

**ALL WALES PRESCRIBING ADVISORY GROUP**  
**DRAFT Minutes of meeting held on**  
**Wednesday, 2 December 2020, commencing 9.30 am via Zoom**

**Chair** – Dr Laurence Grey                      Consultant, Cardiff and Vale UHB

**Voting members**

Mr David Barnard	Lay member
Mr Robert Caine	Healthcare professional eligible to prescribe
Mrs Clare Clement	Prescribing Advisor, Cardiff and Vale UHB
Mrs Sian Evans	Consultant in Public Health, PHW
Dr Lynette James	All Wales Consultant Pharmacist – Acute Care & Medication Safety
Mrs Sue Knights	ABPI Representative
Mr Darren Smith	Pharmacist, Swansea Bay UHB
Ms Kate Spittle	Lead Pharmacist Primary Care, Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB
Mrs Sue Beach	Lead Clinical Development Pharmacist, Hywel Dda UHB
Mr Hywel Jones	Locality Prescribing Advisor and Lead Pharmacist for Aneurin Bevan UHB Prisons

**In attendance (non-voting)**

Mr Richard Boldero	AWTTC
Dr Rob Bracchi	AWTTC
Dr Thomas Curran	AWTTC
Dr Paul Deslandes	AWTTC
Dr Rick Greville	ABPI
Ms Kath Haines	AWTTC
Ms Carolyn Hughes	AWTTC
Mrs Rachel Jonas	AWTTC
Ms Ruth Lang	AWTTC
Mrs Karen Samuels	AWTTC
Mrs Claire Thomas	AWTTC
Dr Tessa Lewis	To attend for item 7.1 only
Dr Nik Reid	To attend for item 7.1 only
Ms Vicki Richards-Green	To attend for item 7.3 only

**Observers**

Alan Meudell	
Claire James	
Bridget-Ann Kenny	AWTTC

**Key of abbreviations**

ABPI	Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry
AWMSG	All Wales Medicines Strategy Group
AWTTC	All Wales Therapeutics and Toxicology Centre
CEPP	Clinical Effectiveness Prescribing Programme
HEIW	Health Education and Improvement Wales
MHRA	Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency
NICE	National Institute for Health and Care Excellence
NPIs	National Prescribing Indicators
NWIS	NHS Wales Informatics Service
PHW	Public Health Wales

## **1.0 Welcome and introduction**

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed members. Members introduced themselves.

## **2.0 Apologies**

Apologies were received from:

Dr Richard Brown	General Practitioner, Hywel Dda UHB
Mr Ross Davies	Pharmacist, Hywel Dda UHB
Mr Paul Fleming	British Generics Manufacturers
Mr Dylan Jones	Community Pharmacist, Powys Teaching HB
Dr Becky McGee	General Practitioner, Aneurin Bevan UHB
Mr Sudhir Serhwat	Community Pharmacist, Powys Teaching HB
Dr Anders Skarsten	Consultant, Powys Teaching HB
Mr Neil Thomas	Nurse Representative
Mr Ben Woodhouse	Pharmacist deputy member, Betsi Cadwaladr UHB

## **Not in attendance:**

Mrs Bethan Tranter	Chief Pharmacist, Velindre
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## **3.0 Declarations of Interest and Confidentiality Agreement**

The Chair asked members to declare any interests relevant to the meeting. No declarations pertinent to the agenda were received.

## **4.0 Chair's report**

### **Membership issues as per Chair's report.**

The Chair was pleased to announce that Clare Clement had agreed to undertake the role of Vice Chair of the group.

The Chair informed members that Sian Evans was attending her last meeting as she had now served the maximum of two terms on the group. The Chair also informed members that Mike Curson and Sally Lewis were now stepping down from the group. The Chair conveyed his thanks to all three members for their time and support to the group.

Members were also informed that Becky McGee, General Practitioner representative, was to continue for a second term on the group.

