

**Animal and Environment Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) Delivery Group for Wales**

**Minutes of the meeting held at over Microsoft Teams on the 10<sup>th</sup> September 2020**

Gavin Watkins (GW)	Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs (MEERA)
Iestyn Jones (IJ)	Gwen Rees (GR)
Amelia Stevens (AS)	Llyr Lewis (LIL)
George Brownlee (GB)	Robert Smith (RS)
Ifan Lloyd (IL)	Geraint Hamer (GH)
Catherine Cody (CC)	Wyn Evans (WE)
Eifiona Williams (EW)	Sian Timms (ST)
Ian Jones (IJ)	Marc Alford-Evans (MAE) – Secretariat

**Apologies**

Paul Green (PG)	Ann Davies (AD)
Gareth Thomas (GT)	Eleri Davies (ED)
Robin Howe (RH)	Eifiona Williams (EW)
Christianne Glossop (CG)	Marion Lyons (ML)

**Agenda Item 1: Welcome and Introduction from the Minister for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs, Progress Review for 2019/20 and Arwain Vet Cymru Update (GW/ST/GR/MEERA)**

1. GW opened the meeting by welcoming the Delivery Group members.
2. ST presented the poster of the AMR Delivery Group Annual Review to everyone present in the meeting. She thanked everyone for their contributions. She explained that the document lists all the different organisations involved in the Delivery Group's engagement work. ST mentioned the event held at Royal Welsh Agricultural Show (RWAS) which helped us create more networking with interested groups. ST thanked RS for hosting an event for WAAW.

3. ST went on to explain that the final section of the Annual Review talks about AVC and Nadis who are delivering advice to Vet practices. There is a graphic to show that Welsh Government schemes are supporting this work.
4. GW added that the infographic is far more useful in communicating the schemes compared to a huge document by the end of the current Implementation Plan's five year period. GW went on to tell the Delivery Group that he is pleased with progress so far and that he knows that there will be significant work to be done for AMR next year after RDP funding is allocated.
5. GR gave a presentation to the Delivery Group on the overview of the Arwain Vet Cymru project and its progress since the last quarterly meeting. Due to COVID19 restrictions, the project had to change how it facilitates its work. Around the time the Delivery Group was set up, the project was launched with the two key points: improving standards of antibiotic selection and prescribing and also improving standards of antibiotic supply. Funding for this research will come to an end next summer. GR went on to mention that some members in the Delivery Group are supporting the research.
6. GR is working on the part of the project that is establishing a network of prescribing champions. Encouraging behavioural change is the project's aim. So far 15 vets in North Wales and 25 in South Wales have signed up. Half of the vets are the partners in a practice and also half the vets have been in the profession for over 20 years.
7. The vets started their training last week via webinars. The stewardship workshop will be starting on World Antibiotic Awareness Week (November 18 – 24). That workshop will be aiming to give the vet champions the knowledge of what they will need to change in their practices in January when they have completed all of the training modules. GR acknowledges that there are challenges when trying to change behaviour (undercutting, loss of profits etc.) but due to it being a pan Wales project, all vet practices can be reassured that other practices are also trying to make the situation better.
8. MEERA joined the meeting. She firstly expressed her appreciation that Delivery Group members were able to work from home and continue to work affectively

during this extraordinary time. MEERA expressed how pleased she was about securing the funding for future work.

9. MEERA went on to say that our ability to have a vaccine for COVID19 is important. MEERA emphasised that the Delivery Group's work is connected globally. MEERA said that we all have made vital contributions to this; vets, academics, animal keepers etc.
  
10. MEERA thanked Environment and Office of the Chief Veterinary Officer (OCVO) colleagues in Welsh Government for working closely on AMR. However, she emphasised that it is up to everyone to tackle the spread of AMR.
  
11. Before leaving the meeting, MEERA said she would catch up on the annual review and the Arwain Vet Cymru presentation later in the day. **ACTION30:** To share presentations with the Minister's office.
  
12. GW added that AMR RDP funding comes from a Ministerial decision which highlights the Minister's interest in this topic.
  
13. GH updated the Delivery Group from the environmental work. GH explained that Dŵr Cymru had suspended their research earlier this year due to COVID priorities but have recently gotten back to their research on the possible effects AMR bacteria has on water.
  
