

## BAA President Blog – 14<sup>th</sup> June 2021

What a busy a couple of weeks since I last wrote my blog.

Thank you to everyone who joined me and my fellow Board Directors for our Member Update webinar last Wednesday. There were lots of topics covered as we tried to give a taster of some of the workstreams we have been focused on over the last few months. If you were not able to join us live, then the recording is available to view again in the [Knowledge Hub](#) in the members' area of this website. Head over there when you get some time as you will find lots of interesting recordings from regional meetings and webinars with our partners, such as the Ida Institute.

### EDIA and the BAA

Our Equality, Diversity, Inclusion & Accessibility committee have been busy behind the scenes, preparing a survey which I would ask you to give ten minutes to completing. This membership survey asks you some personal information about your ethnic origin, faith, gender, marital status and sexual orientation. We understand if you are not comfortable providing this information. You can answer 'prefer not to say' to any of our questions. We do ask that if you do not wish to answer these questions, to still complete the survey and answer 'prefer not to say', rather than not responding at all to help us better understand your views.

Your valuable input will be used to identify areas of development within the BAA and audiology as a whole and ensure that we make changes that benefit our members. This survey is anonymous, and all information you provide will be held in strict confidence, in line with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR).

### BAA Annual Conference

I am delighted that registration for the 2021 BAA Annual Conference opened last Monday. Covid-allowing, we will be face-to-face in Manchester. I love our webinars but after nearly 18 months of online meetings and webinars, I would really like to see our members (and non-members) in person for a change.

The conference team have been super busy and have pulled together a super line of keynote and guest speakers. If you have not already looked at the programme, please have a look through [here](#). To support you, our members, we have put together a limited offer to attend conference. The first 75 members who book for full conference, will be offered an additional place to bring a colleague for free! For less than £200, two of you can spend two days soaking up hours of CPD, education and research, enjoy the company of like-minded colleagues from across the UK and find out what is going on in other departments and practises.

The [portal](#) to submit your abstracts has also opened. Please make sure you get these into us by 21<sup>st</sup> July, for the opportunity to present either your poster or a presentation to your peers.

And last but not least, why not nominate a colleague or your team for an award. Have a look through the six award categories [here](#). I hope to see you in Manchester in November and perhaps hand an award to you?

### Clear facemasks

I attended another meeting last week about the availability of clear masks. I am delighted that the next step has been taken with the issuing of a tender to supply product through NHS SC.

As many of you will be aware, work has been ongoing since the Covid-19 pandemic began to find a suitable mask to aid lipreading and communication in the healthcare setting. The head of mask procurement for the Department of Health has been personally involved for 12 months in seeking a solution. Many problems have been encountered

along the way, with the main issue being masks failing to meet standards. After discussions with manufacturers of FFP3 masks, the procurement team have 3 standards that need to be met and are now going out to the global market to tender. The team are also looking at reusable options.

There will be a more detailed update from me in the forthcoming members' magazine and more information on the clear facemasks will be uploaded to the website soon.

Take care

*Kath Lewis*