

ALL WALES PRESCRIBING ADVISORY GROUP

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 27th April 2005 AT 9.30 AM At the Britannic Conference Centre, Llandarcy, Neath, Swansea, SA

Members

Mrs Nicola John (Acting Chairman)
Mr Trevor Batt
Dr Charlie Danino
Dr Martin Duerden
Mr Stuart Evans
Dr Jonathan Jones
Dr Tessa Lewis
Mr Ken Nazareth
Mrs Delyth Simons
Mr John Terry
Mrs Judith Vincent

In attendance

Mrs Carolyn Poulter (Welsh Assembly Government)
Mr Jamie Hayes (Welsh Medicines Partnership)
Mrs Ruth Lang (Welsh Medicines Partnership)
Mrs Karen Samuels (Welsh Medicines Partnership)

Key of abbreviations

AWMSG	All Wales Medicines Strategy Group
GP	General practitioner
HSW	Health Solutions Wales
HoPMM	Head of Pharmacy and Medicines Management
LHB	Local Health Board
NHSIF	NHS Industry Forum
NPHS	National Public Health Service
WMP	Welsh Medicines Partnership

Action

1 Welcome

The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting.

2 Apologies

Dr Robert Bracchi
Dr Mark Daniels
Mr William Duffield
Dr Stephen Griffiths
Dr Thomas Lau
Miss Tracy Parry
Dr Gillian Todd

3 *Declarations of interest*

Members were reminded to declare any interests pertinent to the agenda. There were none.

4. *Minutes of previous meeting*

The minutes of the meeting held on 12th January 2005 were checked for accuracy and content. Item 10 - blood glucose testing, the Diabetes Nurse Specialist should be amended to read Andy Bray.

5. *Matters arising*

Mr John Terry reported that the Chief Pharmacists had asked that representation be made by a chief pharmacist on the working group to address the issue of incentivising secondary care as well as an interface pharmacist.

WMP

6. *Feedback from AWSG Meeting*

Sip feeds

WMP tabled a copy of the background and brief and informed members that the following working group had been enlisted to address the clinical aspects of sip feeds.

Lead: Dr Tessa Lewis, GP & AWPAG deputy member
Mrs Mary Pope, Pharmacy Inspector, CSIW, Vale & Valleys Region
Penny Cowley, Chief Dietitian, North East Wales NHS Trust representing the All Wales Dietetic Advisory Committee
Mrs Elizabeth Lovell, Nurse & Senior Manager, Mumbles Nursing Home contacted through the UK Home Care Association
Mrs Judith Vincent or nominated pharmacist
Dr Charlie Danino, General Practitioner & AWPAG deputy member
Consultant gastroenterologist – to be appointed

Dr Tessa Lewis informed members that she hoped to arrange an initial meeting of the working group some time during May. No timescale was identified.

WMP agreed to provide a list of the members of the NHSIF working group and ensure there was representation from Welsh Health Supplies. WMP asked that consideration be given to ensuring that the two working parties addressed this issue in a cohesive manner, as there would be a requirement to draw the two sub-group documents together and this may involve joint working with good communication between the two working groups.

WMP

Members requested that it be highlighted at an early stage that the emphasis is on promoting appropriate prescribing.

National Prescribing Incentive Scheme – update

The Chairman reported that this document had been widely disseminated

throughout NHS Wales and its implementation would be monitored. It was reported that the scheme had been adopted in Conway, with similar schemes having been adopted in Torfaen and Denbighshire. The document is available [on the AWMSG website](#).

Antiplatelet & Statin template documents

The Chairman reported that the two templates had been widely disseminated through the service and had been posted [on the AWMSG website](#). Stuart Evans agreed to bring updated versions to the January 2006 meeting, revised in light of new evidence.

Broadening the appraisal process

Mrs Carolyn Poulter confirmed receipt of a letter from Professor Roger Walker to Mrs Anne Lloyd seeking an indication from Welsh Assembly Government as to whether the broader remit to consider all new medicines would be progressed. Mrs Poulter confirmed there were limited resources to fund the broader remit during the present financial year. The group expressed their willingness to work with Welsh Assembly Government to develop a central process for the appraisal of all new medicines, and a suggestion that LHB's may wish to buy-into the new process was made so that duplication within the present system can be avoided. The feasibility of this suggestion would need to be explored with Chief Executives and Directors of Finance. The group reiterated there was a need to build on the existing expertise within Trusts and LHBs in relation to key staff already involved in appraisal of medicines.

