

ALL WALES PRESCRIBING ADVISORY GROUP (AWPAG)

Minutes of meeting held on

15th March 2023 commencing at 9.30 am via Zoom

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

Voting members

Mrs Vicky Allum	Interim Head of Pharmacy, Primary Care and Community Services – Betsi Cadwaladr UHB
Dr Richard Brown	General Practitioner – Hywel Dda UHB
Dr Phil Cox	General Practitioner – Swansea Bay UHB
Ms Helen Davies	Prescribing Advisor – Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB
Mrs Sian Evans	Consultant in Public Health - Public Health Wales
Ms Hazel Hopkins	Prescribing Advisor – Hywel Dda UHB
Dr Lynette James	All Wales Consultant Pharmacist – Acute Care & Medication Safety
Ms Rachel Jenkins	ABPI representative
Dr Gemma Rogers	General Practitioner, Aneurin Bevan UHB
Mrs Jacqueline Seaton	Chief Pharmacist – Powys THB
Mr Darren Smith	Pharmacist – Swansea Bay UHB
Mr Emyr Stephens	Vale Locality Lead Pharmacist – PCIC Cardiff & Vale UHB
Mrs Bethan Tranter	Chief Pharmacist – Velindre NHS Trust
Mrs Fiona Woods	Lay member

In attendance (non-voting)

Ms Joe Ferris	ABPI
Mr Richard Boldero	AWTTC Senior Pharmacist
Dr Rob Bracchi	AWTTC Medical Advisor
Dr Thomas Curran	AWTTC Project Manager
Miss Sara Pickett	AWTTC Principal Health Economist
Mrs Claire Thomas	AWTTC Senior Pharmacist
Ms Karen Jones	AWTTC Senior Pharmacist

Presenting

Mrs Lindsay Davies	Attended for Item 7.1 only
Mrs Dianne Burnett	Attended for Item 7.1 only
Ms Chineze Ivenso	Attended for Item 7.2 only
Dr Efthymia Mantzourani	Attended for Item 7.3 only
Dr Julian Forton	Attended for Item 7.4 only
Dr Nik Reid	Attended for Items 7.6 and 8.1 only
Miss Meryl Davies	Attended for Items 7.6 and 8.1 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 new members, Mrs Vicky Allum, Mrs Fiona Woods, Mr Emyr Stephens (deputising for Clare Clement), Ms Joe Ferris

(deputising for Dr Rick Greville) and Ms Rachel Jenkins (deputising for Mrs Sue Knights - APBI).

2.0 Apologies

Apologies were received from:

Mrs Clare Clement	Prescribing Advisor – Cardiff and Vale UHB
Dr Rick Greville	Director ABPI Cymru/Wales
Mrs Sue Knights	ABPI representative
Mr Malcolm Latham	Lay member
Mr Paul Fleming	BGMA
Mrs Amy Williams	Other healthcare professional eligible to prescribe
Mr Andrew Evans	Chief Pharmaceutical Officer, Welsh Government

3.0 Declarations of Interest and Confidentiality Agreement

The Chair asked members to declare any interests relevant to the meeting and Ms Rachel Jenkins declared a personal non-specific interest in items 7.4, 8.2 and 8.8. The Chair confirmed that Ms Jenkins would not participate in these discussions.

4.0 Chair's report

Membership

Members were informed of the following resignations:

David Pyle – Alternate Hospital Consultant representative
David Barnard – Lay member
Alan Meudell – Lay member
Hywel Jones – Pharmacy representative, Aneurin Bevan UHB
Adrian Byrne – Alternate Pharmacy representative, Powys THB

Members were informed of the following new appointments:

Mrs Fiona Woods – Lay member
Mr Malcolm Latham – Lay member
Vicky Allum- Interim Head of Pharmacy, Primary Care and Community Services – Betsi Cadwaladr UHB

Nominations have been received for main and alternate Pharmacist representatives for Aneurin Bevan UHB and GP representation for Betsi Cadwaladr UHB.

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 AWTTTC.

The Chair confirmed that the AWPAG constitution had been reviewed and updated to include a Community Pharmacist; also, medical and pharmacy representation from Velindre Trust.

5.0 Minutes of previous AWPAG meeting – 14th December 2022

The minutes of the previous meeting were checked for accuracy and agreed. There were no matters arising.

6.0 Feedback from AWMSG – 8th February and 7th March 2022

Feedback on the recent AWMSG meetings.

- Polypharmacy in older people: A guide for healthcare professionals (for endorsement)
Dr Thomas Curran confirmed AWMSG's endorsement of the resource subject to the inclusion of a general statement alerting healthcare professionals to consider differences in demographics. It was noted that this resource had now been published and is available on the AWTTTC website.

