

## **ALL WALES PRESCRIBING ADVISORY GROUP (AWPAG)**

### **Minutes of meeting held on**

**13<sup>th</sup> December 2023 commencing at 9.30 am**

**Held at the All Nations Centre, Cardiff  
and via Zoom**

**Chair** – Dr Laurence Gray Consultant Clinical Pharmacologist, Cardiff & Vale UHB

#### **Voting members**

Mrs Vicky Allum	Head of Pharmacy, Primary Care and Community Services, Betsi Cadwaladr UHB
Mrs Sue Beach	Lead Clinical Development Pharmacist, Hywel Dda UHB
Mrs Clare Clement	Lead Pharmacist for Primary, Community and Intermediate Care, Cardiff & Vale UHB
Ms Helen Davies	Principal Pharmacist for Medicines Optimisation in Primary Care – Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB
Dr Jennifer Ellis	General Practitioner, Betsi Cadwaladr UHB
Mrs Sian Evans	Consultant in Public Health - Public Health Wales
Dr Lynette James	All Wales Consultant Pharmacist – Acute Care & Medication Safety
Ms Rachel Jenkins	ABPI member
Mr Malcolm Latham	Lay member
Dr Gemma Rogers	General Practitioner, Aneurin Bevan UHB
Ms Hayley Saunders	Senior Nurse Profession Practice, Aneurin Bevan UHB
Mrs Eryl Smeethe	Lead Prescribing Advisor – Aneurin Bevan UHB
Mr Darren Smith	Primary Care Pharmacist – Swansea Bay UHB
Mrs Fiona Woods	Lay member

#### **In attendance (non-voting)**

Dr Rick Greville	ABPI
Dr Andrew Champion	AWTTC Programme Director
Dr Rob Bracchi	AWTTC Medical Advisor
Mrs Claire Thomas	AWTTC Head of WAPSU and Medicines Optimisation
Mr Richard Boldero	AWTTC Senior Pharmacist
Dr Paul Deslandes	AWTTC WAPSU Pharmacist
Dr Thomas Curran	AWTTC Programme Manager
Mrs Ruth Lang	AWTTC Head of Liaison and Administration
Mrs Helen Adams	AWTTC Senior Pharmacist
Ms Karen Jones	AWTTC Senior Pharmacist
Ms Shaila Ahmed	AWTTC Senior Pharmacist
Dr Bridget-Ann Kenny	AWTTC Scientist
Dr Katherine Chaplin	AWTTC Scientist
Mr David Haines	AWTTC Medical Writer
Mrs Sian Harbon	AWTTC Medical Writer
Dr Sara Pickett	AWTTC Principal Health Economist

#### **Observing**

Ms Emma Williams Welsh Government

## **External presenters**

Dianne Burnett, National Lead Medicines information attended for item 7.1  
Anna Burgess, Digital Lead Pharmacist WMIC attended for item 7.1  
Ffion Evans, Pharmacist attended for item 7.1  
Elizabeth Bond, Consultant Mental Health Pharmacist attended for item 7.5  
Chineze Ivenso, Consultant in Mental Health attended for item 7.5  
Dr Katie Pink, Consultant in Respiratory Medicine attended for item 7.6

## **Key of abbreviations**

ABPI	Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry
AWMSG	All Wales Medicines Strategy Group
AWTTC	All Wales Therapeutics and Toxicology Centre
HEIW	Health Education and Improvement Wales
NICE	National Institute for Health and Care Excellence
NPIs	National Prescribing Indicators
PHW	Public Health Wales
WAPSU	Welsh Analytical Prescribing Support Unit

## **1.0 Welcome and introduction**

The Chair welcomed members and observers to the meeting.

## **2.0 Apologies**

Apologies were received from:

Mr Paul Fleming	BGMA
Mrs Sarah Davies	Senior Lecturer Advanced Clinical Practice, Swansea University
Ms Hazel Hopkins	Prescribing Support Pharmacist, Hywel Dda UHB
Mrs Sue Knights	ABPI representative
Mrs Jacqueline Seaton	Chief Pharmacist, Powys THB
Mrs Bethan Tranter	Chief Pharmacist, Velindre NHS Trust
Mrs Amy Williams	Physiotherapist, Other professions eligible to prescribe member

## **3.0 Declarations of Interest and Confidentiality Agreement**

The Chair asked members to declare any interests relevant to the meeting; no declarations of interest pertinent to the meeting were received.