Members were reminded that there are still currently vacancies for doctors from Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board and Swansea Bay University Health Board along with a doctor member from Velindre Cancer Centre. Should further information regarding these nominations be required members were asked to contact either the Chair or Anne Coles. The Chair also informed members that he had contacted colleagues directly with regards to the current vacancies.

## **5.0 Minutes of previous AWPAG meeting – 23 September 2020**

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

Matters arising:

### **7.4 Prescribing of denosumab (Prolia) in Wales (2020) update**

The Chair informed members that further to requesting further information on this proposed update, no response had been received.

### 7.9 SBAR: NPI Process Review

The Chair confirmed that the recommendations of the SBAR were being implemented and a questionnaire would be circulated in the New Year.

### 8.1 SPIRA Steering Committee

Kate Spittle confirmed that she would soon be able to share the name of a representative from Cwm Taf Morgannwg for the SPIRA Steering Committee.

## **6.0 Feedback from AWMSG**

Richard Boldero gave feedback from AWMSG

- SBAR – Low Value for Prescribing – paper 3 – suspension of active monitoring  
AWMSG members supported the recommendation of AWPAG. This will be for a limited time with expectation of AWPAG to review in March 2021 for implementation of active monitoring of the low value medicines in paper 3 from April 2021.
- SBAR – The management of vitamin B12 deficiency during the COVID-19 Pandemic  
Agreement was made for a request to be put to Welsh Government for a review of the SLS criteria around oral cyanocobalamin. This has also been removed from the vitamins and minerals section of the Low Value for Prescribing – paper 3.
- Delivering Value Through Disinvestment: An exploration and analysis of appropriate disinvestment in medicines considered Low Value for Funding by NHS Wales  
Discussion was led by Professor Debra Fittsimmons and Professor Dyfrig Hughes, two of the main authors of the paper. Although members thought there were a number of areas requiring further consideration and development, overall they agreed the set out process was logical and workable. The paper will be considered again at the meeting of AWMSG in December 2020.

## **7.0 Documents for discussion**

### **7.1 Nitrofurantoin in Treatment of Urinary Tract Infection: Best Practice Reminders**

Dr Tessa Lewis gave an update to members on the “Nitrofurantoin in Treatment of Urinary Tract Infection: Best Practice Reminders” document.

A query was raised as to the dissemination of this document to community pharmacists. Members were informed that NWSSP send information to community pharmacists on behalf of AWTTC and disseminations are also sent to Community Pharmacy Wales.

It was confirmed that all comments received on this document had been forwarded to Dr Lewis although some antimicrobial pharmacist comments had been received after the consultation deadline and therefore these comments had not been included in the table within the document. Dr Nik Reid also presented some further comments that he had received from antimicrobial pharmacists in Wales.

There was lengthy discussion about the focus of the leaflet and how it was not necessarily aligned to the title and original aims of the project. Options for re-focusing the content on notifying the reader of the risks associated with prescribing nitrofurantoin in patients with suspected pyelonephritis were discussed, as well as removing some of the broader content around management of lower UTIs which may otherwise be open to misinterpretation.

Following the discussion, it was felt that the document required changes before AWPAG sign it off for proceeding to AWMSG for endorsement. AWTTC agreed to

liaise with Dr Lewis and Dr Reid and coordinate making the required changes in preparation for e sign-off by the group. Members were happy for the document to progress this way.

The Chair thanked Dr Tessa Lewis and Dr Nik Reid for attending.

**Action:** AWTTC to liaise with Dr Tessa Lewis and Dr Nik Reid, and coordinate changes being made to the document.

**Action:** Updated document to be forwarded to AWPAG for e sign-off.

### **7.3 Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) Treatment and Withdrawal Management Guidelines for Adult Smokers in Secondary Care**

Vicki Richards-Green presented the “Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) Treatment and Withdrawal Management Guidelines for Adult Smokers in Secondary Care” document and gave members an overview of the background to the policy. Members welcomed the idea of the policy, but there were concerns over consultation in its development and that there appeared to be no involvement from Public Health Wales and the Welsh Government Smoking Cessation Group in the development of the document.

