

## BAA President Blog – 18<sup>th</sup> October 2021

Do you feel this year is flying by? Possibly, because we have all been so focussed on catching up with the patients we suspended for a while or that we are now seeing a rise in referrals. I am aware that many of you are already back up to the activity you had pre-Covid-19 and it is a testament to all your resilience that we found new ways for service delivery.

I am also aware that there are a small number of services who have been more affected with some restrictions in access to their departments due to where the Covid wards have been sited and staff being re-deployed or high levels of sickness due to isolation and stress.

I want to get the message out that we are there or almost there with activity as a lot of press in the private sector imply that we have extremely long waiting lists and are not coping with the backlog.

It is not a straightforward picture across all the nations. BAA would like to know where you are so that we can get respond with the right information.

So, we have a survey monkey going out this week to Heads of Service. It has a number of questions and I completed it in around 5 minutes, but it may take a little longer if you need to find some data (waiting time/staff WTE). I hope you don't mind BAA doing this and really hope that you will complete it for us. We need to have assurance and to be able to campaign for support where it is needed.

I attended the CSO conference in early October and it was pleasing to see Audiology was well represented in both attendees and speakers. It was great to hear about the innovations. BAA was represented at the BSA conference last Wednesday and it was so good to talk to people face to face. There were some interesting and enlightening presentations.

I then travelled to the special degree ceremony at Manchester University last Wednesday late afternoon/early evening to see Professor Dame Sue Hill MBE receive her Honorary Doctorate for contribution to Healthcare Sciences. There were 4 others also receiving Honorary Doctorates.

The transparent face mask tender is still ongoing and there are now bi-weekly meetings for the pilot panel, and these will carry on into 2022. We cannot give any exact information at this stage as it is still confidential under the tender process, however, BAA will have a continued presence at the meetings. It does make you realise how complex these processes are to get items to meet specification for use in clinical settings and how frustrating it is with the time it takes.

Please also remember that your mental health and wellbeing is important and easy to overlook when busy. There are lots of resources out there to help including signposting on the BAA website. I know some are still finding the anxiety levels high, and it is ok to acknowledge this, and it is ok to get support.

Take care

*Kath Lewis*