

Governance of WATAG

1. Status

The Western Australian Therapeutics Advisory Group (WATAG) (previously named the Western Australian Drugs and Therapeutics Committee or WADTC) was established to encourage the appropriate, safe and cost-effective use of therapeutic drugs in Western Australia. It operates as an independent expert clinical advisory committee and reports to the Chief Medical Officer, WA DoH.

2. Terms of Reference

The terms of reference for the Western Australian Therapeutic Advisory Group are:

- 2.1. To develop best practice standards and guidelines for drug use in Western Australian based on scientific knowledge of clinical efficacy, safety and cost effectiveness, and to give advice on drug use where appropriate;
- 2.2. To encourage health services and individual prescribers to apply the standards and guidelines developed or adopted by the Committee for everyday clinical practice;
- 2.3. To undertake such research and gathering of information from the scientific literature and other sources as may be necessary, including the conduct of drug usage evaluations;
- 2.4. To initiate and promote educational programmes relating to drug therapy, and to disseminate drug information to health services and members of appropriate professional groups in Western Australia.

The Chairman shall provide an annual report to the Chief Medical Officer regarding the activities of WATAG.

3. Mission

By working to ensure the safe, appropriate and cost-effective use of medicines, WATAG aims to contribute positively to the health of West Australians and to the performance of the health system.

4. Goals

4.1. Clinical advice

To provide independent expert information and advice to the Chief Medical Officer and the WA Department of Health in relation to drugs and therapeutics.

4.2. Information exchange network

To develop and maintain links between organisations, groups, and individuals involved in therapeutic drug use and thus facilitate the identification, evaluation and solution of contemporary problems in therapeutics.

4.3. Advice for Professionals

To provide information and advice to health professionals making decisions on drug usage in health services and general practice.

5. Membership

Membership comprises medical, pharmacy, nursing and other health professionals with expertise and an interest in the safe, appropriate and cost-effective use of medicines in WA. The membership also reflects a broad representation of key stakeholders involved in therapeutic drug use at tertiary, secondary, regional and private health services.

5.2 Current membership

Committee Member	Position and Address
Dr Poh-Kooi LOH <i>Chairman</i>	Geriatrician & Clinical Pharmacologist Royal Perth Hospital
Dr Terry BAYLISS	Medical Director Hollywood Private Hospital
Ms Jennifer BENZIE	Chief Pharmacist, Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital
Dr Sean HOOD	Psychiatrist & Senior Lecturer Bentley Health Service & UWA
Dr Paul LANGTON	Cardiologist Private practice & Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital
Mr Murray PATTERSON	Chief Pharmacist Pharmaceutical Services (WA DoH)
Dr Tony RYAN	Physician Private practice & Armadale Health Service
Ms Amanda SHERRATT	Nurse Practitioner Course Coordinator, Curtin University
Dr David SPEERS	Infectious Disease Physician PathWest & Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital
Dr Nicole STAPLES	Haematologist Royal Perth Hospital
Mr David LYON <i>Secretary (non-voting)</i>	WATAG Executive Officer Royal Perth Hospital

5.2 Appointments

Members of WATAG are appointed by the Chief Medical Officer (WA Department of Health). WATAG will recommend a nominee(s) for any vacant position that arises, for appointment by the Chief Medical Officer.

The term of appointment has no fixed time limit.

The Chairman is also appointed by the Chief Medical Officer on the recommendation of the Committee, determined by a formal nomination procedure. This includes a call for nominations from Committee members followed, if necessary, by a Committee vote. The term of office is not fixed.

The Committee has the power to co-opt additional members as required.

5.3 Independence

Members of WATAG and its sub-committees shall act in an independent manner in the collective interest of the people of WA. WATAG and its sub-committees shall act independently of the Department of Health.