## **4.0 Chair's report**

Members were informed that Mrs Rachel Andrews had now been appointed as alternate member for Public Health Wales.

Member were informed that nominations had now been received from the Royal Pharmaceutical Society for a Community Pharmacist member and alternate member.

The Chair reminded members that there are currently vacancies for doctor members for Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board, Swansea Bay University Health Board and Powys Teaching Health Board, along with a doctor member from Velindre NHS Trust. Members were asked to forward nominations to AWTTC. Members remarked that it may be useful to reach out to regular consultees to potentially fill current vacancies.

## **5.0 Minutes of previous AWPAG meeting – 20<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

The minutes of the previous meeting were checked for accuracy and agreed.

## **6.0 Feedback from AWMSG – 8<sup>th</sup> November and 5<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

Claire Thomas fed back on documents that had been presented at recent AWMSG meetings:

- Withdrawal of national desflurane contract in Wales – for endorsement  
Members briefly discussed the issues with disposal of desflurane in machines
- All Wales COPD Management and Prescribing Guideline -  
for information
- Decarbonisation – inhaler prescribing, use and disposal 2023-2030.  
A National Strategy for Wales – for endorsement
- Wales Cancer Network: Guideline for management of hydration  
during systemic anti-cancer therapy containing cisplatin –  
for acknowledgement
- National Prescribing Indicators 2023-24: Analysis of prescribing data  
to June 2023 – for information
- NHS Wales inhaler carbon footprint report – August 2023 – for information

## **7.0 Documents for discussion**

### **7.1 Common Ailments Service – Monograph for urinary tract infection in women and transgender males who have not undergone sex reassignment surgery**

Dianne Burnett, Anna Burgess and Ffion Evans presented the document to members which had been updated following consultation. Members discussed the issue raised in consultation of haematuria, and the safety netting advice that was still due to be added recommending onward referral should haematuria persist following antibiotic treatment.

There was discussion around wider contractual and service considerations regarding the Common Ailments Service (e.g. patient non-attendance following GP referral, links between Community Pharmacy and GP patient record systems, instances of some community pharmacies not being able to deliver all aspects of the CAS formulary). While these issues were discussed, it was highlighted that AWPAG's consideration was limited to the clinical framework and advice within the CAS Formulary document.

Members were asked to decide whether the document should now proceed to AWMSG for endorsement given the planned changes related to haematuria. Members agreed that the document could proceed to AWMSG.

**Action: To proceed to AWMSG in February 2024 for endorsement**

### **7.2 All Wales policy for medicines administration, recording, review, storage and disposal (MARRS)**

Dr Lynette James presented an updated document following consultation. Members were asked to consider whether the updated document, which now focusses on healthcare settings, should proceed to AWMSG for endorsement. It was discussed that many of the consultation comments came from colleagues

within the social care sector, and that engagement with the sector highlighted an unmet need for guidance in this setting. Feedback from the social care sector will be considered as part of the development of social care resources which are in progress. It was confirmed that the self-administration guidelines will continue to reflect the guidelines endorsed by the Nursing and Midwifery Council as these are standardised nationally.

Members discussed the reference to e-learning modules within the policy, and queried what progress had been made on these. It was confirmed that, although the training fell outside of the remit of this document, the author was working with Health Education and Improvement Wales and that these were currently in development.

There was a query on the time critical medicines detailed in Appendix 1 about some differences between the recommended timings of anti-Parkinsonian medicines. It was felt the recommended timescales could cause auditing issues. It was confirmed that the timescales presented were to be used as a guide and were not mandated, and that it was safer to use the shorter time as an aim.

