

BAA President Blog – 24th January 2024

It's been nearly three months since the BAA conference, and I hope everyone who attended has had time to reflect on what they learned and what inspired them.

BAA Conference 2023 was our biggest, and possibly best, conference yet, with more than 670 registered attendees from various areas of audiology alongside 52 exhibitors (with 200 personnel engaging with us on their stands). There were a wide range of presentations, workshops, and networking opportunities that made it a truly valuable experience for attendees.

For many, one of the highlights was our opening speakers, Claire Benton- with her Bamford lecture titled "UK paediatric audiology: climbing a mountain or climbing out of a hole?" Her presentation stunned many with its candour and emotion. We have started to share this speech more widely, as it so clearly articulates the issues that have contributed to inadequate audiological care for thousands of children, whilst accepting the responsibility of the profession for failings in scientific practice.

Other keynotes included our overseas guests, Dr Angela Alexander, who gave us a literally sparkly masterclass on identifying auditory processing disorder and it's management, and Dr Barbra Timmer, who closed conference with our Adrian Davis keynote lecture. Dr Timmer focused on Hearing rehabilitation outcomes: Our role in addressing well-being, stigma, and adapting audiology services. Our attention will turn more to adults in 2024 as our Adult Quality Standards are due to be released alongside our Quality Improvement work...

Over the two days of conference, we heard much more about the importance of embedding quality improvement into our services and were given practical examples and tools to use. Our Quality Improvement Tool was showcased and will soon be available for you to access via our website.

At the AGM, we reflected on the past year for BAA and the profession, and introduced our new Board Directors - Catherine McGee, Laura Turton and Michelle Foster - whilst saying goodbye to those that had finished their terms on board - Rebecca Anderson, Heather Dowber and Barbara Gregg. We are so grateful for all their hard work.

One of my highlights was presenting the annual awards to those nominated by colleagues for their hard work. Interestingly two of the newly elected board directors had also been nominated for awards, which shows not only their willingness to contribute to our field, but that this is recognised by members voting for them, and colleagues nominating them. Read more about our award winners later in this issue...

We learned so much about excellent and innovative practice, and some of the recent research in audiology. We heard from leaders in audiology and from other fields who shared their experience and transferable knowledge with us. But conference not only provided a platform for learning and networking but also fostered a sense of community and collaboration among audiologists. Like many others, I left feeling inspired and motivated to continue striving for excellence in the field of audiology. And that is the whole point of conference.

I wish you well for the new year ahead, and in the next blog, we will outline some areas we will focus on in 2024.

Take care

