

Equality and Health Impact Assessment

Managing medicines shortages in Wales – information resources

AWTTC will fill in an Equality and Health Impact Assessment in parallel with each development stage of our projects. This will help us to follow the five ways of working for public bodies, and work to achieving the wellbeing goals, outlined in the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Date: 18/2/2025

1.	AWTTC contact details	Tel: 02921 826900 Email: awttc@wales.nhs.uk
2.	State the objectives of the project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Develop a general patient information leaflet to help patients and the public understand why medicines shortages happen and what actions they should take. · Develop general information for healthcare staff to help them understand why medicines shortages happen and how they should respond. · Develop a host page on the AWTTC website for information about medicines shortages, links to medicine shortage notices (MSN), a medicine shortage log, and letters on public health alerts. The web page will also give AWMSG-endorsed information and any ad hoc supplementary information from AWTTC.
3.	Evidence and background information considered. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · population data · staff and service users' data, as applicable · needs assessment · engagement and involvement findings 	Sometimes the supply of medicines in Wales fails to meet the demand. Medicines shortages often feature on national news but without much information about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · why shortages happen; · what patients and their families and carers should do; and · what pharmaceutical companies and healthcare staff are doing to resolve the shortage.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• research• good practice guidelines• participant knowledge• list of stakeholders and how stakeholders have engaged in the development stages• comments from those involved in the designing and development stages <p>Population pyramids are available from Public Health Wales Observatory.</p>	<p>Medicines shortages can happen because of: problems with distribution or transport networks; interruption to access to raw materials to make the medicine; manufacturing problems; a 'batch failure' – where a medicine fails to meet quality control standards; an unexpected increase in demand.</p> <p>The UK Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) guidance outlines the responsibilities of medicine manufacturers and suppliers to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• tell the DHSC about any expected supply shortages, and about any medicines that have been discontinued (stopped production of);• help manage supply problems; and• help prevent any potential impacts on patients. <p>Note: For prescription medicines we expect the prescriber to have prescribed or advised their use within the terms of their UK marketing authorisations. Healthcare professionals should take note of the contraindications, warnings, safety recommendations and any monitoring needs for the medicine. These are explained in the Summary of Product Characteristics (SmPC) for the medicine or the British National Formulary.</p> <p>Healthcare professionals should follow relevant professional guidance and take full responsibility for the decision when prescribing or advising the use of off-label or unlicensed medicines. This includes considering the contraindications, warnings, monitoring requirements and other safety recommendations for the medicine (MHRA guidance on off-label or unlicensed use of medicines).</p>
4.	Who will this project affect?	Patients, their families and carers, and the general public in Wales. Pharmacists and all healthcare staff in Wales.

5. EQIA - How will the project impact on people?

Questions in this section relate to the impact on people based on the 'protected characteristics' of the Equality Act 2010, and other factors.

How will the project impact on, or affect:	Potential positive and/or negative impacts	Recommendations for improvement/ mitigation	Actions taken (and who by)
<p>5.1 Age For most purposes, the main categories are people aged:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · under 18 years; · between 18 and 65 years; · over 65 years. 	<p>We do not expect a potential negative, or unequal, impact on people based on their age.</p> <p>There might be a potential positive impact on people who are taking regular or multiple medicines, which is more common in older people, by providing information to reassure them about their medicine supply.</p>	<p>Paper formats of the patient information leaflet should be available for people who would prefer to have a physical leaflet to look at rather than one online. The provision of paper-based resources by AWTTC is beyond the remit of this project.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>5.2 Persons with a disability as defined in the Equality Act 2010 Those with physical impairments, learning disability, sensory loss or impairment, mental health conditions, long-term medical conditions such as diabetes.</p>	<p>We do not expect a potential negative, or unequal, impact on people with a disability.</p>	<p>All related documents published on the AWTTC website will meet accessibility requirements.</p> <p>Any patient-facing materials will be also be produced as easy read booklets in Welsh and English, and online versions will meet accessibility</p>	<p>AWTTC ensure accessibility of documents, and produce easy-read booklets.</p>



