

ALL WALES PRESCRIBING ADVISORY GROUP
Minutes of meeting held on
Wednesday, 23rd September 2020, commencing 9.30 am via Zoom

Chair – Dr Laurence Grey

Consultant, Cardiff and Vale

Voting members

Mr David Barnard
Dr Richard Brown
Mr Robert Caine
Mrs Clare Clement
Mr Mike Curson
Mr Ross Davies
Mrs Sian Evans
Dr Lynette James

Lay member
General Practitioner, Hywel Dda
Healthcare professional eligible to prescribe
Prescribing Advisor, Cardiff and Vale
Pharmacist, Aneurin Bevan
Pharmacist, Hywel Dda
Consultant in Public Health, PHW
All Wales Consultant Pharmacist
– Acute Care & Medication Safety
Community Pharmacist, Powys
ABPI Representative
General Practitioner, Aneurin Bevan
Consultant, Powys
Pharmacist, Swansea Bay
Pharmacist, Cwm Taf Morgannwg
Nurse Representative

Mr Dylan Jones
Mrs Sue Knights
Dr Becky McGee
Dr Anders Skarsten
Mr Darren Smith
Ms Kate Spittle
Mr Neil Thomas

In attendance (non-voting)

Mr Richard Boldero	AWTTC
Dr Rob Bracchi	AWTTC
Dr Katherine Chaplin	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 Miranda Morton	Welsh Government
Dr Sara Pickett	AWTTC
Miss Laura Phillips	AWTTC
Mrs Karen Samuels	AWTTC
Ms Laura Taylor	AWTTC
Mrs Claire Thomas	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
NOAC	Non-Vitamin K antagonist oral anticoagulants
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. The Chair expressed a warm welcome to members who were attending their first meeting.

2.0 Apologies

Apologies were received from:

Mr Paul Fleming

Dr Sally Lewis

Mrs Bethan Tranter

Mr Ben Woodhouse

British Generics Manufacturers

National Clinical Lead for Value-Based and
Prudent Healthcare, Aneurin Bevan

Chief Pharmacist, Velindre

Pharmacist deputy member Betsi Cadwaladr UHB

3.0 Declarations of Interest and Confidentiality Agreement

The Chair asked members to declare any interests relevant to the meeting. Kath Haines confirmed that declarations already received were not pertinent to the agenda and that all members could stay throughout the meeting.

4.0 Chair's report

The Chair informed members that Kate Spittle has now been appointed as Pharmacist member for Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB, following serving as a deputy member on the group for many years. The Chair informed members that Darren Smith has been appointed as the Pharmacist member for Swansea Bay, Helen Davies has been appointed as the deputy Pharmacist member for Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB and that Robert Caine has been appointed as the 'Healthcare professional eligible to prescribe' member.

The Chair informed members that the group is still seeking a Vice Chair nomination.

Members were reminded that there are still currently vacancies for doctors for Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board and Swansea Bay University Health Boards along with a doctor member from Velindre. Should further information regarding these nominations be required members were asked to contact Anne Coles.

5.0 Minutes of previous AWPAG meeting – 10 June 2020

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

6.0 Feedback from AWMSG

Kath Haines gave members a brief update on all of the papers (other than the respiratory papers) that had recently been considered by AWMSG, and informed members that the papers had been endorsed by AWMSG and were now available via the website.

Richard Boldero informed members that the All Wales Prescribing Guidelines for Asthma had been endorsed by AWMSG on an interim basis pending the publication of the joint NICE/BTS/SIGN guidance. Richard Boldero also informed members that the All Wales Management of Acute COPD Exacerbation and the All Wales Secondary Care Community Acquired Pneumonia guidelines had also been presented at the June AWMSG meeting where it was requested for some further references to be provided in supporting the rationale for divergence from NICE guidance. Once completed these can then be further considered for endorsement by AWMSG.

7.0 Documents for discussion

7.1 Delivering Value Through Disinvestment

The Chair welcomed Prof Deborah Fitzsimmons to the meeting. Prof Fitzsimmons gave members an overview of the project and asked members for their comments. The group discussed the possible next steps for the project.

Dr Anders Skarsten joined the meeting.

The group acknowledged that the document provides a good foundation for a future disinvestment process. It was agreed that further work is required to develop the principles outlined in the document into a practical tool that can potentially be rolled out if supported. The importance of the inclusion of all stakeholders in decisions made in relation to this work was highlighted. The group agreed that the next stage for the project is progression to AWMSG for further discussion. Prof Fitzsimmons thanked AWTTTC and AWPAG members for the constructive comments throughout the project.

