

ALL WALES PRESCRIBING ADVISORY GROUP (AWPAG)

**Minutes of meeting held on
20th September 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 Clare Clement	Lead Pharmacist for Primary, Community and Intermediate Care, Cardiff & Vale UHB
Mrs Sarah Davies	Senior Lecturer Advanced Clinical Practice, Swansea University
Dr Jennifer Ellis	General Practitioner, Betsi Cadwaladr UHB
Mrs Sian Evans	Consultant in Public Health - Public Health Wales
Ms Elizabeth Hallett	Pharmacist, Aneurin Bevan UHB
Ms Hazel Hopkins	Advisory Pharmacist, Hywel Dda UHB
Dr Lynette James	All Wales Consultant Pharmacist – Acute Care & Medication Safety
Mrs Sue Knights	ABPI representative
Mr Malcolm Latham	Lay member
Dr Gemma Rogers	General Practitioner, Aneurin Bevan UHB
Mrs Jacqueline Seaton	Chief Pharmacist, Powys THB
Mr Darren Smith	Primary Care Pharmacist – Swansea Bay UHB
Mrs Bethan Tranter	Chief Pharmacist, Velindre NHS Trust
Mrs Avril Tucker	Antimicrobial Pharmacist, Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB
Mrs Amy Williams	Physiotherapist, Other professions eligible to prescribe member
Mrs Fiona Woods	Lay member

In attendance (non-voting)

Dr Rick Greville	ABPI
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
Dr Stephanie Francis	AWTTC Programme Manager
Ms Karen Jones	AWTTC Senior Pharmacist
Ms Shaila Ahmed	AWTTC Senior Pharmacist
Dr Bridget-Ann Kenny	AWTTC Scientist
Dr Katherine Chaplin	AWTTC Scientist
Dr Carolyn Hughes	AWTTC Medical Writer
Mr David Haines	AWTTC Medical Writer
Mrs Sian Harbon	AWTTC Medical Writer
Dr Sara Pickett	AWTTC Health Economist

Observing

Mrs Rachel Andrew

Public Health Wales

Mr Paul Taylor

Lay member elect

External presenters

Hannah Saitch

Welsh Anaesthetic Green Network

Ramsey Sabit

Consultant in Respiratory Medicine, Cardiff & Vale UHB

Katie Pink

Consultant in Respiratory Medicine, Cardiff & Vale UHB

Victoria Richards-Green

Clinical Informatics and Prescribing Support Lead,

Aneurin Bevan UHB

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.

2.0 Apologies

Apologies were received from:

Ms Helen Davies

Principal Pharmacist for Medicines Optimisation in
Primary Care – Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB

Mrs Eryl Smeethe

Lead Prescribing Advisor – Aneurin Bevan UHB

Mr Paul Fleming

BGMA

3.0 Declarations of Interest and Confidentiality Agreement

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

4.0 Chair's report

Members were informed that nominations had been received for the alternate member for Public Health Wales.

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.

5.0 Minutes of previous AWPAG meeting – 28th June 2023

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

6.0 Feedback from AWMSG – 11th July and 11th September

Tom Curran updated members on recent AWMSG meetings:

- Inhaler decarbonisation report – The report was shared with AWMSG for information in July 2023.
- Antidepressant prescribing patterns and adverse events following introduction of a National Prescribing Indicator to monitor dosulepin usage in Wales – Presented to AWMSG for information in July 2023.
- National Prescribing Indicators 2022-2023: Analysis of prescribing data to March 2023 – Presented to AWMSG for information in September 2023. AWMSG members shared some thoughts on potential changes to indicators that could be considered; it was noted that the NPIs are due for update and review later in the year.
- Endocrine management of gender incongruence in adults: Prescribing guidance for non-specialist practitioners – The updated document was published on the website in August and went to AWMSG in September 2023 for information.
- Primary care antimicrobial guidelines – The document was published on the website following minor updates to ‘Scarlet Fever’ and ‘Vaginal candidiasis’ sections, and went to AWMSG in September 2023 for information.
- SBAR: Medicines optimisation resources – Process for archival – proposal for endorsement – AWMSG members shared their thoughts on the process which will be discussed during agenda item 7.2.

7.0 Documents for discussion

7.1 All Wales policy for medicines administration, recording, review, storage and disposal (MARRS)

Lynette James introduced the document that had been circulated for consultation and summarized the consultation responses. The majority of comments from the consultation related to social care, and changing the guidance to allow it to be more appropriate for non-healthcare staff working in social care settings. The challenges of writing one policy for different environments were discussed, including the terminology, definitions and language, as well as the different processes and systems.

The conclusion was that the consultation has identified a current need for social care guidance and that a separate, specific document would be worthwhile, linking to the healthcare focused document as a suite of resources, brought together with covering information. The fallout of this would be that the documents may have different time scales. It was noted that avoiding role specific prescribing duties would future proof the document, as well as adding more information about non-medical prescribers.