How will the project impact on, or affect:	Potential positive and/or negative impacts	Recommendations for improvement/ mitigation	Actions taken (and who by)
		requirements for screenreaders. Alternative formats to a leaflet should be considered.	
5.3 People of different genders: Consider men, women, people undergoing gender reassignment. N.B. Gender-reassignment is anyone who proposes to, starts, is going through or who has completed a process to change his or her gender with or without going through any medical procedures. Sometimes referred to as Trans or Transgender.	We do not expect a potential negative, or unequal, impact on people based on their gender, or on people undergoing gender reassignment.	N/A	N/A
5.4 People who are married or who have a civil partner.	We do not expect a potential negative, or unequal, impact on people based on their marital status or being in a civil partnership.	N/A	N/A
5.5 Women who are expecting a baby, who are on a break from work after having a baby, or who are breastfeeding.	We do not expect a potential negative, or unequal, impact on women who are expecting a baby, are breastfeeding, or are	N/A	N/A



How will the project impact on, or affect:	Potential positive and/or negative impacts	Recommendations for improvement/ mitigation	Actions taken (and who by)
They are protected for 26 weeks after having a baby whether or not they are on maternity leave.	on a break from work after having a baby.		
5.6 People of a different race, nationality, colour, culture or ethnic origin including non-English speakers, gypsies and travellers, migrant workers. The Runnymede Trust	We do not expect a potential negative, or unequal, impact on people of a different race, nationality, colour, culture or ethnic origin. People of different race and ethnicities can have varying responses to medicines.	The patient information leaflet could also be made available, where possible, in languages other than Welsh and English, including Polish, Arabic, Romanian, Bengali and Chinese. Provision of leaflets in languages other than Welsh and English by AWTTC is beyond the remit of this project.	N/A
5.7 People with a religion or belief or with no religion or belief. The term 'religion' includes a religious or philosophical belief. Implications of religious beliefs on selection of medicines (BMJ) In practice: guidance on religion, personal values and beliefs (General Pharmaceutical Council)	We do not expect a potential negative, or unequal, impact on people who have a religion or belief, or people with no religion of belief. Some medicines are made from certain animal products and people might not want to	N/A	N/A



How will the project impact on, or affect:	Potential positive and/or negative impacts	Recommendations for improvement/ mitigation	Actions taken (and who by)
	take them because of religion or belief.		
5.8 People who are attracted to other people of: <ul style="list-style-type: none">the opposite sex (heterosexual);the same sex (lesbian or gay);both sexes (bisexual). Stonewall	We do not expect a potential negative, or unequal, impact on people based on who they are attracted to.	N/A	N/A
5.9 People who communicate using the Welsh language in terms of correspondence, information leaflets, or service plans and design.	We do not expect a potential negative, or unequal, impact on people who communicate using the Welsh language. All patient-facing materials will be produced in Welsh and English, in line with the Welsh language standards, including easy read booklets.	Any patient-facing materials will be produced in Welsh and English, in line with the Welsh language standards, including easy read booklets.	AWTTC will produce the patient information leaflet in Welsh and English.
5.10 People according to their income related group.	We do not expect a potential negative, or unequal, impact on people based on their income-related group.	N/A	N/A



How will the project impact on, or affect:	Potential positive and/or negative impacts	Recommendations for improvement/ mitigation	Actions taken (and who by)
	In Wales, all prescription medicines are free-of-charge for patients; positive recommendations through this project will not affect people depending on their income-related group.		
5.11 People according to where they live.	People living in rural areas in Wales might be more affected by a medicine shortage, as there will not be many pharmacies in rural areas – and they might have to travel further to reach a pharmacy. We hope the leaflet might have a positive impact on people living in rural areas by reassuring them about medicine supplies and management of shortages.	N/A	N/A
5.12 Consider others who face health inequalities, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Looked after and accommodated children and young people	We do not expect a potential negative, or unequal, impact on people who face health inequalities.	N/A	N/A



How will the project impact on, or affect:	Potential positive and/or negative impacts	Recommendations for improvement/ mitigation	Actions taken (and who by)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Carers: paid/unpaid, family members• People who are homeless or those who experience homelessness: people on the street; those staying temporarily with friends/family; those in hostels/B&Bs• People involved in the criminal justice system: offenders in prison or on probation, ex-offenders• People with addictions and substance misuse problems• People who have poor literacy• People living in remote, rural and island locations			
5.13 Consider any other groups and risk factors relevant to this project.	N/A	N/A	N/A

6. HIA - How will the project impact on the health and wellbeing of people in Wales and help address inequalities in health?

