

ALL WALES PRESCRIBING ADVISORY GROUP (AWPAG)

Minutes of meeting held on

14th December 2022 commencing at 9.30 am via Zoom

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

Voting members

Mr David Barnard	Lay member
Dr Richard Brown	General Practitioner – Hywel Dda UHB
Mrs Clare Clement	Prescribing Advisor – Cardiff and Vale UHB
Dr Phil Cox	General Practitioner – Swansea Bay UHB
Ms Helen Davies	Prescribing Advisor – Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB
Ms Sarah Davies	Advanced Nurse Practitioner – Hywel Dda UHB
Mrs Sian Evans	Consultant in Public Health - Public Health Wales
Ms Hazel Hopkins	Prescribing Advisor – Hywel Dda UHB
Mrs Sue Knights	ABPI representative
Dr Becky McGee	General Practitioner – Aneurin Bevan UHB
Dr Gemma Rogers	General Practitioner, Aneurin Bevan UHB
Mrs Jacqueline Seaton	Chief Pharmacist – Powys THB
Mr Darren Smith	Pharmacist – Swansea Bay UHB
Ms Amy Williams	Other healthcare professional eligible to prescribe

In attendance (non-voting)

Mr Paul Fleming	Chairman BGMA
Dr Rick Greville	ABPI
Mr Richard Boldero	AWTTC
Dr Rob Bracchi	AWTTC
Dr Thomas Curran	AWTTC
Dr Paul Deslandes	AWTTC
Ms Carolyn Hughes	AWTTC
Mrs Ruth Lang	AWTTC
Mrs Claire Thomas	AWTTC
Mrs Jessica Morgan	AWTTC

Presenting

Dr Julian Forton	Attended for Item 7.1 only
Mrs Harriet Price	Attended for Item 7.2 only
Miss Sheridan Court	Attended for Item 7.2 only
Mrs Lindsay Davies	Attended for Item 7.3 only
Mrs Dianne Burnett	Attended for Items 7.3 and 10.1 only
Mr Sam MacDonald	Attended for Item 7.2 only
Dr Nik Reid	Attended for Item 7.7 only
Miss Meryl Davies	Attended for Item 7.7 only
Dr Efthymia Mantzourani	Attended for Item 8.3 only

Key of abbreviations

ABPI	Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry
AWMSG	All Wales Medicines Strategy Group
AWTTC	All Wales Therapeutics and Toxicology Centre
DHCW	Digital Health and Care Wales
HEIW	Health Educations and Improvement Wales
MHRA	Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency
NICE	National Institute for Health and Care Excellence
NPIs	National Prescribing Indicators
PHW	Public Health Wales
QAIF	Quality Assurance and Improvement Framework

1.0 Welcome and introduction

The Chair welcomed all members and introduced Mrs Jacqueline Seaton who was attending her first meeting of AWPAG and thanked Dr Becky McGee, attending her last meeting, for her contribution to the group.

Members were informed that this would be Kath Haines' last AWPAG meeting due to her planned retirement in February 2023. The Chair thanked Kath for all her hard work and support.

2.0 Apologies

Apologies were received from:

Mr Andrew Evans	Chief Pharmaceutical Office, Welsh Government
Ms Kath Haines	Head of Welsh Analytical Prescribing Support Unit
Dr Lynette James	All Wales Consultant Pharmacist – Acute Care & Medication Safety
Mr Hywel Jones	Pharmacist – Aneurin Bevan
Mr Alan Meudell	Lay member
Mrs Bethan Tranter	Chief Pharmacist – Velindre NHS Trust
Mrs Karen Samuels	AWTTC

3.0 Declarations of Interest and Confidentiality Agreement

The Chair asked members to declare any interests relevant to the meeting.

Mrs Sue Knights declared an interest for items 7.1 and 10.7.

The Chair noted that Mrs Knights would leave the meeting for items 7.1.

4.0 Chair's report

Membership

Members were informed of the following:

Resignations

Dr Becky McGee (GP Aneurin Bevan) last meeting today
Ms Emily Knight (alternate member Aneurin Bevan UHB)
Ms Rosemary Allgeier – Public Health Wales

New Appointments

Mrs Jacqueline Seaton, Chief Pharmacist, Powys Teaching Health Board
Mr Emyr Stephens, alternate Pharmacist, Cardiff & Vale
Mrs Sian Evans, becomes main member for Public Health Wales

The Chair reminded members that there are currently vacancies for doctor members for Cwm Taf Morgannwg 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.

5.0 Minutes of previous AWPAG meeting – 28th September 2022

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

The actions from the last meeting were considered.

6.0 Feedback from AWMSG – 18th October and 6th December 2022

Feedback on the recent AWMSG meetings.