Prof Fitzsimmons left the meeting.

Action: Paper to progress to AWMSG.

7.2 Prescribing Dilemmas: A Guide for Prescribers (2020 update)

Dr Robert Bracchi informed member about the six areas identified as needing discussion, following comments received during the consultation. The group discussed comments on the best way to communicate with patients and the different methods currently being used in practice. The group agreed to the document being amended to include further approaches to communication with patients. The group discussed local prescribing practices in-depth, and discussed formulary issues in different health boards and how these relate to prescriptions received in private consultations. The group discussed the number of days available for emergency supply of medications as well as routine prescriptions. The group agreed to edit the wording in the temporary resident section to clarify that some of the advice is specific to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Action: AWTTTC update document to address comments.

Action: AWTTTC to share the document for electronic sign-off prior to submission to AWMSG for endorsement.

Dr Tessa Lewis joined the meeting.

7.3 Nitrofurantoin in treatment of Urinary Tract Infection: Common Prescribing Errors

The Chair welcomed Dr Tessa Lewis to the meeting. Dr Lewis gave members a background to the guideline and asked members for any comments. Members expressed their thanks to Dr Lewis for a useful document which was well written. Members agreed that the document was a good template to be used for further updates. The group commented on the different methods to disseminate the document. Members agreed that a statement on taking local prescribing guidance into consideration should be added to the document, and that All Wales prescribing guidance should be emphasised above equivalent NICE guidance. Kath Haines confirmed the next steps for the paper.

Action: Dr Tessa Lewis and AWTTTC to amend document to address comments.

Action: AWTTTC to disseminate updated document for consultation.

Dr Tessa Lewis left the meeting.

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

The Chair informed members that an AWMSG Shared Care Protocol for denosumab has been in place for a number of years, however, the Chairs of the Welsh Osteoporosis Advisory Group (WOAG) and Network of Orthogeriatrics in Wales (NOW) had submitted a request to amend current guidance. Claire Thomas informed members that the amendment requested was to remove the requirement for initiation by a specialist and include initiation in primary care as an option. Claire Thomas highlighted that a move away from specialist initiation only would result in denosumab no longer being suitable for shared care, as per the current AWMSG shared care principles. The group raised concerns regarding small patient numbers being prescribed denosumab within individual GP practices, and therefore a potential lack of experience and expertise with the medicine. Members also expressed their concern regarding dealing with an adverse drug reaction to denosumab, should one occur after administration of the first dose in primary care, and also on implementation during a pandemic. Claire Thomas informed members that NICE is in the process of developing guidance on *Non-bisphosphonates in osteoporosis* which will update the current guidance on denosumab, however development of this has been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Lynnette James informed members that the MHRA had published a safety update in August regarding increased risk of fractures when stopping or delaying treatment with denosumab, and that patients should not stop treatment without specialist review. The group agreed that the proposal should not be implemented.

Action: Chairs of WOAG and NOW to be informed of AWPAG decision.

7.5 National Minimum Standards for Medication Review

Dr Rob Bracchi presented the consultation comments to the group and informed members of discussion and progress to date. Claire Thomas highlighted that reference to 'prescriber' in the document will be changed to 'reviewer', and that a definition will be added to the beginning of the document. The group agreed that the reviewer should be presumed to have competency in the field. The issue of equality was raised, and it was agreed that this should be actioned at a local level. The group agreed that as this is a technical document it is not required to be translated into Welsh, although the Patient Information Leaflet does. Claire Thomas confirmed that the Patient Information Leaflet has gone out to the Patient and Public Interest Group (PAPIG) for comments, and will be translated following finalisation. The group discussed comments on the need for a National Clinical Competency Framework and those frameworks currently available. It was agreed that there was a need for such a framework to encompass all relevant healthcare professionals, and that this piece of work should be highlighted to HEIW who may be best placed to take this on in conjunction with AWMSG. The group discussed comments on the audit and agreed the audit section should remain, however, clarification on its use should be included.

Action: AWTTC to make agreed amendments followed by electronic AWPAG sign-off prior to AWMSG endorsement.

Action: AWTTC to raise need for a National Clinical Competency Framework for medication review.

