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**Minutes of the Advisory Panel on Substance Misuse (APoSM) Main
Panel Meeting
Friday 26th May 2017 (10:00am – 13.30pm)
4.03, Cathays Park, Cardiff**

Attendees

Interim Chair

Richard Ives (RI)

Members

Professor Simon Moore (SM)

Rosemary Allgeier (RA)

Dr Julia Lewis (JL)

Andrew Wilson (AW)

Josie Smith (JS)

Chief Constable Mark Polin (MP) (via teleconference)

Guests

Dr Tom May (TM)

REDACTED (REDACTED)*

University of South Wales

Knowledge & Analytical Services,
Welsh Government

*Only present for part of the meeting

Welsh Government Officials

REDACTED (REDACTED)

REDACTED (REDACTED)

REDACTED (REDACTED)

REDACTED (REDACTED)

REDACTED (REDACTED)

Apologies

Members

Ifor Glyn (IG)

Professor Philip Routledge (PR)

Tracey Breheny (TB)

Guests

Andy Perkins (AP)

Wulf Livingston (WL)

Figure 8 Consultancy

Glyndwr University

Conflicts of interest - None declared

Agenda Item 1 – Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

- 1.1 The Interim Chair welcomed members and guests to the meeting and thanked them for attending. The Interim Chair also welcomed LB to her first meeting of the Panel since joining the Substance Misuse

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Policy Team within Welsh Government. Members were advised that MP was also joining the meeting via teleconference. All apologies were noted.

- 1.2 The Interim Chair advised members that Dr Tom May from the University of South Wales was in attendance at the meeting for the purposes of agenda item 5 to discuss his paper on 'A review of the effectiveness of MISCs' which he had written on behalf of the Enhanced Harm Reduction Centres (EHRCs) Sub-Group.
- 1.3 The Interim Chair informed members that REDACTED from the Knowledge and Analytical Services (KAS), Welsh Government was in attendance for the purposes of agenda item 6 to update members on the 'contribution analysis' of the Substance Misuse Strategy on behalf AP and WL.
- 1.4 The Chair advised members that the main purpose of the meeting was to:
 - receive an update on the Prescription only Medicines (PoMs) report,
 - receive an update on progress of the Enhanced Harm Reduction Centres (EHRCs) Sub-Group,
 - receive and update on the 'contribution analysis' of the Substance Misuse Strategy, and
 - discuss and agree a way forward in relation to the future work programme of the Panel.
- 1.5 The Interim Chair stated that he encouraged full, frank and open discussions and reminded members of the principle of collective responsibility.

Agenda Item 2 – Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising

- 2.1 The Panel agreed that the minutes recorded from the previous meeting held on 30th January 2017 were a true and accurate record.
- 2.2 The Panel discussed matters arising following the previous meeting held on 30th January 2017:
 - The Interim Chair advised members that the APoSM web page of the Welsh Government website had been reviewed and updated to ensure that the information was accurate and that the correct downloads were linked to the page. RI informed members that this had been more difficult than expected but that this was now complete and the page was now adequate.
 - The Interim Chair referred to the publication of the Panel's 'Substance Misuse in an Ageing Population' Report in March 2017. The Interim Chair stated that the report had been well received and

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was picked up in the press, specifically by ITV, BBC and the 'Drink Wise Age Well' Blog. The Interim Chair informed members that he had found the process of agreeing and publicising the press release unsatisfactory and hoped that this could be improved on in the future. The Interim Chair advised members that he had received a letter from the Minister thanking him for the report, stating that she would now consider the recommendations and respond to the Panel in more detail. REDACTED informed members that the Secretariat had also ensured that the Report was sent to key stakeholders such as Area Planning Boards and substance misuse providers in order to make them aware of it so that they could respond accordingly.

