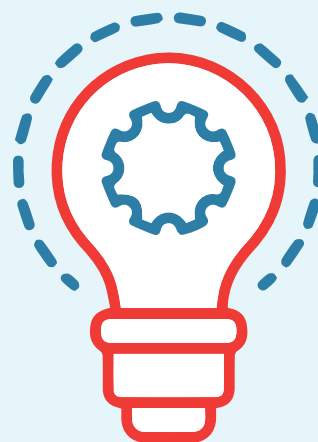


- Oliver Newman (Swansea Bay University Health Board) presented a pilot scheme for inhaler recycling in the health board - a community pharmacy sustainability initiative.
- Gemma Williams (Swansea Bay University Health Board) talked about using ScriptSwitch messages in GP systems to encourage the use of inhalers with a lower environmental impact when appropriate.

- Joseph Carter (Asthma and Lung UK) presented the patient perspective on sustainability. This included what to consider when developing messages about switching a person's inhaler to a more environmentally friendly alternative.



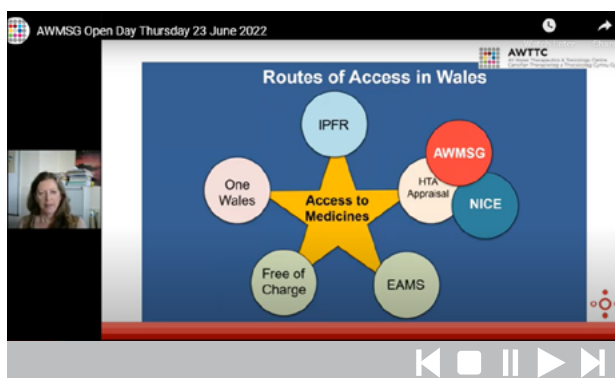
Videos of all of the presentations are available on the [AWTTC website](#).



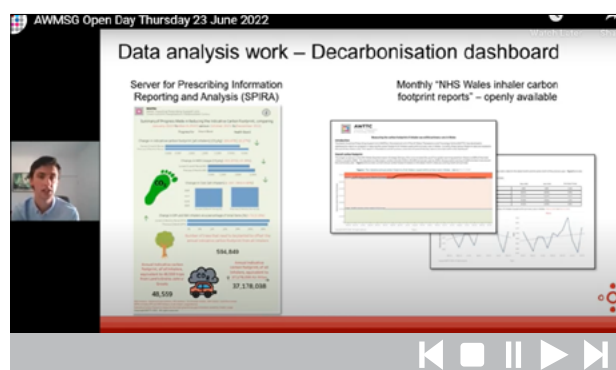
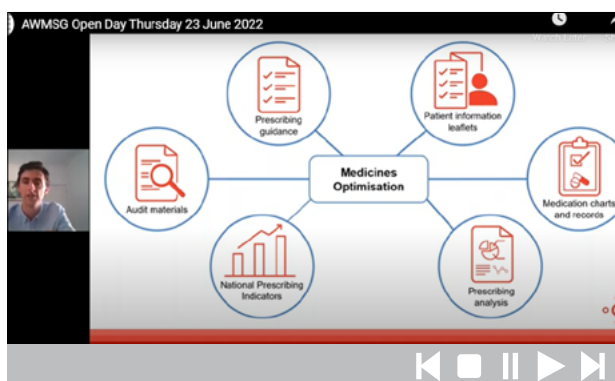
Industry Open Days



AWTTC delivered two Open Day sessions between April 2022 and March 2023, with support from the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry. Twelve speakers delivered seven topics which attracted more than 90 industry professionals.



The AWTTC Industry Open Day programme has received very positive feedback. Working with pharmaceutical industry professionals at the AWTTC Industry Forum we look forward to planning an interesting agenda for the Open Day to be held in Autumn 2023.



Topics included: an update on medicines optimisation; the national prescribing indicators; the One Wales Medicines Process; medicine access in Wales; and the importance of early engagement.

[See videos of the presentations on the AWTTC website.](#)

Learning at Lunch



In the past year AWTTTC presented a new series of 'Learning at Lunch' one-hour virtual training sessions for all healthcare professionals. The quarterly sessions included updates on three therapeutic areas and a round-up of national prescribing news and changes in practice. The sessions gave an opportunity for healthcare professionals to ask questions and discuss each topic with leading experts. The sessions were designed to be brief but informative.

The most recent learning at lunch event was very well attended and was the largest online event that AWTTTC had hosted. A wide range of healthcare professionals from all health boards in Wales attended, including: GPs, specialist doctors, secondary and primary care pharmacists, nurses, a lay member of the New Medicines Group, a university lecturer and pharmacy students.

Some of the comments received:

It couldn't have been better

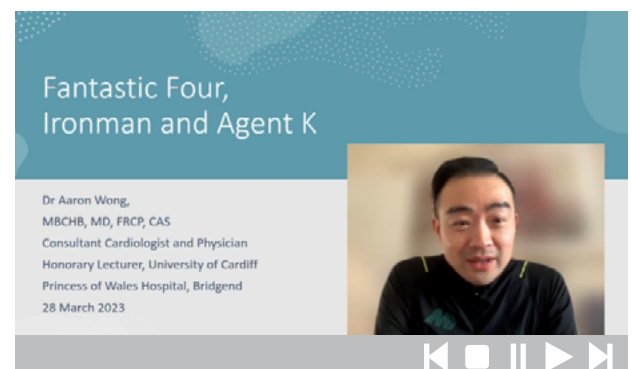
Extremely professional

You delivered exactly what you said you would

It was fantastic

Absolutely brilliant format

[Videos and presentations from previous sessions and details of future ones](#) are available on the AWTTTC website.



