

ALL WALES PRESCRIBING ADVISORY GROUP (AWPAG)
Minutes of meeting held on
28th June 2023 commencing at 9.30 am
Held at the Cardiff Metropolitan University, Cyncoed Road, Cardiff
and via Teams

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 and Vale UHB
Dr Phil Cox	General Practitioner – Swansea Bay UHB
Ms Helen Davies	Principle Pharmacist for Medicines Optimisation in Primary Care – Cwm Taf Morgannwg 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 Hazel Hopkins	Prescribing Advisor – 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 Eryl Smeeth	Lead Prescribing Advisor – Aneurin Bevan UHB
Mrs Fiona Woods	Lay member

In attendance (non-voting)

Ms Joe Ferris	ABPI
Mr Paul Fleming	BGMA
Mr Richard Boldero	AWTTC Senior Pharmacist
Dr Rob Bracchi	AWTTC Medical Advisor
Dr Thomas Curran	AWTTC Programme Manager
Mrs Claire Thomas	AWTTC Head of WAPSU and Medicines Optimisation
Ms Karen Jones	AWTTC Senior Pharmacist
Dr Bridget-Ann Kenny	AWTTC Scientist
Mrs Sue Cervetto	AWTTC Senior Pharmacist
Dr Carolyn Hughes	AWTTC Medical Writer
Dr Katherine Chaplin	AWTTC Scientist
Mrs Sian Harbon	AWTTC Medical Writer

Observing

Ms Hayley Saunders	Senior Nurse for Professional Practice, Aneurin Bevan UHB
Mr Dafydd Rhys Thomas	Pharmacist, Swansea Bay UHB

Presenting

Ms Elizabeth Bond	Attended for item 7.1 only
Dr Hannah Saitch	Attended for item 7.3 only
Dr Sophie Quinney	Attended for item 7.4 only
Miss Meryl Davies	Attended for Item 7.5 only

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 Educations 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 everyone and introduced new members, Dr Jennifer Ellis, Mr Malcom Latham, Mrs Eryl Smeethe, and Ms Hayley Saunders.

2.0 Apologies

Apologies were received from:

Dr Rick Greville	Director ABPI Cymru/Wales
Mrs Amy Williams	Other healthcare professional eligible to prescribe
Mr Andrew Evans	Chief Pharmaceutical Officer, Welsh Government
Mrs Bethan Tranter	Chief Pharmacist – Velindre NHS Trust
Dr Richard Brown	General Practitioner – Hywel Dda UHB

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

The Chair congratulated Mrs Claire Thomas on her new appointment as Head of WAPSU and Medicines Optimisation at AWTTC. The Chair informed members that Mr Andrew Champion had recently been appointed as the new Programme Director for AWTTC and will commence his post in the autumn.

Members were informed of the following new appointments:

Dr Jennifer Ellis
 Eryl Smeethe
 Elizabeth Hallett
 Hayley Saunders
 Dafydd Rhys Thomas

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 AWTTC.

5.0 Minutes of previous AWPAG meeting – 15th March 2023

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

6.0 Feedback from AWMSG – 19th April, 16th May and 14th June 2023

Dr Tom Curran updated members on recent AWMSG meetings:

- Opioids in palliative care – A patient information manual
 Following AWPAG members review of minor changes made to the patient information manual, it had gone to AWMSG for information. Final amendments following Welsh translation being finalised before being made available online.
- Primary care antimicrobial guidelines
 Following consideration of the minor updates to the 'Acute rhinosinusitis' section at the previous AWPAG meeting, this update was published and shared with AWMSG committee for information. Following publication change, an additional more urgent amendment was also published to update the paediatric

doses for cefotaxime in the treatment of meningitis to reflect updates to the BNF for Children.