- National Prescribing Indicators update and review process (for endorsement)
Mrs Claire Thomas confirmed AWMSG's endorsement of the NPI review process and therefore NPIs will now be reviewed and updated on a three yearly basis. This process will commence in Autumn of this year with a questionnaire and Mrs Thomas informed members that AWTTTC will be looking for volunteers to be part of an NPI sub group.
- National Prescribing Indicators – Analysis of prescribing data to September 2022 (for information)
Mrs Claire Thomas informed members that AWMSG had highlighted the positive changes in this document and asked AWPAG members to consider good practice that could be shared from the health boards.
- Primary Care Antimicrobial Guidelines updates (for information)
Dr Thomas Curran reminded members of the three updates considered at the last AWPAG meeting. These updates have now been published and were taken to AWMSG for information.
- Amikacin Guidelines (for acknowledgement)
Dr Thomas Curran confirmed AWMSG's acknowledgment of the guidelines, with a request to be passed on to the authors that clarity be added to how the dosing recommendations are referenced. Dr Curran noted that AWTTTC are currently awaiting a website from All Wales antimicrobial guidance team that can be linked to from the AWTTTC website.
- NHS Wales inhaler carbon footprint report – November 2022
Mr Richard Boldero informed members that the report for data to November 2022 was presented to AWMSG at the March meeting. A request was made to make a slight amendment to allow a comparison to the three-month period of the equivalent year. This will now feature in the report for data to January 2023.

7.0 Documents for discussion

7.1 Review of the Common Ailments Service (CAS) Formulary

The Chair welcomed Mrs Lindsay Davies and Mrs Dianne Burnett who gave an update on the changes to the document after consultation. During consultation, the document was also reviewed by the community pharmacy group and an update was given on their feedback and changes made to the documents based on this, namely the changes to terminology around what constitutes an 'episode' with it being possible that some conditions may require multiple consultations per episode.

There was discussion around the removal of codeine from the monographs and around the production of associated patient information leaflets. It was acknowledged that further feedback from optometry groups was currently required, and work is in progress to address this.

Members were informed that the sore throat monograph had had a minor adjustment since consultation. Members were also informed that work is ongoing to support referrals to the CAS formulary to ensure success of the service.

Action: Proceed to AWMSG

7.2 All Wales protocol for the appropriate prescribing of antipsychotics for people living with dementia

The Chair welcomed Dr Chineze Ivenso who presented the All Wales protocol for the appropriate prescribing of antipsychotics for people living with dementia. Members were asked for their initial thoughts on the overall scope and aims of the protocol.

Discussion ensued regarding how best to integrate this protocol into GP practice. Members asked for clarity around responsibility for antipsychotic review, especially where care is transferred between different settings. A point was raised around the prominence of

non-pharmacological interventions versus antipsychotics, and whether the protocol should include a greater focus on non-pharmacological interventions. Members felt that non-pharmacological interventions as the first step, rather than antipsychotics, should be highlighted more clearly and it was suggested that the name of the document could be amended to support this. Members felt that the document was missing detail on tapering guidance, and the document could provide clearer guidance on long term prescribing of antipsychotics. Members felt that information regarding the rationale for using a licensed antipsychotic over an unlicensed antipsychotic could be included, with inclusion of risks/side effects for each antipsychotic to aid decision making. Members noted that the risks associated with using antipsychotics should be made clearer in the document, and suggested that it would be useful for the document to state that a discussion regarding the risks and benefits with the patient and their family should be recorded in the patient's notes.

Action: Document to be updated with recommendations from AWPAG.

7.3 Understanding Unlicensed Medicines

The Chair welcomed Dr Efthymia Mantzourani who informed members of updates to the document following consultation, and outlined amendments.

A point was raised around varying costs of unlicensed medicines between different care settings and whether this may cause any issues with transfer of care. Members felt that this issue should be monitored post-publication, and addressed in the document in future if needed. A point was raised around who can dispense, and ensuring it is clear that 'dispensing doctors/GPs' were included from the start of the document. It was raised that the link to the PALs service in the Patient Information leaflet led to an England based service, and it was agreed to investigate a link more appropriate for use in Wales. Discussion around the inclusion of the word 'value' into the infographic was had, and the possibility to add a definition of value-based healthcare into the document.

Action: Author to action the points raised before the AWPAG chair can confirm the document to proceed to AWMSG

7.4 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 following consultation.

Dr Forton thanked members for their comments and explained the changes to the documents since consultation. Members were asked specifically about the Clenil modulite 200mcg inhaler and whether this should be included as an unlicensed use; or whether the licensed 100mcg version should instead be included in the guidelines. Members agreed that the licensed product should be the preferential choice for inclusion.

There was discussion around the importance of promoting carbon neutral treatments and inhaler disposal. It was pointed out that inhaler disposal schemes were not yet available across Wales, and it was requested that this mention should be removed from the document. On the issue of cost-effectiveness of the treatment options, Dr Forton stressed the importance of consistent messaging within the guidelines and the need to rationalise the available options.

Action: Dr Forton to make amendment of Clenil modulite inhaler strength and remove reference to inhaler disposal scheme.