Spotlight on AWTTC

Research Activities



AWTTC's Research Group conducts high-quality research into the safe and effective use of medicines in Wales. Our key research themes include access to medicines, medicines optimisation and medicines safety. Since 2006, the organisation has produced more than 360 books, book chapters, journal articles, letters, conference posters and talks. A video about the work of the AWTTC Research Group can be viewed on [Our Research page](#).



15 publications this year
360+ publications since 2006

Over the past year, we have:

- published four peer-reviewed articles:
 - [COVID-19 "Rebound" associated with nirmatrelvir/ritonavir pre-hospital therapy](#)
 - [4-year study of carbon monoxide exposures reported to the UK National Poisons Information Service \(NPIS\)](#)
 - [Potential cyanide poisoning reported to the UK NPIS](#)
 - [Prescribing costs of hypoglycaemic agents and associations with metabolic control](#)
- presented [six posters](#) at the International Congress of the European Association of

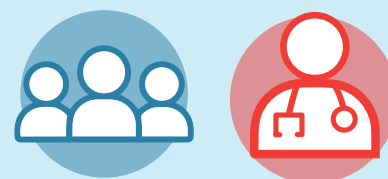
Poisons Centres and Clinical Toxicologists:

- The use of antidotes in the management of methotrexate poisoning
- Oral methotrexate poisoning reported to the UK NPIS
- Enquiries to the UK NPIS involving sodium-glucose co-transporter-2 (SLGT2) inhibitors
- Successful use of high dose insulin therapy in severe amlodipine poisoning presenting with cardiac arrest
- COVID-19 testing kits - a new source of accidental poisoning in the UK?
- COVID vaccines - therapeutic errors reported to the UK NPIS

- presented [three posters](#) at the North American Congress of Clinical Toxicology:
 - The UK NPIS early warning system major incident example: Olympic Park, London
 - A 10-year review of insulin-related enquiries to the UK NPIS
 - Fatal propranolol overdoses reported to the UK NPIS over 5 years
- presented [two posters](#) at the Pharmacology 2022 conference:
 - Pharmacodynamic-pharmacokinetic relationships to optimize PPI dosing intervals with respect to mealtimes
 - The efficacy of tranexamic acid in the treatment of intracranial haemorrhage.

For details of all previous AWTTC research publications please see [Our Research page](#).

The One Wales Medicines process



The One Wales Medicines process was set up in 2015. It enables one decision for all of NHS Wales about access to a medicine that is not routinely available for a group of patients (a patient 'cohort') who have an unmet clinical need. This includes medicines that are used 'off-label' and also licensed medicines, where it is a chance to collect more data before health technology assessment.

AWTTC regularly collects and analyses data from Individual Patient Funding Requests (IPFRs) across Wales, to look for patient cohorts for particular medicines and conditions. Healthcare professionals in Wales can also ask for medicines to be considered by the One Wales Medicines process, through their clinical networks or committees.

The One Wales Medicines Assessment Group (OWMAG) considers the evidence on the clinical and cost-effectiveness of the medicine and looks at the potential impact on the NHS budget, the health service, and society. A clinical expert and a representative from a patient organisation are invited to attend an OWMAG meeting to observe, answer questions and input into discussions. They help OWMAG members to better understand the clinical context and give the perspective of patients and carers. OWMAG will then make a recommendation giving a rationale for their decision and, if the recommendation is positive, give guidance on use of the medicine in NHS Wales.

In a change to the One Wales Medicines process, rather than the decision being endorsed by the Chief Executive Management team, from January 2023 all OWMAG recommendations will go to AWMSG for endorsement, then to Welsh Government to be ratified.

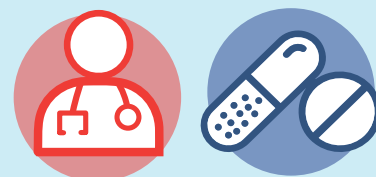
Ongoing monitoring of IPFR data shows that soon after a positive One Wales Medicines decision is published, IPFRs are no longer submitted for that medicine and condition. This shows that the One Wales Medicines process accelerates equitable patient and clinician access to these medicines across Wales.

There are currently 17 One Wales recommendations enabling access to medicines for the treatment of patients with conditions where there is an unmet clinical need.

An animated video about the One Wales Medicines process was launched in October 2022. English and Welsh subtitled versions are available to view on the [AWTTC YouTube channel](#) and the [AWTTC website](#).

More information on the One Wales Medicines process, and current One Wales decisions, is available on the [AWTTC website](#).

Kath Haines and Karen Samuels retire



The start of 2023 saw major changes at AWTTTC with the retirement of two long-serving members of the senior management team.

Kath Haines worked at AWTTTC for 16 years leading on Medicines Optimisation and heading up the Welsh Analytical Prescribing Support Unit. She left in February to enjoy more time with the family and travelling. Kath was a hugely valued member of the team and was responsible for some ground-breaking developments, such as the introduction of the Blueteq High Cost Drugs and Patient Access systems and the development of the Carbon Inhaler dashboard.



Kath Haines

We also said goodbye to AWTTTC's Programme Director, Karen Samuels. During her 20 years at AWTTTC Karen was instrumental in developing AWMMSG's health technology assessment (HTA) process which was accredited by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE). More recently, Karen collaborated with colleagues in the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency and NICE to launch the Innovative Licensing and Access Pathway and HTA access tool.



Karen Samuels

AWMSG members and AWTTTC staff thank you both for your dedicated service and for ensuring safe, timely and equitable access to medicines for people living in Wales.