WMP confirmed that following the ABPI endorsement of the AWMSG appraisal process in February 2005, there had been a marked increase in the number of appraisals submissions, and that two appraisals were scheduled for the next three AWMSG meetings (up to and including December 2005). The need for timely advice was discussed and problems within the present structure highlighted. WMP representatives confirmed that efforts to address any backlog could be made, but it would have resource implications. It was agreed that AWPAG should encourage support of the WMP bid, to allow savings in the long-term.

WMP representatives agreed to take comments back to the AWMSG Steering Committee.

WMP

Blood glucose testing

Mr Ken Nazareth reported that Professor David Owens, Chair of the Consensus Group set up by Welsh Assembly Government to produce a unified set of care pathways for diabetic patients in Wales, had been supportive of the template brought to the January AWPAG meeting, which may form part of a national programme. Mr Nazareth, Professor Roger Walker, AWMSG Chairman and Professor Owens had all agreed there was a need to avoid any conflicting advice and the document had been withdrawn from the agenda of the AWMSG March meeting. The Group expressed concern that any delays in the national consensus statement would not be acceptable at local level and urged that the current problems in relation to home blood glucose testing be addressed within a year.

Prescribing Strategy

WMP representatives reported that this issue is currently being progressed by Professor Philip Routledge and confirmed the intention to consult key members / groups before taking the document back to AWMSG.

WMP

Generic & therapeutic substitution

WMP representatives confirmed that this formed part of the original work programme of AWMSG. The Chairman asked the Welsh Assembly Government representative for guidance as to whether this issue is covered by primary or secondary legislation; if the former, then the Welsh Assembly Government could not pursue this.

Mrs Judith Vincent joined the meeting.

Local prescribing comparators

It was reported that AWMSG had agreed that the terminology be changed to local prescribing comparators.

At their March 2005 meeting, AWMSG had asked that AWPAG consider the on-going development of the agreed local prescribing comparators and identify the resource implications for NHS Wales. Concern was expressed that data interpretation of the agreed basket should be undertaken by professional support to Health Solutions Wales and urged Welsh Assembly Government to address this issue. It was agreed that in the interim, AWPAG should seek to use the expertise within the Service to support the development and monitoring of the local comparators and WMP agreed to liaise with Mrs Judith Vincent, Chair of the Heads of Pharmacy and Medicines Management to explore the possibility of sharing this responsibility until such time that Welsh Assembly Government address the need for professional support to Health Solutions Wales.

WMP/JV

WAG

The Group agreed that work should be progressed to develop an incentive scheme for secondary care. Mr Stuart Evans and Dr Martin Duerden agreed to prepare the background and brief for this task and finish group. The group will also consider the use of ADQs, DDDs, and STARPUs. WMP agreed to seek the following membership:

SE/MD

WMP

Trust Clinical Director (or senior clinical manager)
Trust Finance Director
LHB Finance Director
Trust Chief Pharmacist
Interface Pharmacist
HoPMM
GP

Dr Charlie Danino agreed to be assigned the GP member.

NJ

The Group discussed the need for an impartial chairperson. Mr Nicola John agreed that the National Public Health Service had a broad

understanding of the issue throughout Wales and offered to pursue the possibility of seeking a Chairperson via the NPHS.

Dr Jonathan Jones joined the meeting.

National prescribing indicator targets 2005-2006

- Inappropriate generics

The group agreed to discuss this under Agenda item 9.

Guidance for partnership working

It was reported that the letter accompanying this Welsh Health Circular had been amended and the revised version had been posted on the AWMSG website.

AWPAG membership & constitutional issues

WMP representatives reported that the recommendations made at the last AWPAG meeting had been taken to the AWMSG Steering Committee and the following had been agreed:-

The AWMSG Steering Committee addressed the recommendations of AWPAG. All memberships (AWMSG, NHSIF and AWPAG) will cease at the end of July. Sub-group meetings can be held in July with the current membership. WMP will address sub-group memberships once AWMSG membership issues have been clarified.