- National Prescribing Indicators – data to quarter ending June 22

Claire Thomas informed members that AWMSG members had noted some significant improvements with regards to the National Prescribing Indicators (NPIs). AWMSG members suggested that the inclusion of brief information within the report, regarding

specific pieces of work that health boards had undertaken to achieve improvements, would be of benefit. Claire Thomas informed members that AWTTTC would be in touch to request such information where appropriate, and also asked for members to inform AWTTTC of any specific work that had been undertaken.

- Biosimilar Medicines Strategy

Mr Richard Boldero informed members that the Biosimilar Medicines Strategy was endorsed by AWMSG in December and will be disseminated shortly.

- NHS Wales inhaler carbon footprint report (Aug 22) (for information)

Mr Boldero informed members that this report was provided to AWMSG at the December meeting and an updated report was on this meeting's agenda.

- Inhaler decarbonisation scenarios (for information)

Mr Boldero informed members this was presented to AWMSG and generated a considerable amount of discussion. AWPAG members were thanked for their contributions to the scenarios. Mr Boldero also informed members that scenario 1, which focused on the switching of salbutamol MDIs to salbutamol DPIs, would be made into an additional page on the inhaler decarbonisation dashboard.

7.0 Documents for discussion

7.1 All Wales Paediatric Asthma Management and Prescribing Guidelines

The Chair welcomed Dr Julian Forton who presented the All Wales Paediatric Asthma Management and Prescribing Guidelines.

Dr Forton explained how there was a lack of consistent guidelines for paediatric asthma, and members were told that this new guideline will address this unmet need. The guideline was shared on-screen and explained in detail. Dr Forton highlighted the focus within the guideline on switching to combination inhalers from age six. The availability of the Asthma Hub app was also introduced and explained.

Following discussion, it was agreed that nomenclature of dosing should be aligned with the agreed wording of the already endorsed adult asthma guidelines, for ease of transition from paediatric to adult care. There was discussion about treatment and referral thresholds not being presented clearly in the guideline, and members were shown how this was presented in the guideline and supporting document. The ABPI representative also highlighted how not all available products are listed on this guideline, and that this is likely to be highlighted through consultation.

Though it falls outside of the remit of AWMSG and AWPAG, there was discussion around the use of the associated asthma app. It was noted that not everyone will have access to the app, and this may pose an issue for accessibility and equality of access. There was also a query raised around who would have access and ownership of any data collected by the app.

It was pointed out that the carbon footprint of inhalers could be presented more clearly as this was not immediately obvious. More consistency with the layout of adult guidelines would be preferable and it was noted that use of montelukast in this guideline differs from that in adults. In response it was stressed that this guideline has to be different as clinical management differs between children and adults. It was suggested that a reference table defining 'peak flows' could be included.

The Chair thanked Dr Forton for attending the meeting.

Action: Document to proceed to consultation in the New Year.

7.2 Polypharmacy in older people: a guide for healthcare professionals

The Chair welcomed Mrs Harriet Price and Miss Sheridan Court who presented Polypharmacy in older people: a guide for healthcare professionals. The main changes since the consultation were explained and members thanked them for their contribution. There was discussion around the wording referring to the Equality Act and wording on the use of monitored dosage systems; Mrs Price and Miss Court agreed to investigate the information sources to confirm the most appropriate wording before this document proceeds.

The Chair thanked for Mrs Price and Miss Court for attending the meeting, and agreed that the document could proceed to AWMSG for endorsement.

Action: Document to proceed to AWMSG for endorsement.

7.3 Review of the Common Ailments Service (CAS) Formulary

The Chair welcomed Mrs Lindsay Davies and Mrs Dianne Burnett who presented the Review of the Common Ailments Service (CAS) Formulary and Patient Information Leaflets.

Changes that had been made to the format of the CAS monographs were explained to members, and members were told that the accompanying patient information leaflets would be reviewed after the monographs had been agreed.

There was discussion around what was meant by 'an episode' of an illness. In the case of the CAS formulary, it was explained that 'an episode' referred to the original presentation to the prescribing pharmacist. It was clarified that the CAS is designed for acute cases and is for short term guidance, and not for treating conditions long-term.

There was discussion around the inclusion of cost/relative cost in the CAS. There was also discussion around the use and recommendation of opioids. It was agreed that caution should be used when recommending opioids, but that they also have an importance in many clinical pathways (e.g. if patients are intolerant of NSAIDs).

Members thanked for Mrs Davies and Mrs Burnett for attending the meeting. It was agreed that the updated CAS formulary document could proceed to consultation in the new year, after the authors had confirmed some remaining points with relevant specialists.

Action: Document to proceed to consultation in the New Year.