Medicines optimisation

Medicines optimisation focuses on patients and outcomes rather than processes and systems. It aims to support healthcare professionals in advising patients how to get the best outcomes from the medicines they are taking. This may involve stopping some medicines or starting others, to make sure a patient is taking the safest medicine that works best to treat their condition. Healthcare professionals will also advise patients how best to keep on taking a treatment. To help patients and prescribers get the best outcomes from medicines, AWMSG publishes prescribing guidance and resources, as well as reports on prescribing performance.

Prescribing guidance and resources

We published a range of prescribing guidance and resources during April 2022 to March 2023.

Value-based prescribing - Strategy

This strategy sets out the approach to a value-based prescribing programme. It summarises the background to the work and gives a structure for the proposed work to progress. The aim of the value-based prescribing programme is to optimise the use of medicines to deliver increased value. [You can access the full strategy on the AWTC website](#) (see [page 27](#) in this report).

Value-based prescribing – Biological medicines for severe uncontrolled asthma

Medicines included in the value-based prescribing programme are categorised into five areas. 'Biological medicines for severe uncontrolled asthma' is in the area of 'Optimal prescribing for higher health gain'. [You can access the full resource on the AWTC website](#) (see [page 27](#) in this report).



Care home medicines optimisation toolkit

Care homes are legally responsible for ensuring that all aspects of medicines management are covered by written policies and procedures.

The 'Care Home Medicines Optimisation Toolkit' brings together

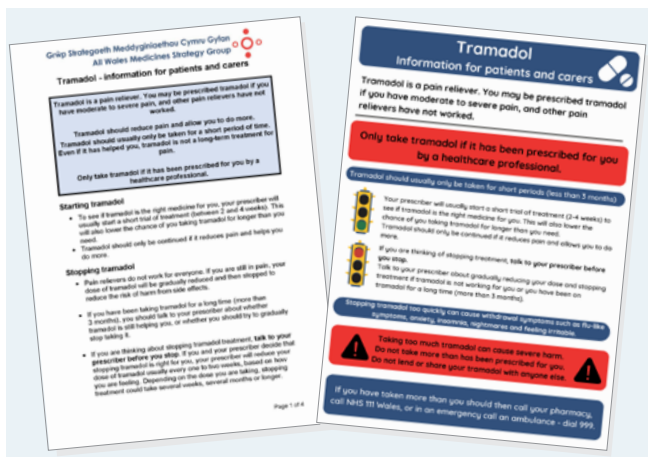
a suite of guidance documents, tools and useful resources for care home staff and the pharmacy teams who advise and support care homes.

[You can access the full resource on the AWTC website.](#)



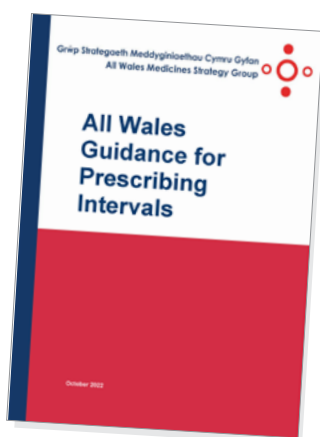
Tramadol educational resources – Patient information leaflets

We published a series of patient information leaflets to support our Tramadol educational resources. The leaflets give key facts for patients taking tramadol (an opioid pain reliever), including: advice for safe use, possible side effects, and what other medicines and drugs to avoid when taking tramadol. The leaflets are available in English and Welsh and in three different formats. [You can access the leaflets on the AWTC website.](#)



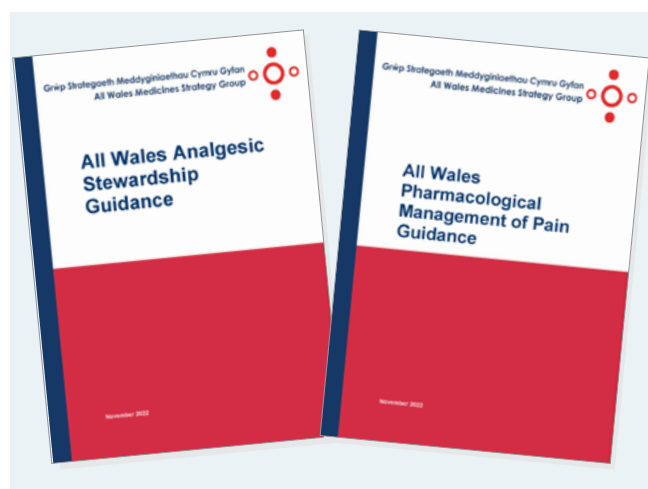
All Wales guidance for prescribing intervals

In 2019, a Welsh Government-commissioned review of dispensing volumes in community pharmacies across Wales concluded that extending dispensing intervals would benefit pharmacies, GPs and patients. This document outlines the current situation regarding prescribing intervals, and sets out recommendations to increase prescribing intervals where appropriate. [You can access the full resource on the AWTC website.](#)



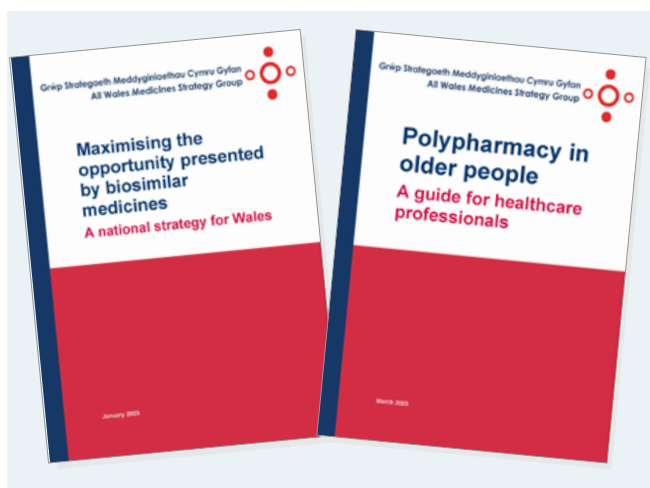
Resources for pharmacological management of pain