5.4 Conflicts of Interest

Each member of WATAG and its sub-committees shall abide by the Code of Conduct and declare any potential conflict or duality of interest in matters of concern to the committee (or sub-committee). WATAG members shall

- a) complete and sign an Annual Declaration of Potential Conflicts of Interest,
- b) verbally declare any potential conflicts of interest at the commencement of each meeting on matters pertaining to the prepared Agenda,
- c) alert the Chairman of any other potential conflicts of interest that may arise during the course of a meeting.

Invited guests or attendees shall complete and sign a Declaration of Potential Conflicts of Interest at the commencement of any meeting attended.

Where a potential conflict of interest has been declared, the Chairman shall determine how to proceed and advise the meeting accordingly.

5.5 Meetings Schedule

Meetings are generally held every two months at a place and time determined by the Chairman. The Chairman can also convene additional meetings, and cancel or defer meetings according to the Committee's business requirements.

5.6 Attendance

Members should table an apology if unable to attend. Attendance by a proxy is not usual practice, but members unable to attend a meeting may recommend a proxy to the Chairman. Attendance by a proxy shall be at the discretion of the Chairman.

A standing invitation applies to the Chairman and secretary of both WADEP and WAMSG to attend WATAG meetings in a non-voting capacity. The Chairman of WADEP is normally required to attend WATAG meetings, but may appoint a proxy from the WADEP membership to attend and report on his/her behalf.

5.7 Access

WATAG meetings are restricted to committee members, sub-committee Chairmen (or their proxy), invited guests and committee (including sub-committee) support staff.

5.8 Temporary Vacancies

Temporary vacancies may be filled at the discretion of the Chairman.

5.9 Subcommittees

WATAG may create a subcommittee either as a standing committee or on an ad hoc basis. Special working groups may also be created, as required.

5.10 Executive Officer

The WATAG Executive Officer shall be an *ex-officio* member of the committee. The Executive Officer shall be entitled to receive notice of and to attend meetings, and be heard at such meetings, but not entitled to vote. The Executive Officer shall act as Committee Secretary and record and prepare minutes of meetings.

6. Funds and Property

A Memorandum of Understanding between WATAG, the Chief Medical Officer (WA Department of Health), and the Area Health Service Chief Executives provides the basis for a triennium of recurrent annual funding for the work of the Western Australian Therapeutics Advisory Group (WATAG) and its sub-committees. Recurrent annual funding is provided by the Office of the Chief Medical Officer, WA DoH for each financial year (1 July to 30 June), paid to, and managed by the host organisation for WATAG.

6.1 Use of Income and Property

The income and property of the WATAG may only be applied for the purpose of promoting the goals of the Committee, and in accordance with budget provisions.

Except as provided in this clause, no part of the income or property of the Committee may be paid or transferred directly or indirectly to any Committee member. The following payments or reimbursements to members are permitted:

1. out-of-pocket expenses incurred in the performance of duties, on production of receipts;
2. any service rendered to the Committee in a professional or technical capacity, other than in his or her capacity as a committee member, if the provision of services and the payment is approved by the Committee and the payment is no more than an amount which would be considered reasonable in relation to the service provided;

A Statement of Income and Expenditure shall be prepared for inclusion in the Annual Report.

6.2 Surplus Income and Property

If the Committee is wound up, disposal of net assets and funds remaining after payment of all liabilities will be determined by the WA Department of Health and the host organisation.

7. Employees

WATAG shall appoint an Executive Officer. The ordinary place of work of the Executive Officer will normally be with the host organisation where the Chairman is appointed.

The Committee shall delegate the day-to-day functions of the committee to the Executive Officer who shall report regularly to the Chairman.

Support staff appointments may also be made to sub-committees of WATAG. These positions will normally work in conjunction with, and be located with the respective sub-committee Chairman.

8. Proceedings at meetings

8.1 Regular Meetings

WATAG will meet bimonthly or as determined by the Chairman. A schedule of meetings will be prepared by the Executive Officer for each new calendar year, and tabled for adoption at the last meeting of the preceding year. Meetings will normally be scheduled for Wednesday 17:45 hours and should not extend beyond 1930 hours. Members will be advised by the Executive Officer at least 7 days in advance of a scheduled meeting of any variation from the approved schedule.