Agenda Item 3 – Welsh Government Update

- 3.1 The Interim Chair invited REDACTED to provide members with a broad update on the current key issues relating to Welsh Government policy. REDACTED advised of the following:
- 3.2 **Minimum Unit Pricing** – REDACTED advised members that the Welsh Government was still actively considering the position in Wales and was watching Scotland for a possible announcement in September/October. REDACTED explained that there were various pieces of work ongoing in preparation should this go ahead.
- 3.3 **British Irish Council (BIC)** - REDACTED informed members that the Welsh Government would be hosting a ministerial meeting of the British Irish Council in Cardiff in September 2017 focusing on the drugs agenda following the increase in drug-related deaths in 2015. The meeting would be looking at what the various administrations are doing in response to this.
- 3.4 **Drug Related Deaths** – REDACTED gave feedback on the recent awareness raising campaign and conference held on 4th May 2017 run by Drugaid with support from Welsh Government. REDACTED explained the conference was well received and showed a positive response to other work being undertaken such as the distribution of Naloxone. REDACTED advised members that Welsh Government would continue to work with stakeholders to evaluate reasons behind the increases in drug related deaths (DRD) and have put a number of initiatives in place in an attempt to address this.
- 3.5 **Area Planning Boards (APBs) Service Reconfiguration** – REDACTED advised members that APBs were undertaking an exercise looking at current services in order to ensure that they are as responsive as they can be to local needs.
- 3.6 JS gave feedback following her presentation at the Royal College of Psychiatrists meeting of the 'Four Nations: How evidence-based are our alcohol policies and programmes?' JS advised members that she presented on the Public Health Wales (PHW) 'Linked Environment for

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Alcohol Death Research' (LEADR) report. JS also advised there were a number of other presentations, some based on Health Economics, and agreed to share these with members.

- 3.7 JS advised members that there have been several confirmed fentanyl deaths in England and that there is currently one confirmed death in Wales. JS also advised members that an alert had been issued by the Chief Medical Officer (CMO) advising on the availability of, and harms from, heroin that has been mixed with fentanyl or carfentanyl, both unusually potent synthetic opioids.

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| Action Point 1 | JS to circulate presentations from the Royal College of Psychiatrists meeting of the Four Nations to Panel members. |
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Agenda Item 4 – Update and discussion on Prescription only Medicines Report (PoMs)

- 4.1 The Interim Chair apologised to members for the delay in the PoMs report and expressed his disappointment at the lack of progress that had been made. The Interim Chair informed members that he had various communications with PR since the last meeting of the Panel and had received a draft report on which he had provided detailed comments but had received nothing since.
- 4.2 The Interim Chair stated that he would speak to PR again following the meeting but in the meantime wanted to seek members' views on a solution for taking this work forward given it is such a 'hot topic' at present.
- 4.3 JS agreed that this report needed to be completed as soon as possible and suggested that another member of the Panel take the lead on this report in order to produce a near final draft. JS stated that she had all the relevant data for the report, following the format of the previously published 'Tramadol' report.
- 4.4 It was discussed and suggested that JL take the lead on this work and produce a final draft for consideration by Panel members. JL agreed to take this piece of work forward and explained that she is also currently undertaking work on this issue in Gwent. JL also advised members that anaesthetists are now also looking at this issue and that it was a very timely topic for the Panel to consider.
- 4.5 TM advised members that he and Katy Holloway at the University of South Wales have just published a paper looking at a wider group of analgesics and would be happy to share data and offered to contribute to the report. RH also advised members that she is currently undertaking a piece of research on Opiate Substitute Therapy.

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- 4.6 JS advised that she is currently undertaking work looking at changes in prescribing, including the issue of the prescribing of Gabapentin and Pregabalin in prisons. JS stated that she felt this issue should be raised in the PoMs report.
- 4.7 The Panel discussed and agreed that there should be a sub-chapter in this report exploring the pressures on General Practitioners to prescribe rather than addressing health problems, especially pain relief, in other ways, and with more appropriate prescribing. It was discussed that this is partly an issue of limited resources, especially consultation times. Members stated that other areas to be covered in the report would include pain relief and internet purchasing of PoMs.
- 4.8 The Interim Chair stated that the report should also include details on developments made in terms of the recommendations contained in the previously published 'Tramadol' report for which PR would provide an update on progress.
- 4.9 JL explained that the first step would be to re-convene the PoMs Sub-Group and arrange a meeting in order to discuss the current version of the report, with the aim of providing a final draft for consideration at the next meeting of the Main Panel. The Interim Chair agreed to speak to PR to inform him of the decisions made in order to take forward the PoMs report and to also ask him to provide JL with a copy of the latest draft of the report.
- 4.10 REDACTED reminded members that there are two actions in the Substance Misuse Delivery Plan 2016-18 relating to progress made against the recommendations of the 'Tramadol' report and the publication of the PoMs report. REDACTED advised members that progress made against both these actions was currently being reported on as 'amber' status and stressed the importance of the Panel completing both these areas of work.