- the AWPAG Chairman will be elected by the group and be responsible for providing AWMSG with a brief written report at the quarterly meetings.
- The Vice Chairman will be elected by the group and will not automatically assume the role of Chairman at the end of the Chairman's term of office.
- The term of office of the Chairman and Vice Chairman should run concurrently (ie three years)
- In the event of the Chair not being a member of AWMSG, AWMSG will invite a member to join AWPAG to form a link between the sub-group and the parent group. AWMSG will take account of the needs of the group when nominating the link person. This individual will represent AWPAG at AWMSG and normally address any issues related to the group, including those raised in the Chairman's report.
- At the commencement of their term of office all members and deputies will be notified of the dates of forthcoming meetings. A personalized letter will be sent to make it clear that if members are unable to attend, they must contact their deputy giving as much notice as possible.

- Nominations will be sought (from the appropriate professional bodies) for those posts where existing members who have attended less than 50% of meetings during their term of appointment. All other members will be invited to confirm whether they wish to serve a further term of office.
- Locum expenses will be paid for members upon provision of documentary evidence and in accordance with Welsh Assembly Government guidelines. WMP will be empowered to apply discretion in relation to expenses and claims with the proviso that documentary evidence is provided.

Members were asked to confirm in writing whether they wished to seek another term of office. Since the January meeting, resignations had been received from

Members

Mrs Gill Todd
Dr Stephen Griffiths
Miss Tracy Parry

WMP agreed to write to the above individuals to confirm that the above memberships would cease at the end of July 2005 and nominations would be sought for any vacancies.

WMP

WMP agreed to bring a list of memberships and vacancies to the July meeting for discussion.

WMP

7. *Feedback from the AWMSG 2-day Training Seminar on Information Mastery*

Feedback from members who had attended this training was extremely positive. On behalf of the Welsh Medicines Resource Centre, Mr Jamie Hayes offered to cascade the information by arranging half-day workshops at a local level. It was felt that the information was highly relevant and the group proposed that AWMSG endorse their generic support of the concept of information mastery. In order to support the development of skills and competencies, Dr Martin Duerden agreed to prepare a paper on what software is currently available and list useful sources of information to bring back to a future meeting for further discussion. To assist with the cascading of information, WMP agreed to post the training information on the AWMSG website and highlight this issue as part of any prescribing strategy being developed by Professor Routledge.

MD

WMP

8. *Roles & Structures of Prescribing Committees (referred by AWMSG)*

Members were asked to consider the draft consultation paper prepared by the NHS Industry Forum on the roles and structures of prescribing committees.

Members expressed concern that this piece of work did not form part of the work programme of AWMSG and it was inappropriate that NHSIF should consider it part of their remit. AWPAG supported the extant Welsh Health Circular [WHC\(2003\) 73](#) setting out the roles and responsibilities of

prescribing committees, which encompasses a whole range of medicines management issues. WMP were requested to record the strong view of the Group that this issue does not fall within the remit of NHSIF, the extant Welsh Health Circular should be complied with, and wider consultation would be inappropriate. **WMP**

9. *National Indicators 2006-2007*

The group discussed whether or not the existing 2005-2006 national indicators should be revised for 2006-2007. The general consensus was that a change at this stage may cause confusion and reduce the value of the indicators, but that a decision on how to replace co-proxamol is needed. It was agreed that members would consult the professional bodies they represent and bring comments back to the next meeting.

The issue of early uptake of new drugs was discussed, and a suggestion was made that this could be addressed by WMP if and when the broader remit to consider all new medicines is introduced to provide clear guidance across NHS Wales. Prescription charges, the monitoring of volume changes and minor ailment schemes were discussed. It was agreed that surveillance should be undertaken on the impact of the reduction of prescription fees on prescribing and workload. In doing this, the hidden costs in relation to minor ailment schemes should also be taken into account. The need for data interpretation as part of the professional support to Health Solutions Wales was again identified and the group urged the Welsh Assembly Government representative to take this issue forward to support NHS Wales. **WAG**

10. *Access to medication out of hours*

The Welsh Assembly Government representative informed the Group that this agenda item referred to two issues, E11 on the AWMSG work programme - GP access to medication e.g. emergency medicine bags, and F1 out of hours access to pharmaceutical services. Following discussion at the AWMSG March meeting, Mrs Poulter had been asked to compile a questionnaire for circulation to senior primary care managers in LHBs throughout Wales in order to identify any areas of concern in the current out of hours arrangements. The draft questionnaire was circulated to members for comment and Mrs Poulter agreed to incorporate the suggestions prior to its circulation. It was agreed that a copy of the questionnaire would be given to the HoPMMs. Comments received back from the LHBs would be brought back to the AWPAG meeting in July. **WAG**