8.2 Other meetings

Additional meetings may be summoned, or scheduled meeting may be cancelled, deferred or rescheduled at the discretion of the Chairman, WATAG. Members will be advised in advance by the Executive Officer of any variation from the approved schedule.

8.3 Quorum

The quorum exists when half (6) the members are present, including the Chairman. If a meeting of members does not have a quorum within twenty minutes after the commencement time for the meeting, the meeting may proceed informally or be adjourned to a date and time determined by the Chairman.

8.4 Chairing of Meeting

The Chairman may nominate an Acting Chairman from the membership, or if no arrangement has been made, an Acting Chairman may be chosen by those members present, to permit the work of the Committee to continue in the Chairman's absence.

8.5 Resolutions

Resolutions are reached by a majority of members present. A resolution shall only be made if there is a quorum, and it is supported by a majority of those members present. A resolution made while a meeting is proceeding informally (see 8.2) shall not be final but will require to be confirmed by a later meeting at which a quorum is present.

8.6 Voting

The Chairman shall not have an ordinary vote. In case of an equality of votes, the Chairman shall have a casting vote, which shall be cast in favour of the *status quo ante*. Chairman may call for a vote on any matter requiring resolution, and he may have the vote taken again if he is in doubt as to the result, or to have the vote counted. Voting will normally be by voice or show of hands, but may be by secret ballot if requested by any member. Members must be present when a question is completely put to be eligible to vote.

8.7 Out-of-session Resolutions

To resolve some matters in a timely manner, the Chairman may elect to determine the committee's position by way of out-of-session vote. A written proposal(s) will be circulated to members, usually by email and a time and date will be specified for responses to be returned. A resolution shall only be made if supported by a majority

of responding members. Voting will be valid only if a minimum of five members respond. In case of an equality of votes, the Chairman has a casting vote, which shall be cast in favour of the *status quo ante*, or he may elect to defer the matter for full discussion at the next regular meeting. Members will be advised promptly of the outcome of any out-of-session resolutions.

8.8 Communication

Usually, committee correspondence will be by electronic means. A database of members' contact details shall be maintained by the Executive Officer.

9. Agenda and Minutes

9.1 Agenda

Preparation of the Agenda for each meeting shall be prepared by the Chairman and the Executive Officer. Any member may submit items of business to be placed on the agenda. The Agenda of regular meetings shall include business requiring discussion or action, including new and unfinished business, subcommittee reports including Minutes and other information, any other business, correspondence, and other items for information or noting. The Agenda for regular meetings shall be made available to members by e-mail at least 7 days before each meeting.

Copies of all documents associated with a meeting shall accompany the Agenda or be tabled at the meeting. Documents for information or noting may be circulated to members upon receipt and in advance of a meeting, to be noted during the proceeding of a meeting.

9.2 Minutes

Draft Minutes shall be distributed to members no later than ten working days after the meeting where they were recorded. Minutes must include the date, time and place of meeting. Details of attendance and apologies must be recorded accurately. Items will be written in the order in which they appear in the Agenda, irrespective of the order in which they were discussed during a meeting.

Resolutions shall be recorded accurately and numbered sequentially for each calendar year. Any actions to be taken shall also be recorded, together with the initials of the member(s) responsible for completing the action.

Minutes shall be confirmed at the next scheduled WATAG meeting with a quorum, and shall be signed by the Chairman and filed in the record of WATAG (WADTC) Minutes.

Minutes of all Committee meetings will be recorded, and kept at the WATAG office. Other WATAG documents, except accounting records will be maintained at the WATAG office. Accounting records will be kept with the host organisation.

10. Amendment of this Statement

The Committee may alter or add to this Statement by a special resolution passed at a meeting of the WATAG. Any alteration or addition will take effect on the date of the special resolution, or later if specified. The list of members shall be kept up to date by the Executive Officer, without the need for special resolution as described above.