- Understanding unlicensed medicines
This resource was presented to AWMSG in April for endorsement and is now published and available on the AWTTTC website.
- Mental health medicines in older adults – Adverse Drug Reaction (ADRe) Profile
With AWPAG members having agreed for this item to proceed to AWMSG for acknowledgement, AWMSG agreed to acknowledge the item in April and it is now signposted to from the AWTTTC website.
- Sodium valproate website hub
AWMSG members were updated on plans to host a sodium valproate resource hub based on the recommendations of the Welsh Government sodium valproate task force. The hub will go live once sign off from Welsh Government is received.
- All Wales Paediatric Asthma Management and Prescribing Guidelines
Having been endorsed by AWMSG in May, this is now published and available on the AWTTTC website.
- National Prescribing Indicators 2022-2023. Analysis of prescribing data to December 2022
Following publication of the most recent quarterly report (covering data to December 2022) this has been presented at AWMSG for information and discussion.
- All Wales Common Ailments Services (CAS) formulary
Having been endorsed by AWMSG in June, this document is going through its final stages of preparation before publication on the AWTTTC website.

7.0 Documents for discussion

7.1 Management of distressed behaviours in dementia

Elizabeth Bond updated members regarding the changes made to the document since the previous AWPAG meeting. Members were reminded of the history and context of the document, and expectations for its use.

Discussion took place around the practicalities of using the included All Wales Antipsychotic Monitoring (AWAM) record, particularly when care is transferred between settings. The potential of including this resource on the Welsh Clinical Portal (WCP) was discussed.

The Chair queried if there was a reason behind the ordering of the list of medicines in Table 3, it was agreed that an alphabetical order could be used instead. It was noted that the information leaflets are currently only available in English, and that Welsh translations would be required prior to publication.

A final query concerned patients with swallowing difficulties and covert administration of medication; it was acknowledged that such issues may be outside the scope of this guidance, but links to other relevant guidelines could be added to the document.

Action: Document to be updated with agreed changes

Action: Explore the potential of adding AWAM to WCP

Action: To proceed to consultation

7.2 Decarbonisation - Inhaler Prescribing, Use and Disposal: 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. AWPAG members were asked to provide feedback on the document, particularly the Top 12 actions listed.

Members agreed that the document could benefit from more focus and detail on the disposal of inhalers. Sian Evans informed members that this would be added once data had been collected from ongoing pilot projects, and that Welsh Government would decide on an action plan for disposal. Members agreed the importance of making it easy for people to dispose of unwanted inhalers.

There was discussion around the role of the pharmaceutical industry and inhaler manufacture, including current work on the manufacture of greener propellants.

Action: To proceed to consultation

7.3 Withdrawal of national desflurane contract in Wales

Dr Hannah Saitch gave a presentation to members explaining 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.

Members were informed of the proposals and recommendations of a working group set up to investigate desflurane use, which include not renewing the procurement contract when it expires in June 2024.

Members asked about discussions with NWSSP, and about the availability of alternative anaesthetic gases and preventing potential supply issues. Plans to remove old gas equipment and vaporisers, and how to dispose of waste desflurane were discussed. Members supported the recommendation to withdraw the national desflurane contract in Wales.

Action: To proceed to consultation

7.4 Endocrine management of gender dysphoria (update)

Dr Sophie Quinney provided members with an overview of the updates to the guideline, including a review and update of terminology, prescribing practices and relevant studies published since the guideline's publication. There were no significant changes to the content.

The Chair asked for clarification on the age patients could be treated by the Welsh Gender Service (WGS). Dr Quinney explained that referral to the service was previously was from the age of 17 and a half, however patients can now be referred from the age of 17. Despite this, patients are not able to be seen by the service until they are 18 years old, this is partly as a result of waiting list time.

Members asked for clarification on how the referral process worked, and what support the Welsh Gender Service was able to provide GPs. Dr Quinney provided details.

Action: To make the agreed minor updates to the published document

Action: Presentation to AWMSG for information

7.5 Primary care antimicrobial guidelines – Scarlet Fever

Ms Meryl Davies provided members with a brief update to the Primary Care Guidelines treatment of scarlet fever section, following an update to NICE guidelines.

Discussion around the supply of azithromycin in the event of a disease outbreak was briefly discussed. There was also a query around whether any patient-facing guidance will be produced to tackle the spread of disinformation among patients in the event of disease outbreaks, however it was agreed that this was outside the scope of the

document.

Action: To make the agreed minor updates to the published document
Action: Presentation to AWMSG for information

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

Dr Lynette James provided members with an overview of the proposed document, including the context, aims and proposed scope.