The feeling amongst the group was that there is no evidence to support claims that current out of hours services are inadequate and are impacting on accident and emergency departments [as outlined in the Welsh Assembly report to AWMSG in March 2005](#). One member expressed particular concern over the AWMSG minute from the March 2005 meeting that "members expressed concern that current arrangements were not working and having an adverse impact on the workload of accident and emergency departments particularly during holiday periods". It was felt that this unsubstantiated claim was inappropriate and a personal view expressed by a member should not be recorded.

11. **Annual Prescribing Conference - update**

WMP representatives reported the following tentative arrangements.

Proposed venue: Cardiff Hilton Hotel

Proposed date: commencing the evening of Thursday 19th January 2006 with a memorial lecture commemorating the life and work of Mrs Felicity Newton-Savage and Friday, 20th January 2006. These dates will be subject to the availability of the guest speaker and may be subject to change.

This conference will be open **to all prescribers and advisers.**

Suggested themes include:

Concept of GP Prescribing leads
Information management
Supplementary Prescribing
Shared care
GMS & Pharmacy contracts
Orphan drugs
Appraisals
Medicines Management
AWMSG
WMP

12. **Prescribing trends (referred from AWMSG)**

WMP representatives informed the group that AWMSG had tasked AWPAG with commenting on the prescribing patterns observed in the [graphs](#) and to identify any initiatives in order to disseminate good practice. It was agreed that WMP would identify the top four or five LHBs moving in the required direction for each basket of indicators, excluding drugs less suitable for prescribing, and approach the HoPMM of that LHB to ask if he/she could identify what they are doing well. This information will be reported back at the next meeting.

WMP

13. **Shared Care**

Dr Tessa Lewis asked members for comment on the shared care template and the draft letter to GPs requesting shared care. A list of proposed drugs was tabled for discussion, along with two example shared care protocols – methotrexate and penicillamine.

It was agreed that a standard template for use within NHS Wales would be well received. Members commented that identifying individual responsibilities was helpful and agreed to recommend that the patient be encouraged to read the appropriate patient information leaflet, as this would be more “patient-friendly”. There was discussion over affordability of enhanced services and capping.

Members asked that the working group concentrate on producing examples for the 5 products suggested in the GMS Contract and consult

**Working
Group**

with the rheumatologists. An update on this work will be made to AWMSG at their meeting in June 2005.

14. *Watchdog arrangements for sales promotion*

WMP representatives reported that the AWMSG Chairman had requested that AWPAG be afforded the opportunity to comment on Watchdog arrangements for sales promotion and asked that members be aware of the consultation on the ABPI Code of Practice. It was reported that this consultation process ended on 11th March 2005, but it had been agreed that any comments from AWPAG members would be considered as part of the review. A collective response was compiled by the Chairman, and members were asked to provide individual responses outside of the meeting by accessing the stakeholder questionnaire on

<http://www.abpi.org.uk/publications/pdfs.codeofpractice03.pdf>

To be sent to ABPI Code of Practice Review, ABPI, 12 Whitehall, London, SW1A 2DY or emailed to abpicode@abpi.org.uk

It was noted that none of the members had previously been aware of the consultation.

15. *Any other business*

The Chairman reported that she was hopeful that agreement had been reached with Welsh Assembly Government that the Business Service Centre would take back the funding issue in relation to publications. Discussions around the administration arrangements for ordering and delivery are currently on-going, with a view to the NPHS handing over responsibilities for purchasing to the Business Services Centre (BSC).

- *Dates of meetings 2006*

WMP representatives asked that the group consider changing the format of meetings during 2006 so that they are run in parallel with NHSIF meetings, to allow the opportunity for joint working, if appropriate.

Members agreed that the current structure for meetings should remain, as the general feeling was that the meetings were long enough and there was no scope to reduce the length of the meeting, and no desire to prolong it.

Next meeting

The next meeting will be held on 13th July 2005. Meeting venue details will follow.