**Action: To proceed to AWMSG in February 2024 for endorsement**

### **7.3 All Wales Guidance for Penicillin allergy de-labelling**

Shaila Ahmed and Dr Laurence Gray presented members with an update on progress with the penicillin allergy de-labelling document, including clinical context and aims. It was highlighted the guidance is for secondary care and the title of the document and section 2.1 who the guidance is for, will be updated accordingly. Members agreed that the guidance was very useful and necessary. There was discussion about the practicalities of de-labelling patients across healthcare settings, who would perform the testing and how results would be recorded. Members discussed the benefits of removing incorrect penicillin allergy labels and the potential cost savings to the healthcare system. It was agreed that a key part of implementation will be in ensuring patients are communicated with effectively about what de-labelling means for them. It was suggested that allergy cards and digital recording on the NHS app could be used.

**Action: Minor updates to be made before proceeding to consultation**

### **7.4 Prescribing dilemmas – private shared care (minor update)**

Dr Paul Deslandes provided members with an update on recent progress with the prescribing dilemmas document. Members were informed that the aim was not to produce a definitive guide, but to provide prescribers with useful questions to consider if presented with a request to enter into a shared care agreement with a private clinician. Members were asked to consider what the next steps for the document should be.

Members felt that the language in the document currently has a primary care, medical focus, and that this should be changed as it will apply across settings. The question of whether the document should be disseminated for wider consultation was raised. It was felt that a limited consultation involving local health board associate medical directors (AMDs) would be useful. The aim would be for AMDs to provide an opinion on the proposed questions that

clinicians should ask when considering entering into an agreement. AWPAG members will be contacted by AWTTTC to identify appropriate individuals to approach for consultation. It was agreed that a full consultation was not suitable for this document.

**Action: Document to be updated prior to limited consultation**

### **7.5 All Wales protocol for the appropriate prescribing of antipsychotics for people living with dementia**

Elizabeth Bond and Chineze Ivenso presented members with an updated version of the document following consultation. Members were asked to consider whether the document should proceed to AWMSG for endorsement. A query was raised around the antipsychotic monitoring charts used within the document, and how these were chosen. Members were told that all health boards were able to respond during the consultation and have therefore had the opportunity to comment on the charts, and were involved in the decision initially. Another query around implementation in social care settings was discussed. Members were informed that social care professionals had been included in the consultation and their input had been considered.

Discussion around whether the Deprivation of Liberty safeguards needed to be embedded into the guidance was explored by members. It was agreed that the safeguards are not generally used when administering antipsychotics, but that this was an area to monitor locally after publication.

Overall members felt the document will encourage appropriate prescribing. It was agreed that AWTTTC would explore options to support implementation.

**Action: To proceed to AWMSG in February 2024 for endorsement**

### **7.6 All Wales Adult Asthma Management and Prescribing Guidelines**

Dr Katie Pink presented members with an updated version of the document following consultation. Members were asked to consider if the document should proceed to AWMSG for endorsement. Members questioned whether upcoming national guidance on adult asthma from NICE may supersede or conflict with these guidelines. It was noted that the updates to the national guidelines are following changes in practice, however a statement will be included to note that the guidelines will be reviewed in light of NICE guidance. There was some discussion around whether all uses of terms 'unlicensed' and 'licensed' medicines were appropriate, and some wording amendments were agreed. Members also felt a signpost to published AWMSG resources on the use of unlicensed medicines should be added under core principles.

Members discussed the possibility of including some bioequivalent inhaler options, and making it more obvious that these were available. There was also some discussion on making the use of MDI spacers more prominent within the poster. Discussion regarding the inclusion of cost-effectiveness information within the guidelines occurred, and members suggested how this data could be collected and used. Overall members agreed the guidelines could progress to AWMSG.

**Action: To proceed to AWMSG in February 2024 for endorsement**

## **8.0 National Prescribing Indicators (NPIs) 2025-2028**

Karen Jones and Shaila Ahmed presented an update on the development of NPIs for 2025-28. Members were asked for their comments and to consider the development so far and to help agree a longlist of potential NPIs to take forward for further feasibility testing and development. AWPAG members were asked to take into consideration current developments that are likely to affect the availability of data during the term of the NPIs and also other professions eligible to prescribe such as dentists and Independent Prescribers (IPs). It was suggested that the anticoagulants in AF NPIs should be retired (with continued monitoring as a local comparator), and members were broadly supportive of this.