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| Action Point 2 | PR to provide an update on progress made against the recommendations contained in the 'Tramadol' report. |
| Action Point 3 | JL to provide Secretariat with dates in order to arrange a meeting of the PoMs Sub-Group. |
| Action Point 4 | Interim Chair to inform PR of the decisions made in order take forward PoMs report and ask him to provide JL with a copy of the latest draft of the report. |

Agenda Item 5 – Update and discussion on progress of the work of the Enhanced Hard Reduction Centres (EHRC) Sub-Group

- 5.1 The Interim Chair reminded members that IG is the 'Lead' of the Sub-Group looking at this area of work and thanked TM for producing the report looking at the effectiveness of Medically Supervised Injecting Centres (MSICs) on behalf of the Sub-Group, which was circulated to members prior to the meeting.

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- 5.2 TM informed members that he was a Research Fellow in Criminology at the University of South Wales and provided members with background to the report that had been written on behalf of the Sub-Group. TM advised members that the research comprised collating evidence via a review of systematic reviews of MSICs. TM stated that the report presents a thematic analysis of the findings from this review.
- 5.3 TM informed members that the report was structured into four main parts. The first dealt with the methodological process of conducting a review of systematic reviews. The second, third and fourth sections present evidence of the effectiveness of MSICs, an overview of the cost-effectiveness of MSICs and recent literature on MSICs published in 2014 or after. TM advised that the review concludes with an overview of key findings.
- 5.4 TM advised members that there is no shortage of literature evaluating the effectiveness of MSICs. The majority of these studies emanating from Australia, Canada, Denmark, Spain and Switzerland.
- 5.5 TM explained that there were five broad themes from the data which included the following topics:
- impact of MSICs on mortality - some evidence to support the prevention of overdose within the community,
 - reducing risky injecting behaviour through the provision of clean paraphernalia,
 - assisting users into treatment programmes,
 - environmental and social benefits – reducing discarded paraphernalia in the streets and reduction in drug-related crime,
 - cost effectiveness – reduction in health care costs. TM stated that there was no evidence to show that MSICs were not cost effective.
- 5.6 TM explained that the next steps would be to consider local contextual issues such as do MSICs engage the most at-risk injecting users? TM stated that many do not allow under-18's or pregnant women and advised that some now allow smoking e.g. synthetic cannabis and 'spice'.
- 5.7 JL questioned whether the cost implication of those engaging/accessing services had been taken into account, and that this should be given consideration in terms of how funds are allocated in future.
- 5.8 MP stated that he was keen to support this area of work, given the current issues in North Wales, particularly in Wrexham, as is the North Wales Police Crime Commissioner (PCC). MP stated that this was a really important area of work and he was happy to support in any way he could.

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- 5.9 REDACTED advised members that there was already a multi-agency group looking at this issue in Wales and that she sits on this group on behalf of Welsh Government (but only in an observer capacity due to the legal position regarding MSICs taken by Welsh Government). REDACTED stated that the purpose of the APoSM EHRCs Sub-Group was to review the current research and evidence and identify the cost-effectiveness and associated wider health cost savings. REDACTED stated that it would be for the multi-agency group to engage with stakeholders and identify a possible model for introduction in Wales.
- 5.10 The Interim Chair thanked TM for his contribution and commended the quality of the report presented to the Panel. The Interim Chair confirmed that the EHRCs Sub-Group is aiming to complete their work so that the Panel can submit a report to the Minister in December 2017.