Questions in this section relate to the impact on the overall health of individual people, and the impact on the population in Wales.

How will the project impact on, or affect:	Potential positive and/or negative impacts and any particular groups affected	Recommendations for improvement/ mitigation	Actions taken (and who by) <i>Refer to where the mitigation is included in the document, as appropriate.</i>
6.1 People being able to access the service offered.	We do not expect a potential negative, or unequal, impact on people's ability to access the service offered.	N/A	N/A
6.2 People being able to improve or maintain healthy lifestyles.	We do not expect a potential negative, or unequal, impact on people's ability to improve or maintain healthy lifestyles.	N/A	N/A
6.3 People in terms of their income and employment status.	We do not expect a potential negative, or unequal, impact on people in terms of their income and employment status.	N/A	N/A
6.4 People in terms of their use of the physical environment.	We do not expect a potential negative, or unequal, impact on people's use of the physical environment.	N/A	N/A
6.5 People in terms of social and community influences on their health.	We do not expect a potential negative, or unequal, impact on people in terms of social and community influences on their health. There might be a potential positive impact in improving	N/A	N/A



How will the project impact on, or affect:	Potential positive and/or negative impacts and any particular groups affected	Recommendations for improvement/ mitigation	Actions taken (and who by) <i>Refer to where the mitigation is included in the document, as appropriate.</i>
	communication and understanding between patients (and their families and carers) and their local community pharmacy.		
6.6 People in terms of macro-economic, environmental and sustainability factors.	We do not expect a potential negative, or unequal, impact on people in terms of macroeconomic, environmental and sustainability factors.	N/A	N/A

7. Please fill in section 7.1 after completing the EqHIA, and fill in the action plan.

<p>7.1 Please summarize the potential positive and/or negative impacts of the project.</p>	<p>Overall, there might be a potential positive impact on people who are taking regular or multiple medicines, by providing information to reassure them about their medicine supply. The availability of a patient information leaflet might improve communication and understanding between patients (and their families and carers) and their local community pharmacy.</p>
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Action plan for mitigation or improvement and implementation

	Action	Lead(s)	Timescale	Actions taken (<i>state who by</i>)
<p>7.2 What are the key actions identified as a result of completing the EqHIA?</p>	<p>Discuss at the All Wales Prescribing Advisory Group meeting.</p>	<p>AWTTC</p>	<p>Sep 2024</p>	
	<p>Develop patient and healthcare staff information, and web page of resources.</p>	<p>AWTTC</p>	<p>Sep 2024</p>	<p>Patient information leaflet updated by AWTTC</p>
	<p>Consult on the patient information leaflet.</p>	<p>AWTTC</p>	<p>Oct-Nov 2024</p>	<p>AWTTC made changes to the leaflet after consultation.</p>
	<p>The All Wales Prescribing Advisory Group to discuss the updated leaflet, and web page.</p>	<p>AWTTC</p>	<p>Dec 2024</p>	<p>AWTTC made final changes to the leaflet.</p>
	<p>The All Wales Medicines Strategy Group to review and endorse the leaflet and easy-read format</p>	<p>AWTTC</p>	<p>Feb 2025</p>	<p>AWMSG endorsed the leaflet. AWTTC</p>



	Action	Lead(s)	Timescale	Actions taken (state who by)
				published on the AWTTC website.
7.3 Is a more comprehensive Equalities Impact Assessment or Health Impact Assessment needed?	No			
7.4 What are the next steps?	Publish the patient information leaflet and other resources, and the AWTTC web page on Medicines shortages.	AWTTC	Feb 2025	AWTTC published
7.5 Review of project and EqHIA	Review and update information, as necessary if/when changes to processes happen	AWTTC	As needed	

AWTTC's EqHIA template is adapted from the Cardiff & Vale University Health Board EHIA template.