

Reporting Committee	WHSSC - All Wales Individual Patient Funding Request (IPFR) Panel
Chaired by	Elizabeth Abderrahim
Lead Executive Director	Director of Nursing and Quality Assurance
Date of last meeting	WHSSC IPFR Panel meeting 06 March 2024

Summary of key matters considered by the Committee and any related decisions made.

The unavailability of Health Board representatives has meant that there have been a number of occasions when it has not been possible to achieve quoracy with the result that some scheduled IPFR Panel meetings were cancelled. This created a backlog of applications with many of these which lapsing their specified urgencies and falling outside of the 6-week turnaround stipulated within the policy.

Urgent requests have continued to be considered at meetings of the Chairs Action Panel although the volume of urgent cases received has made it challenging to convene meetings given the existing commitments of those individuals eligible to sit as members.

The following table demonstrates the number of requests considered at the Chair's Action Panel meetings and All Wales IPFR Panel meetings during this reporting period.

	Number of Requests discussed as Chair's Actions	Number of Requests discussed by WHSSC IPFR Panel
January	6	3
February	16	9
March [to 11/03]	3	11

Key risks and issues/matters of concern and any mitigating actions

The Backlog of Applications.

The greatest risk in the period since the last meeting of the Joint Committee has been the backlog of applications created as a result of the cancellation of Panel meetings. In order to manage that risk a decision was taken that Panel meetings should not be cancelled and should go ahead with any decisions made at inquorate meeting subsequently being ratified at the next quorate meeting. This was to ensure that patients received a decision about their proposed treatment without any further delay. Since that decision was made there have been two scheduled meetings [on 21 February and 6 March] and both of these have been quorate. With the agreement of members those Panels managed an above average number of applications on the agenda [as detailed above] which has meant that it has not

been necessary to convene any additional meetings in order to address the backlog of applications. In this way the backlog has reduced considerably and it is anticipated that it will have been eliminated in the very near future.

The Implementation of the Revised All Wales IPFR Policy

It remains the case that the revised All Wales IPFR Policy [the Policy] is yet to be implemented. Subsequent to the Joint Committee's approval the Policy has been shared with seven Health Boards and, with the requisite Health Board approval, is now awaiting final sign off by the Welsh Government. Until such time as that final sign off is obtained the Panel is obliged to continue operating under Terms of Reference which require five of the seven Health Boards to be represented. This quoracy requirement, coupled with the availability of Health Board representatives, is what has contributed to the backlog of applications and the risks associated with that backlog. It's anticipated that the reduced quoracy requirements under the revised Terms of Reference [four rather than five Health Board representatives] will address the difficulties there have been in convening quorate meetings and, to facilitate early sign off of the Policy, a letter has been sent to Andrew Evans, the Welsh Government's Chief Pharmaceutical Officer, seeking confirmation that the revised policy can be adopted.

In anticipation of the implementation of the revised Terms of Reference steps have been taken to ensure that the membership of the Panel is established as soon as possible. This has included writing to the Medical Directors of each of the Health Boards inviting them to confirm the identity of their representative – under the revised Terms of Reference the Health Boards should be represented by the Chair of the Health Board's own IPFR Panel or, if not the Chair, a nominated clinical deputy. We are awaiting confirmation.

Decision Making

To support the creation of a robust record of the Panel's decision the WHSSC IPFR team have been trialling a revised Panel Record Sheet that includes specific reference to the Part A or Part B test that's been applied and the Decision-Making Guide set out in the Policy has been used during meetings to support the Panel's decision making.

- None

Matters referred to other Committees

- None

Confirmed Minutes for each of the meetings are available on request.

Date of next meeting	17 April 2024
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