These resources were developed at the request of Welsh Government. They aim to support the prescribing of medicines used in NHS Wales to manage pain. The resources include a guide to analgesic stewardship, and documents advising on the pharmacological management of pain. [You can access the full resources on the AWTC website.](#)



Maximising the opportunity presented by biosimilar medicines – A national strategy for Wales

A strong market for biosimilar medicines drives commercial competition and offers a greater choice of affordable biological treatments. This strategy sets out the steps the NHS and its partners in Wales will take to create and support a strong, competitive biological and biosimilar medicines market in the UK. The aim is to benefit the NHS, patients and the economy of Wales. [You can access the full strategy on the AWTTTC website](#) (see page 25 in this report).



Polypharmacy in older people: A guide for healthcare professionals

Being prescribed a high number of medications is associated with an increased risk of harm, and is a strong predictor of hospitalisation because of adverse drug events. Assessing polypharmacy (taking multiple medicines) and patients' adherence to their medication is vital. This polypharmacy guide was developed to support medicines optimisation in older people who may be affected by inappropriate polypharmacy. It includes practical guides

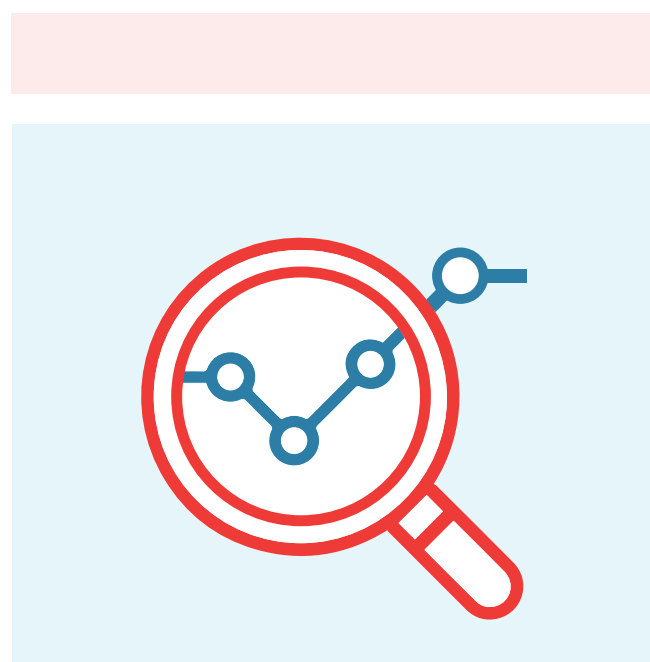
for stopping the prescribing of a range of medications. [You can access the full resource on the AWTTTC website.](#)

Acknowledged resources

AWMSG has acknowledged the following as an example of good practice and aligning with the aims of the AWMSG Five-Year Strategy 2018–2023:

- Antibiotic Review Kit (ARK) Hospital Medication Record (Antimicrobial Resistance Delivery Board for Wales).

You can find out more about all of the [resources acknowledged by AWMSG on the AWTTTC website.](#)



Prescribing monitoring and analysis

AWMSG monitors and analyses prescribing data to benchmark performance and drive improvements in the NHS in Wales.

National Prescribing Indicators

Where there are clear safety, stewardship or efficiency messages that can indicate good practice, prescribers often find it useful to benchmark themselves against other prescribers. This could mean comparing prescribing between different health boards, clusters, or practices. To help compare prescribing, AWMSG agreed that national prescribing indicators (NPIs) were useful tools to promote rational prescribing across NHS Wales. The first set of NPIs was published in 2003.

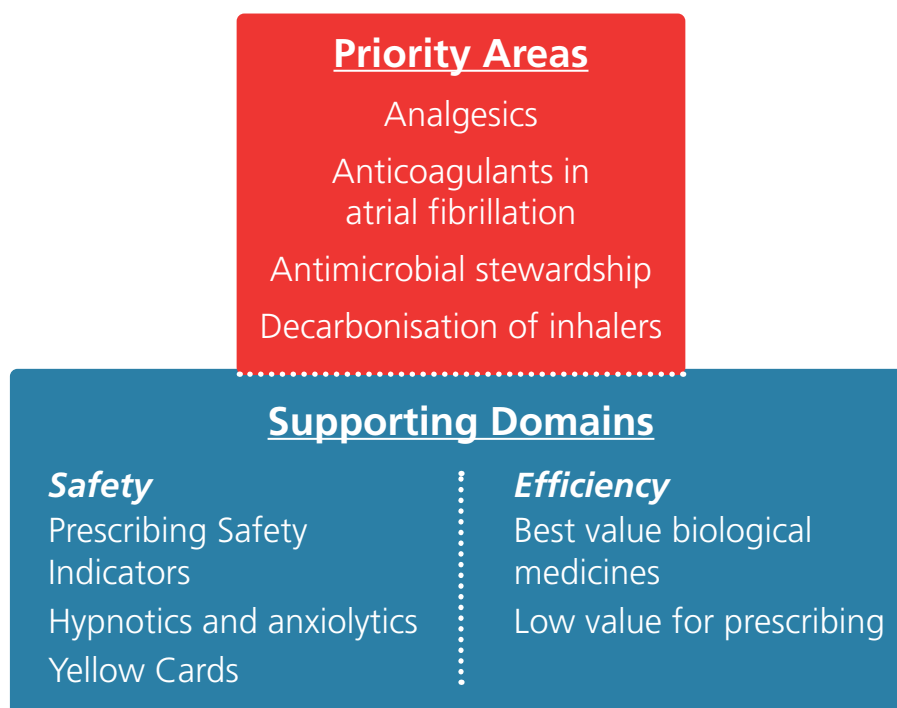
NPIs highlight therapeutic priorities for NHS Wales. They allow us to compare the ways in which different prescribers and organisations use particular medicines or groups of medicines.

