

BAA President Blog – 28th November 2022

Well, I have been president for 6 weeks now, and it has been super-busy!

Conference 2022 was fantastic - so many amazing speakers and catching up with many colleagues and old friends. Our conference team deserves a huge round of applause for pulling it all together so well. And thanks to those of you who came, engaged, and created such a good atmosphere. It really reminds BAA board members why we volunteer to do what we do.

We all allowed ourselves at least a weekend's rest, before getting back on it. The next week, we met with NHS England to discuss our concerns about what we consider critical issues with the audiology workforce - both with supply and retention. NHSE have a long-term workforce plan for healthcare science, but BAA asked for urgent action. We presented some of the issues raised by members at our strategy workshops earlier this year, as well as suggesting potential actions.

In Scotland, several board members continue to contribute to the National Audiology Review, with a representative on every subgroup - Leadership, Structure & Governance, and Quality Assurance, and Education & Training. We believe the Review is a fantastic opportunity to shape the future of Audiology in Scotland, and we asked that the voice of audiologists themselves was included in the review. Once we had agreement for this, the best way to gather views in the time remaining for the review was an online survey, which is about to close. We plan to expand on themes raised by the survey responses in virtual workshops to further discuss experiences of audiologists in Scotland to inform the reviews recommendations. We are also reviewing a sample of ABRs and hearing aid fittings in an exercise to evaluate how quality assurance by peer review could work in Scotland.

One of my highlights so far was the Complex Paediatrics Day held in the Midlands on November 6th. It focused on making clinics as accessible as possible for children and young people with complex needs, as well as on the importance of good test techniques and shared decision-making with families. Places were limited, but resources are all available in the membership area of our website for those unable to attend. All free to members, of course, as are our webinars, regional events, and other resources.

There is enormous activity from my colleagues on Board - too much to mention everything in this short piece. All Board directors want to contribute to our profession and continue to work hard on top of demanding day jobs. You will see outcomes of some of these efforts over the next few months, and please remember that this is all done by a fantastic bunch of volunteers!

Board will meet again in December to focus on our strategy and priorities for the next year. You have told us that you want us to be a voice for audiology to tackle the issues that our profession faces right now. We will plan how we can influence those who can make changes as much as possible, within our limitations as a voluntary professional body.

I am excited to see what the following year brings, and to hear from as many members as possible about the issues that are affecting you.

Take care

Samantha Lear

President