Action: Document to proceed to AWMSG

7.5 Opioids in palliative care – Patient information leaflets (minor update)

The Chair welcomed Ms Karen Jones who gave an update on changes to the document to be considered by AWPAG.

There was discussion around it being renamed from a 'manual' to a 'leaflet', and the included examples for slow-release morphine. It was suggested that MST Continus was now rarely used and other options may make more sense to use in examples. There was also a request to review the use of terms such as 'sustainable-release' or 'modified-release', to be more consistent throughout. It was suggested that a statement on 'returning left over medicines to pharmacy for disposal' be added. It was requested that the Velindre logo be updated to the latest version.

Members acknowledged this was a minor update, so more detailed review and changes to the documents are not within the scope of this meeting.

Members were also informed about potential plans to enable the development of patient information leaflets in additional easy-read formats for future leaflets that go through the process to AWMSG endorsement.

Action: To proceed to AWMSG for information

7.6 Primary Care Antimicrobial Guidelines – Updates

The Chair welcomed Dr Nik Reid and Miss Meryl Davies who informed members of the proposed updates to the formatting of the 'Rhinosinusitis' section to improve clarity. Members were also informed of a change that had already been made to the guidelines relating to nitrofurantoin tablets not being suitable for crushing.

Action: Members approved the changes.

8.0 Verbal updates

8.1 Antimicrobial NPIs – baseline year update

Miss Meryl Davies provided an update to members on the suggested targets and thresholds for NPIs for 2023/2024, taking into account the 10-year UK Antimicrobial National Action Plan (NAP) and impact of the recent IGAS outbreak on 4C prescribing. Members agreed with the proposal to maintain the baseline year of 2019-2020 for total antibacterial items/1,000 STAR-PUs with a 10% reduction, and for 4C prescribing, to use the movement to the lowest quartile method using September 2022 quarter data.

Action: AW TTC to update NPI Specifications document with the agreed targets and thresholds.

8.2 Best Value Biological Medicine – bevacizumab

Mr Richard Boldero informed members that bevacizumab had been removed from the best value biological medicine NPI basket.

8.3 Best Practice Day – 13th July 2023

Mrs Claire Thomas provided members with an overview of the agenda and format of the of the upcoming Best Practice Day. Members were asked to identify best practice initiatives from each health board.

Action: AW TTC to contact members to secure their commitment to host an interactive health board session.

8.4 SPIRA Steering Committee

Mrs Claire Thomas provided members with an overview of the discussions at the most recent SPIRA Steering Committee meeting held in January. The next meeting is scheduled for April 2023.

8.5 NHS Wales inhaler carbon footprint report – December 2022

Mr Richard Boldero informed members of the latest report and pointed out some of the key metric changes. Members were requested to suggest any changes they would like to see for consideration. One member suggested making table 1 more prominent within the report and Mr Boldero agreed to investigate this.

8.6 AWMSG Medicines Optimisation document reviews

Dr Thomas Curran gave an update on the work programme for medicines optimisation projects and confirmed that work is currently being prioritised.

8.7 Adverse Drug Reaction (ADRe) profile (Acknowledgement)

Dr Thomas Curran gave an update on progress with the ADRe profile that had been tabled at the previous AWPAG meeting for consideration for acknowledgement and is due to be considered at the April meeting of AWMSG.

8.8 Value-based Prescribing – asthma biologics

Mr Richard Boldero gave an update on the usage of biological medicines for asthma, and asked members for nominations of health board representatives who could assist with validating the data. Mr Boldero agreed to send an email to members detailing this request.

Action: Mr Richard Boldero to seek nominations from each health board.

9.0 Feedback from the All Wales Chief Pharmacists Group

Mrs Bethan Tranter gave an update from the Chief Pharmacists Group. This included details of the upcoming Homecare Standards review, a Welsh Government commissioned review of secondary care pharmacy services and the details of a genomics guidance document co-badged with the RPS. Members were also informed of a document published by HEIW on pharmacy workforce strategy that is out for consultation, the development of working groups to tackle key pharmaceutical services issues in Wales, and an update on the Transforming Access to Medicines (TRAMs) service. Mrs Jacqueline Seaton gave an update on the Blueteq agenda and Home Office licenses.

10.0 Feedback from Health Boards and Velindre NHS Trust

No feedback was received from health board representatives.

11.0 Feedback from Public Health Wales

Mrs Sian Evans provided a brief update from the inhaler task and finish group.

12.0 Any other business

No other business was raised.

12.1 Format of future meetings (e.g. face-to-face / hybrid)

The Chair gave an update on the format of future meetings with the next meeting in June currently planned to be held as a hybrid meeting based in Cardiff Metropolitan University, Cyncoed, Cardiff.

12.2 Opioids ADQs

Mrs Claire Thomas gave an update on the situation regarding opioid ADQ values and the impact on the NPIs. Members had previously demonstrated a consensus to move towards the use of DDDs. Mrs Claire Thomas will update members by email on further developments.

Action: Mrs Claire Thomas to update members on further developments.

13.0 Date of next meeting: 28th June 2023