Prescribing indicators should be evidence-based, clear and easily understood. They should let health boards and trusts, primary care clusters, GP practices and prescribers compare their current practice against an agreed standard of quality. The NPIs should address efficiency as well as safety and quality; targets should be challenging but achievable, and apply at practice level.

NPIs 2022–2023

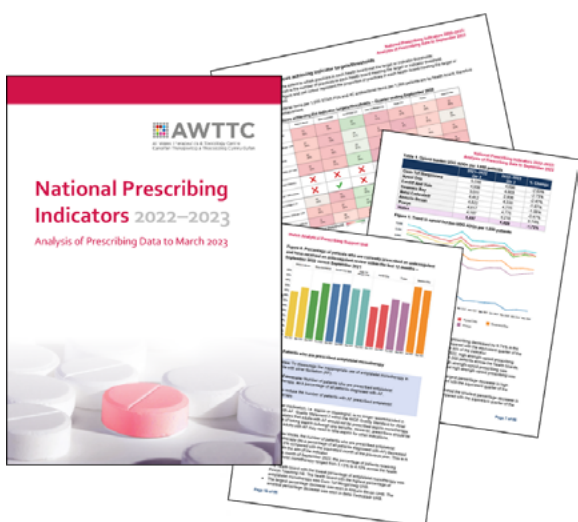
The 14 NPIs for 2022–2023, endorsed by AWMSG, focus on nine areas of prescribing of medicines and the reporting of adverse events (through Yellow Cards). The NPIs focus on four priority areas (analgesics; anticoagulants in atrial fibrillation; antimicrobial stewardship; and decarbonisation of inhalers), which are supported by indicators grouped in the domains of 'safety' and 'efficiency'.

NPIs 2022–2023 – Priority areas and supporting domains



NPI monitoring

AWTTC publishes a quarterly report analysing the performance of each health board against the current set of NPIs. You can view these reports on the [AWTTC website](#).



The [Server for Prescribing Information Reporting and Analysis \(SPIRA\)](#) is updated quarterly with NPI data for health boards, clusters and individual GP practices in Wales, giving a more detailed view of local prescribing. These interactive dashboards for comparative analysis of prescribing data can be accessed by users on the NHS Wales Network. SPIRA also includes additional data, such as AWTTC's inhaler decarbonisation dashboard.

Move to reviewing NPIs every three years

In February 2023, AWMSG agreed that review and update of the NPIs should change from every year, to every three years. This change will let health boards develop longer term plans for using the

NPIs, by ensuring that each indicator will be in place for a minimum of three years.

As a result, AWMSG agreed that the NPIs for 2022-2023 will continue in their current form until March 2025; however, targets and thresholds will be updated annually.



Health Technology Assessment

AWMSG advises Welsh Government if a new medicine should be made available for use in NHS Wales. New medicines are appraised to consider:

- how well they work in the real world (clinical effectiveness);
- how cost-effective they are; and
- which patients they would benefit the most.