7.6 SBAR – The management of vitamin B12 deficiency during the COVID-19 pandemic

Richard Boldero presented the SBAR to members and asked for their comments. Attention was drawn to the question of whether this was something being seen across all health boards or specific health boards. Consensus indicated it was an issue across Wales. Kate Spittle enquired whether the document could make considerations to what will happen post-pandemic and whether there may be a significant presentation of patients needing their injections to 'catch-up'; therefore asking if there could be some indication of the required frequency of injections within the document. Richard Boldero

confirmed that the intention of the document was to support primary care services during the pandemic but any post-pandemic action may also need to be considered at this time. It was confirmed the next steps will be to take the document to AWMSG and to consult with Welsh Government with regards to the Selected List Scheme (SLS) issue.

Action: AWTTC to review document for taking to the November meeting of AWMSG.

Action: AWTTC to inform Welsh Government on the SLS issue.

7.7 Shared Care Prescribing and Monitoring Guidance

Claire Thomas presented the draft guidance and provided background information regarding the development. Members were asked for comments and feedback, however no issues were raised. Claire Thomas thanked members and informed them that the document would now be circulated for consultation.

Dr Anders Skarsten left the meeting.

Action: AWTTC to disseminate document for consultation.

7.8 Educational pack: Material to support appropriate prescribing of hypnotics and anxiolytics across Wales (2020 update)

Dr Paul Deslandes presented the education pack to members and opened for comments. Members raised concerns about the length of the document and felt a key point summary would be useful. The group discussed creating a patient centred summary which could be added to patient prescriptions, this was agreed. The group discussed adding a best practice section to the document to aid prescribers. The group discussed different formats that the document could be presented in. The group agreed this is a beneficial resource.

Action: AWTTC to create a summary of key points, and a patient-focused summary.

Action: AWTTC to disseminate document for consultation.

Dr Rick Greville, Dr Richard Brown, Mrs Sian Evans and Ross Davies left the meeting.

7.9 SBAR: NPI Process Review

Claire Thomas informed members that a meeting had recently taken place to review the current process for NPI development and discuss any changes required. The proposed new process was discussed and it was noted that starting the process earlier would result in earlier endorsement by AWMSG, thereby enabling health boards to plan more effectively. After a brief discussion members agreed with the SBAR recommendation.

Action: AWTTC to implement SBAR recommendation.

7.10 SBAR: Low Value for Prescribing – Paper 3 – Suspension of active monitoring

Richard Boldero presented the SBAR to members highlighting that due to the current pressures on healthcare professionals based within primary care that suspending the active monitoring of items within the paper 3 basket until the pandemic was over seemed the most pragmatic option. The Chair asked for any comments; no comments were received and the action to suspend monitoring was agreed.

Action: SBAR to be taken to November meeting of AWMSG

8.0 Verbal updates

8.1 SPIRA Steering Committee

Claire Thomas updated members on the SPIRA Steering Committee held on 16th September 2020. Claire Thomas highlighted that the group was missing a representative from Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB and Kate Spittle agreed to take this back to the health board.

Action: Kate Spittle to ask for interest in the Cwm Taf Morgannwg UHB representation.

8.2 SGLT2is

Kath Haines gave a background and informed members that this was being taken forward by AWTTTC and will be brought back to AWPAG.

Robert Caine left the meeting.

9.0 Best Practice Day 2021

Kath Haines informed members that AWTTTC are exploring how to deliver a 'virtual' Best Practice Day in 2021. Members were asked for suggestions on how a Virtual Best Practice Day could be delivered and for ideas on content to be included. The options to have multiple short sessions over a few days or to have regular monthly Best Practice sessions were discussed.

Action: Members to send suggestions to AWTTTC.

10.0 Feedback from the All Wales Chief Pharmacists Peer Group

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

11.0 Feedback from health boards

No members had any feedback from their health boards to report.

12.0 Request for AWPAG deputy representative on IPCG

The Chair informed members that the deputy AWPAG representative role on IPCG was vacant, since Louise Howard-Baker stepped down from AWPAG. Members were asked to contact Anne Coles if they would like to be considered for the deputy role.

Action: Members to send expressions of interest to Anne Coles.

13.0 Any other business

Claire Thomas highlighted that an issue regarding a change to the Average Daily Quantity (ADQ) value for co-codamol 15/500mg had recently been raised, which impacts on the quarter 4 2019-2020 and quarter 1 2020-2021 opioid burden indicator data. Claire Thomas informed members that she has been in contact with NHS Business Services Authority in England and they are due to respond this week. Members were informed that the quarter 4 NPI report would be amended and this would also be highlighted on SPIRA.

14.0 Date of next meeting: Wednesday, 2nd December 2020