Agenda Item 6 – Update: Contribution Analysis of the Substance Misuse Strategy

- 6.1 REDACTED advised members that she worked in the Knowledge and Analytical Services (KAS) within Welsh Government and was the contract manager for the work being undertaken on the ‘contribution analysis’ of the substance misuse strategy. REDACTED advised that as the evaluators were unable to attend the meeting, she would talk members through a presentation provided by the evaluators giving an update on their findings so far. REDACTED advised members that the final report was due to be received in the week following the meeting. REDACTED reminded members that as this was a ‘contribution analysis’ of the strategy, the report would look at the changes that have taken place following the implementation of the strategy in 2008.
- 6.2 The Interim Chair stated that it was a key role of the Panel to feed into the review of the strategy and encouraged members to give their views. REDACTED referred members to the presentation and stated that any comments would be fed back to the evaluators. Members’ comments were as follows:
- 6.3 Slide 8: Survey – Four Key Questions – The Interim Chair suggested that the word ‘outcomes’ on point 4 be changed to ‘outputs’.
- 6.4 Slide 9: Key Messages & External Factors – The Interim Chair queried whether these messages had arisen during workshops or individual interviews? REDACTED explained that it was a mix of both.
- 6.5 Slide 14: Headline findings - impact / contribution – REDACTED explained the relative strength of the evidence collected would be discussed within the final report and reiterated that this slide is explaining the rating in terms of the impact/contribution made and not the activity. The Interim Chair stated there is a lot of activity but less

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impact; REDACTED explained that where there is less funding there will tend to be less impact.

- 6.6 Slide 15: Critical Factors – SM asked REDACTED to explain the data issues referred to slide 15. REDACTED stated these issues are due to the longer-term outcomes of service users being difficult to record as systems currently in place are not designed to follow a person’s path of recovery over the long term.
- 6.7 Slide 16 & 17: Key Questions for APoSM – The Interim Chair suggested that members consider the key questions and respond directly to the Secretariat with any feedback rather than a collective response being given on behalf of the Panel.
- 6.8 The Interim Chair expressed his concern about alcohol being side-lined in workshops; and that there appeared to be a lack of involvement from emergency services who may have identified more issues around alcohol.
- 6.9 The Interim Chair stated that there appeared to be a lack of engagement from service users. REDACTED advised that the evaluators had found this difficult to obtain. JL stated that in order to get the best results in terms of engaging service users there needs to be careful consideration given to advertising events/workshops. Targeting professionals who have a responsibility of care to service users could also be an option when trying to encourage service users to engage. There was also mention of engaging the families of service users as a way of obtaining feedback.
- 6.10 REDACTED advised that a final draft of the ‘contribution analysis’ would be submitted for consideration at the Substance Misuse Partnership Board in June with the final version being published in the Autumn.
- 6.11 The Interim Chair thanked REDACTED for attending the meeting and stated that this had been a good way for the Panel to receive an overview of the work undertaken so far in terms of the ‘contribution analysis’ of the substance misuse strategy. The Interim Chair stated that he looked forward to receiving a copy of the final report.

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| Action Point 5 | Members to feedback individual comments to Secretariat in terms of the ‘Key Questions’ for APoSM on slides 16 and 17 of the presentation on the ‘Contribution Analysis’ of the Substance Misuse Strategy. |
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Agenda Item 7 – Lunch