New medicines advice issued between April 2022 and March 2023



**17 medicines
assessed**



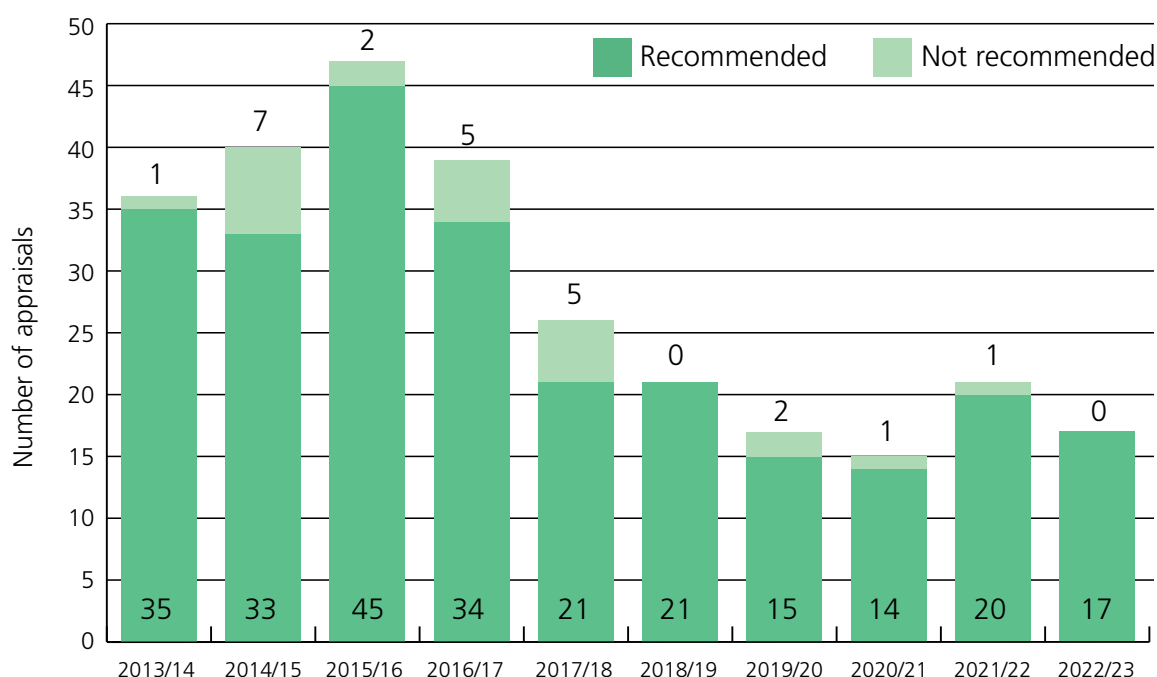
**17 medicines
recommended**



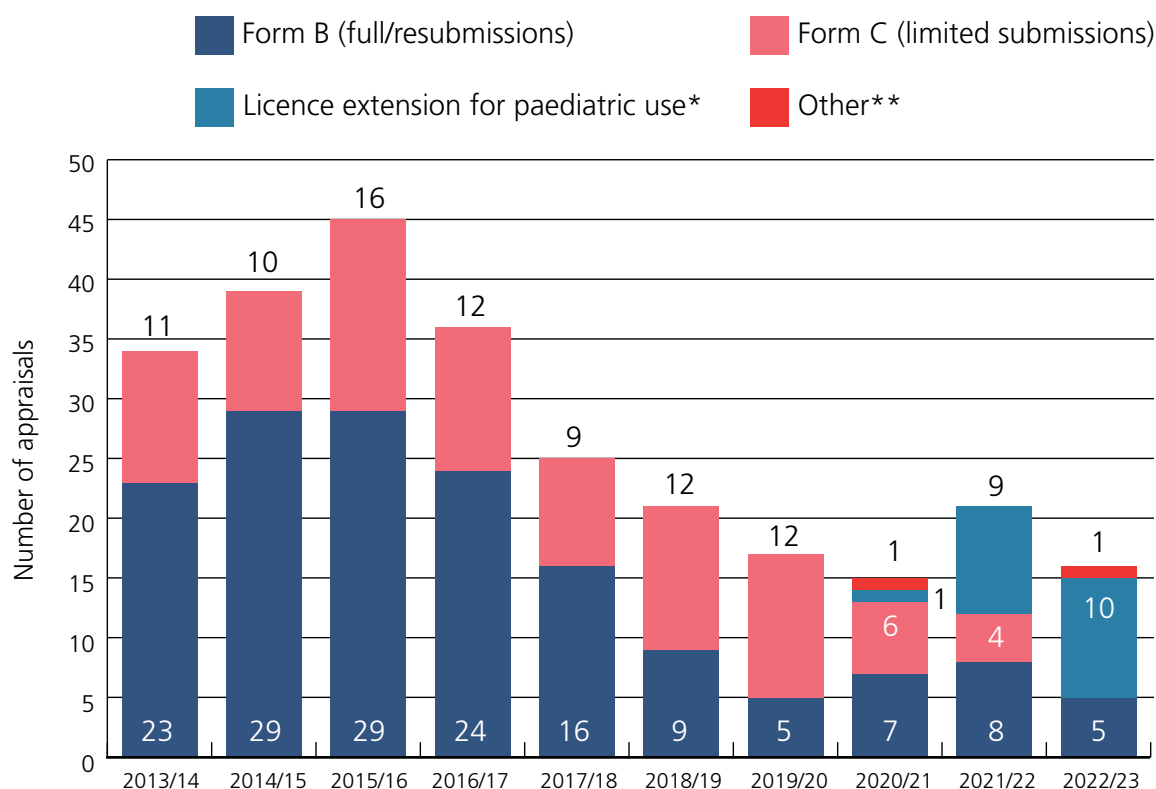
**No Statements of
Advice* issued**

* If a health technology assessment submission from the holder of a medicine's marketing authorisation is not received, AWMSG will issue a Statement of Advice confirming that the medicine cannot be endorsed for use in NHS Wales – a decision made by AWMSG.

Number of medicines recommended and not recommended



Type of submission for appraisal



*Process introduced in 2021

**Reassessment of emtricitabine/tenofovir disoproxil

The changing medicines access landscape

The NHS is facing unprecedented pressure and AWMSG aims to improve health outcomes from medicines and make sure that we get the best value.

Since 2002, AWMSG has recommended medicines based on health technology assessment (HTA) if guidance from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) is not available. NICE's HTA guidance is mandatory within NHS Wales, so it has always been important for AWMSG to focus on medicines not covered by NICE.

NICE has increased its capacity to conduct medicines appraisals by introducing a proportionate approach to HTA. This has significantly reduced the number of medicines needing assessment by AWMSG. HTA is the gold standard for evaluating the clinical effectiveness and cost effectiveness of a medicine. If a medicine is not selected by NICE for HTA, it may be considered by NHS England for commissioning; or there may be a need for local decision-making. The same situation does not apply in Wales as positive HTA has been required for the routine funding of all newly licensed medicines (with a few exceptions as listed in the exclusion criteria).

As the healthcare and medicines access landscape evolves, and shifts towards increased collaboration between UK HTA bodies and regulatory bodies, it is timely for AWMSG to review its HTA processes and ensure equity of access to medicines across Wales. It is essential that AWMSG continues to give timely advice on medicines where clinical need and health impact is greatest.

After publication of a [report](#) exploring the reasons why companies were not engaging with AWMSG's HTA process, AWTTTC began considering the processes of access to medicines in NHS Wales. AWTTTC updated its process for reviewing AWMSG's past recommendations. It produced a [static list](#) of those medicines which will not be reviewed regularly unless new evidence becomes available. AWTTTC is also reviewing the process for appraising medicines that have had their licence extended to allow it to be given to children and young people aged under 18 years.