New NPI areas of interest were then discussed, including some antibiotic NPIs and inhaler decarbonisation. The use of DDDs for measuring antibiotic use was agreed upon. It was also highlighted that diabetes and cardiovascular therapeutic areas are important areas for organisations to consider but it was acknowledged that data may limit the feasibility of NPIs.

Discussion was also had around the possibility of using prescribing data to inform the development of NPIs for 2025-28 and areas to focus on.

**Actions: Development and testing of modified measures and potential new NPIs for 2025-28 to continue with input from NPI Subgroup and stakeholders and to bring back to AWPAG in March for discussion.**

## **9.0 Verbal updates**

### **9.1 Initial clinical management of nicotine withdrawal in adults in secondary care *and* All Wales Guide: Pharmacotherapy for Smoking Cessation (Minor update)**

Karen Jones updated members regarding the guideline.

AWTTC and the author have been working with stakeholders such as the Help Me Quit (HMQ) Programme Board and PHW tobacco control teams to ensure that the work is aligned to wider work, service development and meets the needs of people identified in the EqHIA. The HMQ Programme Board, including the external author, are working on a potential interim statement to address consultation feedback, and AWTTC and the author will review the document and work with PHW as work progresses.

The author is also reviewing the AWMSG-endorsed *All Wales Guide: Pharmacotherapy for Smoking Cessation*, which has been identified by AWPAG for review.

Members briefly discussed NRT, vaping and how this should be included in the document and fit within pathways in Wales.

### **9.2 Opioid burden NPIs – data update**

Karen Jones updated members on the situation regarding missing data for the monitoring and reporting of NPIs for 2022-25. A data issue with certain DDD values had been identified and is currently being investigated, therefore it is

currently not possible to include the opioid burden and high strength opioids data within the quarterly report. Work is ongoing to consider options for reporting. Karen Jones gave an overview of work being done by a Specialist Pain Management Pharmacist working in BCUHB that may potentially be applied nationally to provide an alternative and accurate measure.

### **9.3 Recall and Review Process in General Practice**

Katherine Chaplin informed members that this project is no longer progressing as the author does not have the ability to develop resources at this current time.

### **9.4 SPIRA Steering Committee - feedback**

Richard Boldero provided members with feedback from the SPIRA Steering Committee meeting in October. At the meeting, the branded generics dashboard was discussed, as well as the desflurane dashboard (in support of the AWMSG endorsed paper 'Withdrawal of national desflurane contract in Wales'). The development of a controlled drugs dashboard was also discussed, with further updates to be provided to AWPAG members at the next meeting.

### **9.5 Inhaler decarbonisation report**

Richard Boldero provided members with an update on the NHS Inhaler Carbon footprint report.

### **9.6 Common Ailments Service – Sore throat test and treat (minor update)**

Tom Curran provided members with an update on some additional minor updates that had been made to the sore throat test and treat monograph and signed off by the AWPAG Chair; this was following members having signed off the original set of minor updates at the previous meeting. These changes were likely to be published early in the new year.

### **9.7 AWMSG-endorsed medicines optimisation document – consideration of older resources for review**

Tom Curran informed members that work is ongoing regarding the process for document review, and that a full update will be provided in the March meeting.

### **9.8 Review of AWMSG processes to support medicines access in NHS Wales**

Helen Adams provided members with an overview of the current and proposed medicines access routes within Wales, and explained why changes to the current process were necessary. Members were informed of the proposed changes and provided details of timelines for consultation and implementation.

### **10.0 Feedback from the All Wales Chief Pharmacists Group**

There were no Chief Pharmacists in attendance.

### **11.0 Feedback from Health Boards and Velindre NHS Trust**

Health board members did not have any feedback to share.

### **12.0 Feedback from Public Health Wales**

Sian Evans provided members with an overview of ongoing work at Public Health Wales, including details of upcoming work on diabetes management.

### **13.0 Any other business**

Claire Thomas informed members that Welsh Government had asked AWTTTC to work with stakeholders to develop a position statement on the use of branded generics, and asked for volunteers to form a short life working group.

**14.0 Date of next meeting: Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2024**