There were also concerns that it was not within AWPAG’s remit to comment on certain parts of the document such as service issues and that each service would differ from health board to health board. It was also noted that from pictures in the document it may be interpreted that AWPAG were endorsing some medications over others. There was also discussion over the differentiation between harm reduction and smoking cessation and assessment of dependence. It was felt by the group that prior to going out for wider consultation this document should first be shared with the Welsh Government Tobacco Group and other smoking cessation groups. Sian Evans agreed to speak with Vicki Richards-Green outside of the meeting before the document goes out for wider consultation.

The Chair thanked Vicki Richards-Green for bringing the document to the meeting.

**Action:** Vicki Richards-Green to speak with Sian Evans with regard to contacting specialist smoking cessation groups before the document goes out for wider consultation.

*Kate Spittle left meeting.* The Chair was informed that the quorum of ten voting members was now not met.

*Claire James and Bridget-Ann Kenny left the meeting*

### **7.2 Shared Care and Monitoring Guidance**

Claire Thomas presented the “Shared Care and Monitoring Guidance” document. Members were reminded that the draft document had been presented at the last meeting and the document subsequently circulated for consultation. It was noted that a large number of comments had been received, and the document updated in light of some responses, however further discussion was required to address a number of other comments. Discussion followed regarding the main points highlighted from the consultation. Members discussed the issue of patients under a shared care protocol changing GP practices. Clare Clements was unable to share her views on this due to technical difficulties, therefore it was agreed that she would speak with Claire Thomas outside of the meeting.

Members discussed the need for a Marketing Authorisation Holder (MAH) to be involved in development of a shared care protocol for a newly licensed drug. It was agreed that as all shared care protocols direct prescribers to the SPC, the MAH would

not be able to provide any information beyond what is contained in the SPC. In addition, members felt that a newly licensed drug would be unsuitable for shared care.

The starting point for the agreement when initiating the medicine was discussed but it was agreed that the intention is that this guideline provides a template for local adaptation. Discussion continued with regard to patients signing to state they understand their responsibilities with regard to shared care. However members felt that as this is not done for other medicines, there was no need to treat shared care drugs differently. A number of issues were raised with regard to patients signing but it was suggested for clarity a line could be added to this such as “ensure there is clearly documented informed consent either verbally or in written form” so it is left open for adaptation.

A further comment was discussed regarding whether community pharmacists should be made aware of patients with a shared care agreement. Members felt that, as patients are not registered with a community pharmacy, this may be difficult. However, patients should be advised to inform their community pharmacist, to allow an appropriate time frame to order the prescription, as not all medicines are stocked routinely.

The addition of a section relating to thresholds, at which point the consultant should be contacted, was discussed. It was felt if there is any concern then there should already be a good line of communication in place to discuss individual patients. It was agreed that a section could be added to the template for use when appropriate.

**Action:** CT to update document as per AWPAG suggestion then progress to AWMSG.

#### **7.4 Safeguarding Users of Opioid Patches by Standardising Patient/Caregiver Counselling (Update 2020)**

Kath Haines presented the “Safeguarding Users of Opioid Patches by Standardising Patient/Caregiver Counselling” (Update 2020) noting this was an update from 2016 and was in response to the MHRA Drug Safety Update on Fentanyl patches for non-cancer pain and risk of dependence and addiction associated with opioids. Kath Haines informed the group that this document was based on work originally undertaken by Janet Thomas in Betsi Cadwaladr who had also been given the opportunity to comment on the review. Members were asked for comments but none were received.

**Action:** AW TTC to prepare document for upload to website and to disseminate to AWMSG members.

#### **7.5 Persistent Pain Resources (Update 2020)**

Kath Haines presented the “Persistent Pain Resources” (Update 2020) which has also been updated in response to the MHRA Drug Safety Updates. A query was raised with regards to the possibility of the data in the graphs from 2016 being updated. It was explained that the document hadn’t had an overall review at this time, with the intention of doing this once the NICE chronic pain guidance is published in January 2021. It was suggested to include an asterisk with a comment to inform that these graphs will be updated during the full review of the document.