AWTTTC will conduct additional work to explore how AWTTTC and AWMSG can better support NHS Wales in the future. It is essential that AWTTTC continues to collaborate with fellow HTA organisations and regulatory bodies at a national and international level. AWTTTC looks forward to reporting updates on the wider medicines access agenda for Wales at future AWMSG meetings.

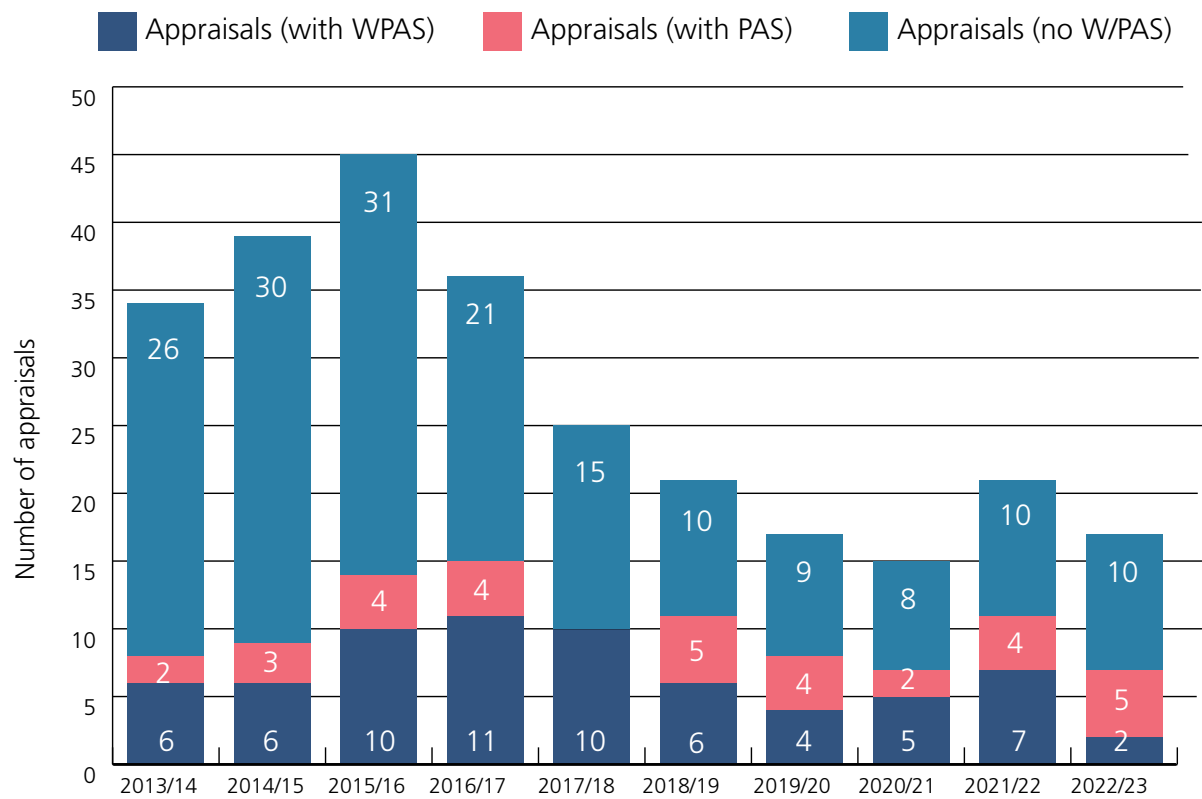
Wales Patient Access Scheme

Between 2011 and 31 March 2023, a total of 83 Wales Patient Access Scheme (WPAS) proposals were submitted for review. The largest proportion (65%) of WPAS submissions have been for simple schemes (n = 54), with 46 of these considered feasible to implement by the Patient Access Scheme Wales Group (PASWG), 6 resubmitted as complex schemes and 1 scheme was withdrawn from the review process.

Up to 31 March 2023, 29 complex WPAS proposals were submitted, with 19 of these considered possible for implementation by PASWG. Of the remaining 9 complex submissions, 4 were not considered feasible, and 6 were withdrawn. Up to 31 March 2023, the inclusion of a WPAS in the company submission to the AWMSG appraisal process has enabled patient access to 55 medicines in Wales.

Ongoing review and development of the WPAS submission and implementation process, with monitoring of schemes to confirm effective working and maximum financial return, is necessary to guarantee the greatest efficiencies for NHS Wales, while still ensuring timely access to clinically effective and cost-effective medicines for patients.

Appraisals with a Patient Access Scheme



Membership

AWMSG

Post	Member	Deputy
Chair	Prof Iolo Doull	Prof Dyfrig Hughes
Consultant in Public Health Medicine	Prof Stephen Monaghan	Awaiting nomination
Welsh Health Specialised Services Committee	Ms Eleri Schiavone	Dr Helen Fardy
Health Economist	Prof Dyfrig Hughes	Prof Deborah Fitzsimmons
ABPI (Wales)	Ms Kate Parrish Mr Tommy Price Mr Farhan Mughal	Attendance is rotated between the three named individuals
Lay representative	Mrs Pam James	Awaiting nomination
Lay representative	Ms Claire James	Mrs Julie Wilson-Thomas
Community Pharmacist	Mr Dylan Jones	Awaiting nomination
Medical Director	Dr Richard Skone	Dr Jim McGuigan
GP with prescribing lead role	Dr Jeremy Black	Awaiting nomination
Managed Sector Pharmacist	Ms Alison Hughes	Ms Rafia Jamil
Managed Sector Pharmacist	Mr Stuart Rees	Awaiting nomination
Director of Finance	Mr Hywel Pullen	Mr James Leaves
Senior Nurse	Mrs Mandy James	Mrs Katherine White
Other healthcare professions eligible to prescribe not already represented	Mrs Cathy Wynne	Mr Karl Jackson
Clinical Pharmacologist	Dr Alison Thomas	Dr Manjeet Singh
Hospital Consultant	Dr Samantha Cox	Dr Manjeet Singh