7.4 Expanding the Common Ailments Service

The Chair welcomed Mr Sam Macdonald who gave a presentation on Expanding the Common Ailments Service. Members expressed their enthusiasm for the CAS and presented some ideas for improvement. Timescales for further meetings about CAS were discussed. There was a query about whether all services are able to offer equal access to the CAS, and it was acknowledged that there may be access gaps. It was also acknowledged that patient knowledge of what CAS is could be improved, with clear messaging to patients when the CAS can provide 'advice only' for some conditions.

7.5 Tramadol Leaflet

Dr Paul Deslandes informed members that AWTTTC had received a query about the recently updated and published Tramadol patient information leaflet and asked members for their thoughts.

Members were told that the query was around the use of short-term tramadol as an analgesic by a health board emergency department, which doesn't necessarily align

with the wording of the current leaflet. There was discussion around what constitutes short-term use, and around the overall scope of the leaflet.

The consensus of members was to leave the leaflet as it is – as use in acute and emergency settings would require development of a different leaflet entirely – but make the health board aware they can use the content for developing their own leaflet for the acute care setting (referencing as appropriate).

Action: AW TTC to respond to enquirer allowing them to tweak the content for use in their own leaflet for the acute care setting.

7.6 National Prescribing Indicators – update and review process

Claire Thomas informed members that AWMSG had agreed to a three yearly update and review of the NPIs at the September meeting, and asked members for their comments on the proposed update and review process, before the document progresses to AWMSG. There were no issues raised by members.

Action: Document to progress to AWMSG

7.7 Primary Care Antimicrobial Guidelines – Updates

The Chair welcomed Dr Nik Reid and Miss Meryl Davies who informed members that a couple of further minor amends to the Primary Care Antimicrobial Guidelines had been requested by the All Wales Antimicrobial Guidelines Group. Dr Reid and Miss Davies requested member approval for these amends so that the guidance could be published and then shared with AWMSG for information.

Members did not raise any concerns/queries over the amends.

Action: Document to be published with agreed amends, and sent to AWMSG for information.

7.8 Understanding Unlicensed Medicines

The Chair welcomed Dr Efthymia Mantzourani who informed members that following consultation of the Understanding Unlicensed Medicines document there were a few queries raised which required members views.

Members were concerned that the current wording in the section on ‘private prescriptions’ in the patient information leaflet would encourage patients to seek out private prescriptions. It was agreed that the section should be reworded to better reflect the aims of the guidance. Members were asked about clinical checks community pharmacists would perform when patients are transferred from primary or secondary care. Discussion focussed on what it was practical to ask community pharmacists to do.

There was also discussion around the transfer of patients between secondary to primary care, and what might be appropriate in practice.

The chair explained to members that the infographic will be updated based on consultation feedback, and this will be made available for members comments.

Action: The document will be updated based on feedback received, and return to AWPAG for members to review in March 2023.

8.0 Acknowledgement Process

8.1 Once daily amikacin prescribing and monitoring guidelines (adults)

Dr Nik Reid presented the Once-daily amikacin prescribing and monitoring guidelines (adults). Members agreed for this document to proceed to AWMSG for acknowledgement.

Action: Document to proceed to AWMSG for acknowledgement

8.2 Mental health medicines in older adults - Adverse Drug Reaction (ADRe) Profile

Dr Tom Curran introduced the ADRe Profile, asked if members would be happy for this document to proceed to AWMSG for acknowledgement and welcomed comments. Dr Curran explained how this document had previously come to AWPAG and AWMSG in 2018-19 seeking full AWMSG endorsement. While it was noted as an example of best practice, it was not felt to be appropriate for endorsement by AWMSG at the time. Dr Curran replied to a query around where the document was hosted and how it could be accessed, clarifying that it was currently free access, with a digital format available on the website. However, it was acknowledged that there needed to be additional clarity on exactly what was to be available on the website, and what amount of registration was going to be required.

Members were happy for the document to proceed to AWMSG for acknowledgement.

Action: Document to proceed to AWMSG for acknowledgement.

9.0 AWMSG Medicines Optimisation Document Review

Dr Tom Curran presented the AWMSG Medicines Optimisation Document Review. He thanked AWPAG members for the votes they submitted, which have informed how each of the documents listed will be considered. The majority will be kept on the website. Dr Curran outlined the reasons behind why some had been flagged for removal, and highlighted that the documents categorised as being appropriate for 'review' will be investigated further by AWTTTC (in collaboration with the original authors as needed), with the information gained being used to prioritise those reviews within the current work programme.

