

BAA President Blog – 8th March 2021

Today is international Women's Day and a day to celebrate the achievements of all our women in hearing health around the world, many of them who work in more deprived areas with limited resources, making a difference to people with hearing loss.

Last Wednesday, 3rd March was World hearing Day, and poor access to good hearing health was highlighted, alongside some of the great achievements we have achieved with current technological and scientific progress.

In the UK, we are fortunate that we have the NHS and a highly skilled and enthusiastic Audiology workforce; listening to some of the stories from across the globe, made me truly grateful for all that we have access to. You can read more about the World Hearing Day and download the first World Report on Hearing from our [news pages](#).

In my role, I sit on and attend other hearing and audiology groups alongside some of the Board directors. It is good to work together on some issues that affect our profession and ultimately, the lives of the hearing-impaired population whom we all seek to improve the lives of. We will tell you all about some of these projects as they progress.

Wax Removal

Recently, we have been working a little with the RNID after a parliamentary written question at the end of 2020 about access to **wax removal in some English CCGs**. The answer stated that ear wax removal is an enhanced service that CCGs and GP practices do not have to provide, instead they can choose to commission this service based on local need.

This contradicts clinical evidence and national guidance by suggesting GPs refer those who are struggling with their hearing (due to ear wax) to audiology services for assessment and hearing aid fitting. The RNID has developed a webpage explaining the issues. Is mapping the problem by obtaining postcodes and encouraging people to write to their MP if they've been affected. The RNID has also been raising the with parliamentarians and they ask that patients are referred to this page, to help them map areas of concern: rnid.org.uk/ear-wax-removal

We [wrote](#) to several key stakeholders at NHS England, receiving a reply from Professor Stephen Powis, National Medical Director for NHS England and NHS Improvement. In his [reply](#), Professor Powis states that "Local commissioners are responsible for meeting the health needs of their local population and should continue to ensure there is appropriate access to ear wax services". We will keep you updated as we progress with this issue.

College of Audiology?

You will remember that 16 months ago, we removed ourselves from the conversations that were happening about a potential College of Audiology. We have not forgotten about these discussions and I will soon be seeking the wider views of members on this topic. I want to represent how you feel and whether we should progress or not.

The other groups who were in the early discussions with BAA, have tentatively put forward a first steps plan that would involve forming a strategy group of all representatives in our profession. When BAA stepped away from the talks 15 months ago the Board put out a statement with the [reasons behind this](#). Whether we go back to the negotiations depends on you and we will be in touch soon.

Don't forget that you can still get involved with your professional body in many ways, including being part of some of our committees and small strategy groups that help your Board develop policies, projects and professional and service development. Our Professional Development Board Lead is looking for people to join their team. If you have an interest in professional development issues and specifically helping us with some of our established projects such as our partnerships with Ida and the BCIG, online training modules and webinars and our mentoring scheme, please drop an email to admin@baaudiology.org

Do not forget we are here for you. Please ask for support – if we can help, we will.

Kath Lewis