Agenda Item 8 – Discussion and Agreement of APoSM Future Work Programme

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- 8.1 The Interim Chair referred members back to the APoSM awayday held in October 2016 and that some members were keen for the Panel to undertake a piece of work around Children and Young People (C&YP). There was discussion on whether this would be focused on substance misuse education in schools or on children at risk.
- 8.2 SM stated that given that the number of permanent exclusions relating to drug use has gone up he would like to explore how schools address substance misuse in terms of school practices, exploring the successes/ failures of current policies and what support there is, if any, to vulnerable young people.
- 8.3 The Interim Chair suggested a review of the existing methods of substance misuse education in Wales to establish whether this is useful/effective. REDACTED advised that the Welsh Government currently supports the All Wales Schools Liaison Core Programme (AWSLCP) via the substance misuse budget and that it is jointly funded by the four Welsh Police Forces. REDACTED stated that there has been a recent operational review of the Programme which has resulted in a change in how the programme is structured.
- 8.4 RI stated that it would be important for the Panel to engage with the police if this work were to be taken forward. REDACTED stated that there are sensitivities around the AWSLCP and suggested that the best approach would be for him to identify who within the police would be the best person for RI and SM to meet to discuss this issue. JS stated that it was important for the Panel to agree on what it is they are hoping to achieve/attempting to influence by undertaking this work before any meeting takes place. It was therefore agreed that to progress this work further scoping would need to be carried out prior to any meeting being arranged.
- 8.5 RA provided members with a paper on 'primary care and substance misuse' linked to discussions that members had at the APoSM awayday in October 2016, specifically around the role of primary care, including pharmacies, in relation to those who are not engaged in treatment services.
- 8.6 RH advised members that there are a number of actions in the Substance Misuse Delivery Plan 2016-18 which are already being taken forward to improve access to and engagement with primary care. Regarding workforce development, one of these actions specifically relates to encouraging GPs (and other primary care professionals) to undertake the RCGP substance misuse certificates Part 1 and 2 and to specialise in substance misuse.
- 8.7 RA confirmed she would undertake research into the level of contact individuals with existing substance misuse problems have with primary care professionals and identify if there are any changing trends.

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| Action Point 6 | RI and SM to carry out further scoping to agree a way forward regarding a possible future workstream for the Panel relating to Children and Young People. |
| Action Point 7 | RA to undertake research into the level of contact individuals with existing substance misuse problems have with primary care professionals and identify any changing trends. |

Agenda Item 9 – Any Other Business

- 9.1 REDACTED stated that the public appointments exercise for the new APoSM Chair was progressing with the interviews likely to take place in early July. REDACTED thanked the Interim Chair for covering the role and in particular, for his work in driving the Ageing Population report through to publication.
- 9.2 SM advised members that he was in the early stages of work calling for a ban on alcohol on aeroplanes and in airports.

Agenda Item 10 – Dates of Future Meetings / Events

- 10.1 The Secretariat advised that they would canvass members with potential dates for the next Main Panel meeting which would take place following completion of the public appointments exercise for the new APoSM Chair.
- 10.2 The Interim Chair advised members that the work of any already established Sub-Groups would continue as usual during this period.

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| Action Point 8 | Secretariat to canvas members with potential dates for the next Main Panel meeting. |
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Agenda Item 11 – Closing Remarks

- 11.1 The Interim Chair concluded the meeting and thanked members for their attendance.

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Action Point Summary

| Number | Action Point | Responsible individual/s |
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| 1 | JS to circulate presentations from the Royal College of Psychiatrists meeting of the Four Nations to Panel members. | JS |
| 2 | PR to provide an update on progress made against the recommendations contained in the 'Tramadol' report. | PR |
| 3 | JL to provide Secretariat with dates in order to arrange a meeting of the PoMs Sub-Group. | JL/Secretariat |
| 4 | Interim Chair to inform PR of the decisions made in order to take forward PoMs report and ask him to provide JL with a copy of the latest draft of the report. | Interim Chair/PR |
| 5 | Members to provide feedback on individual comments to Secretariat in terms of the 'Key Questions' for ApoSM on slides 16 and 17 of the presentation on the 'Contribution Analysis' of the Substance Misuse Strategy. | All Members |
| 6 | RI and SM to carry out further scoping to agree a way forward regarding a possible future workstream for the Panel relating to Children and Young People. | RI/SM |
| 7 | RA to undertake research into the level of contact individuals with existing substance misuse problems have with primary care professionals and identify any changing trends. | RA |
| 8 | Secretariat to canvas members with potential dates for the next Main Panel meeting. | Secretariat |