Action: Updated document focusing on healthcare to return to December meeting

7.2 AWMSG medicines optimisation documents – archival process

Bridget-Ann Kenny gave members an overview of changes to be made to the proposed medicines optimisation document review plans, based on AWMSG feedback. Resources designated to be ‘archived’ will remain on the AWTTTC website and be marked very clearly (on both the webpage and on the documentation) that it has not been reviewed and that AWTTTC can no longer

guarantee accuracy of content within. The specifics of how the status of 'archived' documents is presented on webpages will be explored by AWTTTC and presented to AWPAG at the December meeting. Development of a structured decision framework illustrating the rationale for 'archival' was also suggested by AWMSG, as a means to provide context of the decision, and will similarly be explored within the team and presented to AWPAG at the December meeting.

AWPAG members agreed with all those items currently suggested for 'archival'. Items requiring further consideration for minor updates or a review will be considered by AWTTTC alongside the current medicines optimisation workplan. It was agreed that 'archive' may not be the most appropriate word, and alternative terminology would be explored.

Action: To provide members with an update at the December meeting

7.3 Withdrawal of national desflurane contract in Wales

Dr Hannah Saitch gave an overview of the current situation with the anaesthetic gas desflurane, its current usage, and work to stop its use in Wales and across the UK. Dr Saitch explained that desflurane has a very high carbon footprint but there is also low clinical need, and current use in Wales was limited to only a few clinicians. The document has been out for consultation and questions had returned on the use in community hospitals and in patients with a higher BMI. There would be no amendment made based on community hospitals as it wouldn't be used in these settings and there were alternatives for patients with higher BMIs already available on the market. Members agreed that the document could proceed to AWMSG for endorsement.

Action: To proceed to AWMSG for endorsement in November

7.4 All Wales COPD Management and Prescribing Guidelines (Update 2023)

Richard Boldero and Dr Ramsey Sabit gave an overview of the document. Dr Sabit informed members that very few changes had been made in comparison to the previous document. As such members agreed that this was a minor update with no consultation required. A member requested an amendment to add a supporting statement justifying the choice of triple therapy for phenotypes 2 and 3. Following amendments it was agreed that this would be disseminated to members for e-sign off. It will then progress to AWMSG for information.

Action: Update document and circulate for e-sign off, followed by presentation to AWMSG for information in November

7.5 All Wales Adult Asthma Diagnosis and Management Guidelines (Update 2023)

Dr Katie Pink and Richard Boldero gave an overview of the updated guideline. Dr Pink informed members of changes to the previous version. A significant change is around the first-line option for mild asthma. As this is considered a significant change, the document includes the previous 'traditional' pathway and the new alternative pathway. Concerns were raised regarding the algorithm being 'very busy', but members also appreciated this was to keep the pathway on one page for ease of viewing and printing purposes. Dr Pink agreed to make

amendments for consistency with the use of the term 'off license' or 'unlicensed'. Dr Pink also advised that there will be a patient education program provided by other supporting bodies to help patients understand the changes coming. A member raised concerns over introducing socio-economic bias to patients who don't have access to the patient app. Members were advised that the app is outside of the remit of this group, however paper-based alternatives are available, albeit less interactive and responsive than an app.

Action: Proceed to consultation following amendments

7.6 Initial clinical management of nicotine withdrawal in adults in secondary care

Vicky Richards-Green and Karen Jones gave an overview of the project. There are currently policies in development in Public Health Wales and Welsh Government regarding vaping and smoking, and nicotine cessation services that are yet to be published. Currently, there is no provision of a service to move patients from vaping to no nicotine in Wales. Some hospitals in Wales have a 'no vaping rule' and some don't allow rechargeable vapes on site due to fire safety advice, but there is variation between health boards and hospitals.

The guidance is for all hospital settings to support adults with a nicotine addiction at the point of their admission to hospital. There was discussion regarding whether smoking forms part of the medication history in hospital. Members agreed that the paper should define nicotine dependence. Members requested that the table on page 13 reflect that Nicorette Quickmist is currently the only product licensed for NRT for people who vape. Concerns were raised around the age that people can get support to stop vaping, with regards to consent. Karen Jones advised that this document would need to align with future publications from Welsh Government and Public Health Wales.

Action: Proceed to consultation following amendments

7.7 Decarbonisation: inhaler prescribing, use and disposal 2023–2030 – A national strategy for Wales

Richard Boldero and Sian Evans provided members with details of the decarbonisation strategy for inhaler prescribing, use and disposal in Wales. There was discussion around the role of community pharmacy following comments made during consultation. Sian Evans advised that Community Pharmacy Wales are part of the task and finish groups, however she would take this back to the group to avoid things being done in isolation and to ensure that parties involved are aware of their responsibilities. Members agreed that the document could proceed to AWMSG for endorsement.