There was discussion regarding whether some of the content was appropriate for all health and care settings, such as community and social care, and whether too much focus was placed on secondary care settings. Members discussed whether the document should encompass all health and care settings, or whether these should be separated. It was agreed that the document would proceed to consultation, pending some minor amendments, and that a specific question would be posed as part of the consultation process to gather feedback on what approach to tackling the range of settings was preferred, such as a single document, or a suite of setting-specific documents.

Discussion took place regarding patient self-administration and the importance of maintaining this in secondary care, in addition to the management of medicines storage areas within health and care settings. Training and e-learning packages were also discussed.

It was agreed that the regional partnership boards, and social care organisations should be included as part of the consultation.

Action: Document to be updated with agreed amendments
Action: To proceed to consultation with the inclusion of specific consultation questions

7.7 Prescribing dilemmas – private shared care

Dr Paul Deslandes provided members with an overview of the issues regarding shared care between private and NHS clinicians. The problems services have been facing around private shared care were explained, with a particular focus on chronic disease management requiring ongoing prescribing. Members were asked for their input into this problem, and what actions AWPAG may be able to take.

The core question of whether it was possible for private and NHS care to be shared on an ongoing basis, or whether clear separation is required was raised. The definition of what constitutes an 'episode of care' was also discussed.

Initial discussion focused on why patients may opt for private care, and when shared care might subsequently occur. Problems that could occur with this approach, and which might make an arrangement of this type impractical from a governance perspective were discussed. It was agreed that patients should be made aware of the challenges associated with any possible private shared care arrangement.

Members agreed that the current guidance around this issue, summarised by AWTTTC, is insufficient, and that the scale of the problem is beyond the scope of AWPAG. Potential actions were discussed, including the development of a National Decision Framework. It was agreed that AWTTTC would contact the Welsh Risk Pool for a further opinion.

Action: AWTTTC to contact the Welsh Risk Pool and other stakeholders, followed by further discussion at the next AWPAG meeting.

8.0 Verbal updates

8.1 Repeat prescribing project

Claire Thomas gave an overview of the repeat prescribing/chronic disease management recall and review project progress. After a meeting of the multidisciplinary short life working group in May, it was agreed that a toolkit of resources to support practices would be developed. Once a draft is complete, it will be scheduled for presentation to AWPAG later in the year.

8.2 AWMSG Medicines Optimisation Document Review

Bridget-Ann Kenny gave members an overview of the proposed medicines optimisation document review plans. It was explained that resources designated to be 'archived' would still have a presence on the AWTTTC website, and if there was high demand for an archived document the designation could be reversed. It was clarified that steps were in place to deal with these issues. It is intended that website pages will not be removed, so that existing resources containing links to those pages will continue to work.

8.3 NPI Sub Group

Claire Thomas reminded members that the process for NPI update and review would begin later in the year, and that volunteers from AWPAG will be invited to join the NPI sub group. An email will be sent to members nearer the time, seeking support.

8.4 SPIRA Steering Committee

Richard Boldero provided an update on the latest developments from the SPIRA Steering Committee. This included details of two dashboards that have been developed for inclusion within the SPIRA platform.

8.5 Inhaler decarbonisation report

Richard Boldero provided an overview of the report containing data up to March 2023. Members were asked for their opinions on recommendations made by the AWMSG Steering Committee for potential changes to the report. Members supported the addition of secondary care data on a quarterly basis but requested further information around trajectories to the target carbon footprint.

8.6 AWMSG Strategy 2023–2028

Tom Curran updated members regarding how AWTTTC have been working with the AWMSG committee to develop the next 5-year strategy for 2023-2028. They have held a number of discussion sessions where members have presented their views on what the broad aims of the strategy should be, and what objectives can sit underneath those aims. AWTTTC are now at the stage of seeking members' final thoughts on the proposed objectives, following which the intention would be to reach out to other stakeholders for their input, including members of sub-committees such as AWPAG.

9.0 Feedback from the All Wales Chief Pharmacists Group

The Chair provided an update of the latest work from the Chief Pharmacists Group, which was sent in advance by Bethan Tranter.

10.0 Feedback from Health Boards and Velindre NHS Trust

Members did not have any feedback.

11.0 Feedback from Public Health Wales

Sian Evans provided an update of the latest work in Public Health Wales, including notification of the upcoming Public Health Wales long-term strategy.

12.0 Any other business

No other business was raised.

13.0 Date of next meeting: 20th September 2023