Post and discipline	Member	Health board/trust	Alternate
Chair, Consultant Clinical Pharmacologist	Dr Laurence Gray	Cardiff and Vale	Mrs Clare Clement
Doctor from each health board reflecting different roles			
General Practitioner	Dr Rebecca McGee (to Dec 22)	Aneurin Bevan	Dr David Pyle (Powys) (to Dec 22)
General Practitioner	Dr Gemma Rogers (from Jun 22)	Aneurin Bevan	
Hospital Consultant/General Practitioner	Nomination received	Betsi Cadwaladr	
Hospital Consultant	Dr Laurence Gray	Cardiff and Vale	
Hospital Consultant/General Practitioner	Awaiting nomination	Cwm Taf Morgannwg	
General Practitioner	Dr Richard Brown	Hywel Dda	
Hospital Consultant/General Practitioner	Awaiting nomination	Powys	
General Practitioner	Dr Phil Cox	Swansea Bay	
Hospital Consultant	Awaiting nomination	Velindre	
Pharmacist from each health board/trust reflecting different roles			
Pharmacist	Nomination received Mr Hywel Jones (to Dec 22)	Aneurin Bevan	Nomination received Ms Emily Knight (to Nov 22)
Pharmacist	Ms Vicky Allum (from Feb 23)	Betsi Cadwaladr	Awaiting nomination Mr Ben Woodhouse (to Jul 22)
Pharmacist	Mrs Clare Clement	Cardiff & Vale	Mr Emyr Stephens (from Nov 22)
Pharmacist	Mrs Helen Davies	Cwm Taf Morgannwg	Mrs Avril Tucker
Prescribing Advisor	Mrs Hazel Hopkins	Hywel Dda	Mrs Sue Beach Ms Jenny Pugh-Jones (to Mar 23)
Chief Pharmacist	Mrs Jacqueline Seaton (from Nov 22)	Powys	Awaiting nomination Mr Adrian Byrne (to Dec 22)
Pharmacist	Mr Darren Smith	Swansea Bay	Nomination received
Chief Pharmacist	Mrs Bethan Tranter	Velindre	Mrs Sophie Harding
Community Pharmacist	Nomination received	All Wales	Awaiting nomination Sudhir Sehrawat (to Jun 22)
Medicines Safety Pharmacist			
	Dr Lynette James	All Wales	Awaiting nomination
Lay member			
	Mrs Fiona Woods (from Mar 23) Mr Malcolm Latham (from Mar 23) Mr David Barnard (to Jan 23) Mr Alan Meudell (to Jan 23)		Awaiting nomination
Healthcare professional eligible to prescribe			
	Mrs Amy Williams		Nomination received
Nurse			
	Mrs Sarah Davies		Awaiting nomination
Public Health Wales			
	Mrs Sian Evans (from Nov 22) Ms Rosemary Allgeier (to Nov 22)		Mrs Sian Evans (to Nov 22)
Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry Wales			
	Ms Sue Knights		Ms Rachel Jenkins
Non-voting members			
Director, Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry Wales	Dr Rick Greville		Ms Joe Ferris
Director, British Generic Manufacturers Association	Mr Paul Fleming		Ms Carol Blount Mr Michael Clarke
Welsh Government	To be notified of representation before each meeting		
AWTTC Board Member and AWMMSG Representative	To be notified of representation before each meeting		

Post	Member	Deputy
Chair	Prof James Coulson	
Vice Chair	Dr Emma Mason	
Pharmacist 1	Mr Alan Clatworthy	Eleri Phillips
Pharmacist 2	Mrs Sue Beach	Mr Alun Kurmuually (from Jun 22)
Pharmacist 3	Mrs Teena Grenier	Awaiting nomination
Doctor 1 - Clinical Pharmacologist	Dr Emma Mason	Awaiting nomination
Doctor 2 - Hospital Consultant	Awaiting nomination	Awaiting nomination
Doctor 3 - General Practitioner	Awaiting nomination Dr Chalini Lankage (to Jul 22)	Dr Avkash Das Jain
Professions allied to medicine or eligible to prescribe	Mr Karl Jackson	Awaiting nomination
Public Health/Epidemiologist	Awaiting nomination	Awaiting nomination
Health Economist	Prof Deborah Fitzsimmons	Dr Catrin Plumpton
Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry Member	Mr Sandeep Kiri Olga Ovcinnikova (from Nov 22) Dhwani Shah (from Feb 23) Mr Steven Lister (to Oct 22) Ms Holly Cranmer (to Oct 22)	Attendance is rotated between the three named individuals
Welsh Health Specialised Services Committee	Dr Andrew Champion	Dr Sian Lewis
Lay Member	Mr William Anthony Esmond Mrs Fiona Woods (from Aug 22)	Mrs Pamela Jane James (from Aug 22)
Nurse	Mr Andrew Davies (from Jun 22) Mr Neil Thomas (to May 22)	Mrs Susan Newport



All Wales Therapeutics & Toxicology Centre
Canolfan Therapiwteg a Thocsicoleg Cymru Gyfan

Published by:

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