14. GW had spoken to PG before today's meeting due to them not being able to have anyone from Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) represented in this quarterly meeting however they have colleagues covering another AMR meeting. The VMD will provide an update for the Delivery Group in the next quarterly meeting.

## **Agenda Item 2: Minutes and Actions from the last meeting (ST)**

15. ST presented the current outstanding, parked and closed actions for the DG to consider.
16. ST told the members present that they had until two weeks after today's meeting to submit any comments or edits to the minutes drafted from the last quarterly meeting.

## **Agenda Item 3: Round Table Updates (Group)**

17. RS commented on GW reference on Farming Connect training events starting again. The preference is to conduct sessions via webinars rather than face to face meetings. If they are face to face then it is conducted outdoors rather than indoors. Conducting sessions in person will be a challenge because participants might be hesitant to attend and they are payed by the number of people who attend.
18. IJ updated the Delivery Group by letting the members know that generally they had made good preparations for adapting to COVID19 restrictions. Vaccine sales have increased quite a bit and farmers have been able to obtain their orders with very little difficulty. The pre-ordering system means more engagement. IJ told the Delivery Group that there will be three poultry training programmes that will include AMR that will be introduced before Christmas this year.
19. IJ went on to explain that COVID19 had made many review their businesses operations.
20. AS added that there has been discussions on relaxing the definition of "under our care" which she finds concerning. If people are not playing ball, who will sign it, due to the definition provided by the RVC.
21. RS confirmed that messages are being received more positively. There are problems with undercutting and the definition of 'under our care' may contribute towards this. Others felt that this was more of a localised issue drive by certain practices and industry demand. We should continue to highlight bad practice. As COVID19 has resulted in more remote prescribing, the guidelines may have become even more relaxed. Standards of supply are the issue.
22. GW added that despite not being in a position of viewing this from a practice level, this is viewed as a good thing in the long term instead of engaging in a race to the bottom. The farmers will benefit too because the health and welfare of their livestock will also improve.
23. IL reported to the Delivery Group that one of the areas we have to take seriously are the people who are multiple subscribers to the same farms. The Target Task Force is

supposed to be considering later this month and have voiced this concern. The TTF group received our feedback earlier this month which was circulated by IL. The detail includes a proposal for a vet prescribing champion programme which has garnered a lot of attention based on what is already being done in Wales.

24. GW reminded the Delivery Group that there are no targets in the Implementation Plan for Wales but that they are still interested in the work of the TTF.
25. GR wanted to bring to everyone's attention that Responsible Use of Medicines (RUMA) were holding a meeting at this same point and Arwain Vet Cymru had been given another shout out at that meeting. She added that there was a very interesting paper published a month ago on the effects of setting targets. The conclusion stated that there were downsides and loopholes being used by farmers who were looking at ways to undercut the system. **ACTION31:** Ask GR to send the paper for us to circulate to the Delivery Group after this meeting.
26. GW mentioned that he and Welsh Government colleagues had been told by Fiona Lovett that she has been trying to focus the interventions towards the vets rather than the farmers because they are the medicine keepers. We are all a part of a UK method and he agreed with IL that we can learn from each other.
27. CC updated the Delivery Group on public health by firstly saying that they are now back, more or less, to their normal work areas after being reprioritised to COVID19 response. They have a meeting tomorrow with Devolved Administrations and the Department of Health to coordinate Antibiotic Awareness Week activities. CC told the Delivery Group that it'll be a lot more limited this year compared to previous years due to the COVID19 messaging being published by governments.
28. Regarding the e-bug, CC explained that this is being updated to include the antibiotic use and COVID19 messaging. This is the resource that is being used by Public Health Wales in primary schools to educate on the transfer of diseases.
29. GW asked the Delivery Group about Delivery Group AMR work with young farmers. He asked the Delivery Group if they should be engaging more with Young Farmers Clubs in the messaging strategy.
30. WE said he thought that would be beneficial because they do give presentations in young farmers clubs however he thought that younger farmers are largely educated and aware of the dangers of over using antibiotics.
31. IL agreed and said Gwaredu BVD have presented competitions for education reasons. GW asked if they would be willing to speak to young farmers about the work of the Delivery Group and both agreed. **ACTION32.**
32. WE told the group that dairy antibiotic use has plateaued in dairy sector, but beef will likely go up due to the rearing of bull calves. WG needs to be fully informed of the issue and it's future impact. IJ confirmed that farms infrastructure will be an