Action: To proceed to AWMSG for endorsement in November 2023

7.8 Prescribing dilemmas – private shared care

Paul Deslandes provided members with an overview of the issues regarding shared care between private and NHS clinicians. The issues that services have been facing around private shared care were explained. Following the last AWPAG meeting, the Welsh Risk Pool (WRP) were approached for their opinion. The WRP noted that any responsibility for ensuring safe treatment would be shared between the private specialist and the NHS GP. However, in

practice, it would be easier for a patient to claim from the GP (as GPs currently have NHS indemnification, which is government backed), rather than attempting to pursue the private specialist's indemnifier. WRP also advised that governance arrangements would require health boards to sign off the process, in order that the NHS would accept responsibility for the GP entering into the shared care agreement.

It was agreed that providing specific guidance in this area would not be feasible, and that the decision to enter into such an agreement was for individual GPs to make. However, the Prescribing Dilemmas document will be updated to reflect the information identified whilst reviewing this area of prescribing to provide some advice to prescribers.

Action: Prescribing Dilemmas document to be updated for consideration at December AWPAG

7.9 Common Ailments Service – Sore throat test and treat (minor update)

Tom Curran gave an overview of the project, advising that a minor update had been proposed in light of the sore throat test and treat pilot. Members highlighted that the statement 'very old people' should be defined, also the term 'scarlatina rash' should be expanded on to be more descriptive and address the appearance of the rash in individuals with darker skin tones. Members also requested the addition of a statement explaining that the sore throat test and treat service is only available in some community pharmacies.

Members agreed that the changes made could be confirmed by the AWPAG Chair prior to publication of the minor update. This would be followed by presentation to AWMSG for information.

Action: Amendments to be made and signed off by AWPAG Chair, prior to publication and presentation at AWMSG for information

8.0 Acknowledgement process

8.1 Wales Cancer Network SACT Supporting Guidelines

Sian Harbon gave an overview of the acknowledgement process and the SACT resources hub. Members were asked to consider the enclosed document as the first in a series of forthcoming documents, and whether they were happy to acknowledge the resource hub. Concerns were raised by members that whilst they were happy with this particular document to receive acknowledgement, they would prefer to acknowledge other documents planned for the hub prior to their publication. Members requested each document come to AWPAG for individual approval for acknowledgement, prior to going to AWMSG.

Actions: Cisplatin document to proceed to AWMSG for acknowledgement. Future Wales Cancer Network SACT supporting guidelines to come to AWPAG individually for acknowledgement.

9.0 Verbal updates

9.1 Chronic disease recall/review

Katherine Chaplin informed members that the external author is working on a draft of the toolkit with a second meeting of the short life working group planned for the end of November. The aim is to have a complete draft early 2024.

9.2 Penicillin allergy de-labelling

Dr Laurence Gray provided an overview of the project, highlighting that it is thought only 10% of patients documented to have a penicillin allergy actually have one. The document in development is based on the pilot de-labelling project carried out in Cardiff and Vale UHB. A draft document will be presented at the December meeting.

9.3 SPIRA Steering Committee – feedback

Claire Thomas provided feedback from the July meeting, noting the new dashboards added, covering benchmarking between health boards at BNF chapter level. Steering Committee members had requested training and had agreed that a lunchtime learning session would be most valuable.

9.4 NPI Sub Group

Karen Jones informed members that the NPI subgroup is due to meet on the 21st November 2023 and any expressions of interest to join the group are welcomed.

Action: Members to contact AWTTC with expressions of interest

9.5 Inhaler decarbonisation report

Richard Boldero advised that the enclosed June report included secondary care data for the first time and sought feedback from members on this inclusion. Overall it was positively received and members suggested it would be beneficial to be included going forward.

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

Paul Deslandes informed members that the authors are in the process of considering and responding to the consultation comments and will be discussed at the December meeting.

9.7 Antidepressant prescribing patterns and adverse events following introduction of a National Prescribing Indicator to monitor dosulepin usage in Wales

Paul Deslandes advised this was a paper based on SAIL data to find out what effect the NPI had on patients in Wales. Findings indicated there was no increase in harm to patients stopping dosulepin therapy.

10.0 Feedback from the All Wales Chief Pharmacists Group

Bethan Tranter advised that the Transforming Access to Medicines Service (TRAMS) is now looking at key immunotherapy agents to reduce costs. Swansea Bay are currently ahead of other health boards with e-prescribing. Blueteq high cost drugs system is currently held up with Data Protection Impact Assessment process. Jacqui Seaton informed members that Powys are waiting to start pilot on rheumatology drugs. There may be an issue on the horizon with controlled drugs and new home office licenses, they will bring more information to the December meeting.

11.0 Feedback from Health Boards and Velindre NHS Trust

Members had no additional feedback.

12.0 Feedback from Public Health Wales

There was no feedback from Public Health Wales.

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

Medicines access – Steph Francis informed members that AWTTTC are currently reviewing the process by which AWMSG supports medicines access in NHS Wales. A paper has been produced which provides an overview of the challenges faced by AWMSG as the medicines landscape across the UK changes. The paper will be circulated to members. AWTTTC will need to adapt processes, alongside the current health technology assessment and One Wales process, to ensure routes of access are suitable for the needs of the NHS in Wales.

Action: AWTTTC to circulate paper

14.0 Date of next meeting: Wednesday 13th December 2023