10.0 Verbal updates

10.1 Yellow Card COVID Vaccine Reports

Mrs Claire Thomas and Mrs Dianne Burnett gave an update on the Yellow Card COVID vaccine reports. Members were informed that COVID vaccine Yellow Card reports had not previously been included within the NPIs as the data provided by the MHRA was not in a format suitable for analysis for the purposes of the indicator. However, from quarter 2 of 2022/23, Yellow Card COVID vaccine related reports had been included within the main data set from the MHRA, therefore enabling full analysis. Members were asked whether they wished these reports to be included within the NPI data from quarter 2 onwards, bearing in mind prescribing incentive schemes and the recent changes to the secondary care and member of public reporting targets. Claire Thomas informed members that the majority of COVID vaccine reports had been submitted by members of the public with very few from GP practices or secondary care. Overall members were supportive of including COVID vaccine reports. Claire Thomas informed members that the NPI quarterly report would note that COVID vaccine reports were now included within the data.

Action: AWTTTC to include COVID vaccine reports in Yellow Card NPIs moving forward, with an explanatory note included in the report for 2022/23 Quarter 2.

10.2 Opioid ADQs

Mrs Claire Thomas informed members that the issue regarding some ADQ values for opioids which had been removed by NHS Business Services Authority had now been rectified due to work undertaken by NHSWSSP. Claire Thomas expressed thanks towards NHSWSSP and noted that quarter 1 and 2 data for the opioid burden and high strength opioid NPIs had been updated on SPIRA.

10.3 SPIRA Steering Committee

Mrs Claire Thomas provided members with an overview of the most recent SPIRA Steering Committee meeting, and highlighted that some dashboards within SPIRA will be tweaked over the coming months based on feedback.

10.4 All Wales Guidance for Prescribing Intervals – NPI impact

Mrs Claire Thomas reminded members of previous discussions at AWPAG regarding the impact of the All Wales Guidance for Prescribing Intervals on the NPIs. Members had previously agreed the impact on the majority of the NPIs is likely to be minimal as many of the drugs covered by the indicators are unsuitable for longer prescribing intervals. Claire Thomas informed members that Steven Griffiths, AWTTC data analyst, had developed a dashboard to monitor significant changes in prescribing intervals related to the NPIs, but no movement had been noted as yet. Claire Thomas agreed to keep members informed of any issues and noted that the calculation of targets and thresholds for 2023/24 may need to take this into consideration.

10.5 NHS Wales inhaler carbon footprint report - September 2022

Mr Richard Boldero gave an update on the NHS Wales inhaler carbon footprint report for September 2022. It was mentioned that giving relatable scales for use of carbon (e.g. equivalent miles of air travel) is helpful. It was mentioned that useful and positive information on the table on page 6 could be prioritised in a more prominent place in the document.

Action: AWTTC to investigate formatting updates to report.

10.6 Prescribing Dilemmas – private shared care

Dr Paul Deslandes gave an update on a prescribing dilemma raised at the last meeting, specifically secondary care clinicians working on a private basis, requesting shared care follow-up arrangements with NHS GPs. The matter has been raised with Welsh Government, who have suggested developing a National Decision Framework, taking into account ethical and financial considerations, to take this matter forward.

Action: AWTTC to explore how to take this work forward.

10.7 Value-Based prescribing – asthma biologics data

Mr Richard Boldero gave an update on value-based prescribing and the asthma biologics data. Members were requested to provide nominations of any health board colleagues able to assist in determining asthma patients receiving biological medicines.

Action: AWPAG members to nominate health board colleagues in determining asthma patients receiving biological medicines.

10.8 Primary Care Engagement with Medicines Optimisation Resources – List of actions

Dr Tom Curran informed members of the recommendations raised by YMA and actions taken or planned by AWTTC to address these.

10.9 Repeat Prescribing and Annual Review / Recall Process in General Practice

Dr Tom Curran informed members that a new project submitted by Rachel Brace was now underway. This project was following on from her presentation at a previous Best Practice Day (October 2021) where they presented on a framework for an annual chronic disease management review/recall process in general practice. Dr Curran said that an email will be shared with members following the meeting; the email will provide more background detail for the project and ask for volunteers to participate in a short life working group to assist Rachel with the development of the documentation.

Action: AW TTC to share further information on the project with members.
Action: Members to volunteer for the short life working group.

11.0 AWMSG 20th Anniversary Conference – Feedback

Mrs Ruth Lang gave feedback from the AWMSG 20th Anniversary Conference held at Cardiff City Stadium on the 19th November 2022.

12.0 Feedback from the All Wales Chief Pharmacists Group

Mrs Bethan Tranter was not in attendance at the meeting so no feedback was provided.

13.0 Feedback from Health Boards and Velindre NHS Trust

There was nothing to feedback from the Health Boards.

14.0 Feedback from Public Health Wales

Mrs Sian Evans was not in attendance for this part of the meeting so no feedback was provided.

15.0 Any other business

The Chair thanked Dr Becky McGee for her contribution to AWPAG over the years as this was her last AWPAG meeting.

There was no further business.

16.0 Date of next meeting: 15th March 2023