issue – are farms able to house these animals etc. is a welfare issue that could lead to increased antibiotic usage. WE confirmed that the first two days of life are crucial to the calf's immune system and if not managed correctly can lead to ongoing problems. IJ added that one of the major issues they face from antibiotic use is where people will have pressure to maintain their standards. Also there are financial implications, we must get retailers on board to make this work. GW agreed and said he would pass on his notes to colleagues in the Animal Health and Welfare Group (AHWFG). **ACTION33:** Relay feedback to the AHWFG who are potentially considering a half calf proposal.

#### **Agenda Item 4: Companion Animal Update (AS)**

33. AS explained that efforts are focused more on the prescriber than anyone else. They are trying to get a realistic idea of the timescale to educate on antibiotic use of companion animals. AS went on to explain that there's currently a bilingual hand out in production to include with antibiotics that are prescribed to help owners administer to their pets in the correct way. The pamphlet may be lifted from new BVD posters being produced.
34. AS told the Delivery Group that approaching corporate bodies to get access to their data might be challenging but BVA could assist in gaining access. Consultation data might be more useful and present a challenge.
35. IL revealed that BVA has already done some work in this area and added that they have done well with producing leaflets and waiting room posters for practices.
36. AS was pleased to hear about BVA's work and said that she knows that there is so much to be done but that there still needs to be planning before more work can be taken forward.
37. GW asked who from the Delivery Group sits on the companion animal RUMR sub-group and no member present responded. **ACTION34:** Gavin to raise with Gwyn Jones.

#### **Agenda Item 5: Welsh Lamb and Beef Producers (WLBP) Update (IJ/GB/LIL)**

38. GB introduced himself to the Delivery Group. IJ gave a presentation on the background of Welsh Lamb and Beef Producers (WLBP). He explained what they are currently doing in terms of work and what they expect to do in the future.
39. GB gave a presentation on how Farmvet Systems ties into the WLBP system. They take data from many different resources then it is presented to vets via their app for their use. GB explained in detail that this system allows the vet and farmer to set up the enterprises that they want to record and report against.

40. IL asked if there could be different metrics given depending on the different animals that are being recorded. GB agreed that there needed to be options on which metrics to record and went on to explain that CHAWG have been battling with this issue for some time. They have been keeping up with their recommendations and it is planned to be built in but it hasn't been done yet. GB told the Delivery Group that he felt strongly that this should be facilitated but don't make it mandatory.
41. GW added that there is a statutory requirement for farmers to keep a medicine record but that might not be reflected in practice.
42. RS said that he wanted clarification on if farmers add the information themselves and GB confirmed that they do.
43. GB went on to explain that once the data is drawn into the system, the permission has been put there and assigned this is then at the disposal of WLBP.
44. IJ wanted to remind all Delivery Group members present that this is helping the supply chains as it's a system that allows industry engage with the vets.

**Agenda Item 6: Any Other Business (Group) (Confirmed via Email due to time constraints.)**

45. ST gave the Delivery Group an update on EAAD & WAAW activities. ST told the Delivery Group that in line with health colleagues, we have also agreed on a scaled back approach this year focussing on a few tweets to promote Animal Health Planning. ST gave the Delivery Group an update on upcoming events related to their work. ST told the Delivery Group that a meeting between Welsh Government and the FSA had been organised to take place on the 22nd of September. ST also told them that they are planning to approach the ROADMAP project (via Gareth Enticott at Cardiff University), to request a meeting to discuss this project. Finally, ST told the Delivery Group that they are planning to arrange meetings with colleagues in the other devolved administrations to hear about their work.
46. ST reminded Delivery Group members that if they would like to be invited and involved with any of these meetings to let her know and she'll forward the meeting invites as and when they become available.
47. It was confirmed that the next quarterly meeting will be held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2020.
48. Finally, ST told the Delivery Group that the secretariat will shortly be canvassing for future meeting dates in 2021 and to please keep an eye out for the requests.