Tom Curran highlighted to members that the Tramadol resources on the AWMSG website also needed to take account of MHRA Drug Safety update. The document is currently going through a review and a statement will be put on the website to this effect, drawing the reader’s attention the MHRA Drug Safety Updates in the meantime.

**Action:** AW TTC to prepare updated document for upload to website and to disseminate to AWMSG members.

## **7.6 Medicines Optimisation Framework – Project scope**

Tom Curran presented the “Medicines Optimisation Framework – Project scope” document. This has been developed following the recent review of AWTTC and AWMSG and due to the increase in medicines optimisation work being undertaken by AWTTC. It was felt that now was a good opportunity to improve the clarity of the process and development of this framework is an objective on the current AWTTC work programme. Tom Curran gave an overview of the project scope and what is due to be included in the full document. There was a query with regards to the definition of ‘medicines optimisation’ and a short discussion followed. It was agreed that AWTTC’s definition would likely follow that of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society and be defined in the introduction section of the document.

**Action:** AWTTC to continue development of the document and to include the definition of medicines optimisation in the Introduction.

## **8.0 Verbal updates**

### **8.1 Medication review patient information leaflet**

Claire Thomas provided an update on the patient information leaflet contained within the Welsh National Standards for Medication Review. The leaflet has been updated in light of comments received from patients in the Hywel Dda reader group. The updated leaflet is within the document which will be presented to AWMSG at the December meeting.

### **8.2 Opioid burden NPI**

Claire Thomas informed members that further to the issue of ADQs for co-codamol 15/500 having been removed by NHS Digital as part of the One Drug Database work, discussion with Shared Services had taken place who had agreed to implement a fix from October 2020. As a result, opioid burden NPI data for Q4 2019/20 and Q1 and Q2 2020/21 will not include ADQs for co-codamol 15/500.

## **9.0 Best Practice Day 2021**

The Chair asked members their thoughts on the delivery of the Best Practice Day 2021. It was noted that the delivery would need to be virtual for now and that it had been suggested that 3 x 2 hour seminars on-line would hopefully increase accessibility. Holding the seminars in the months of Feb/Mar, June and September was suggested. The issue of topics for the seminars was discussed and one idea was to present ongoing work related to reducing the prescribing of sodium valproate in women of child-bearing age, aligned to work highlighted by the Cumberlege Report and the National Prescribing Safety Indicators (NPSIs). A concern was raised with regards to including it in a February seminar, as the Welsh Government Sodium Valproate Task Force are intending on releasing an action plan in March.

It was also suggested having a theme for each of the three seminars with each health board being involved at every one. It was noted that at the Best Practice Day in 2019 each health board demonstrated work undertaken and this was well received by the delegates. The Chair queried as to whether a session on continued implementation of improvement projects beyond their initial successful introduction could be included. Sian Evans informed the group that she had attended a conference where a year book had been submitted and suggested possibly AWTTC producing a catalogue. Another topic suggested was “What did we do differently in COVID?”. The Chair asked members to forward their ideas to AWTTC.

**Action:** Sian Evans to share work book.

**Action:** Members to share any ideas for topics.

*Lynette James left the meeting.*

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

Bethan Tranter was not present at the meeting.

**11.0 Feedback from Health Boards**

There was no feedback from Health Boards.

**12.0 Request for AWPAG deputy representative on IPCG**

No nominations had been received for the deputy representation on IPCG. Karen Samuels gave a brief overview of the role of IPCG to members.

**Action:** Members to forward nominations to Anne Coles, AWTTC.

**13.0 Any other business (Chair to have been informed prior to the meeting)**

Richard Boldero requested assistance from members in providing further insight with regard to the SLS review for oral cyanocobalamin. Any information to provide a greater understanding of what is happening in practice would be very helpful.

**Action:** Members to forward any further information to Richard Boldero, AWTTC.

**14.0 Date of next meeting: Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2021**