

BAA President Blog – 21st July 2025

Over the past two weeks, we have had both the Heads of Service meeting and a BAA Board meeting. Over 50 of us gathered in Birmingham for the Heads of Service event, which featured a range of presentations covering various topics. We heard from Jeanette Blenkinsopp from Newcastle, who described their journey of reform and recovery. Key points were the engagement at the Exec level of the Trust being instrumental in the success and pace of the recovery.

In the second part of the morning, we had a series of presentations on the theme of Consultant Clinical Scientists. We heard from John Day about the new recruitment support process we are forming for Consultant-level posts. We will soon have more details about this on our website. Support can be given to Trusts looking to appoint new Heads of Service at this level by offering advice on job descriptions, interviews and development plans for the successful candidates. This was followed by two insightful presentations: one from Linor Llwyd Jones on how she successfully conquered her HSST course, and the other from Keiran Joseph on how he completed his HSSR equivalency. For some, this may not seem particularly exciting or indeed achievable, but nationally, the direction of travel is definitely towards improving our scientific leadership.

Wales is already ahead of the game and has outlined this in their healthcare science career strategy, so it is expected that all new Heads of Service will now be on the Higher Specialist Scientific Register, and Health Boards are supporting the succession planning process for this. We can expect recommendations from the Paediatric Hearing Services Improvement Programme workforce group to be along similar lines for England as well. Between the Heads of Service meeting on 10 July and now, we have two more Audiologists joining the register – congratulations, Gareth Smith and Will Brassington.

After lunch Nathan Hall, Deputy Director (Physiological Science) of the National Diagnostic Programme gave us an update on what has been happening with the data collections many of you have submitted, the impact of the improvement collaboratives that have been running with NHS Elect over the last year, the development of new service models in Audiology and how he foresees the 10-year plan impacting Audiology. We hope to invite Nathan to repeat his talk as a webinar soon, so more of you can access it and ask questions.

The forward-looking aspects of Nathan's talk informed the last session, where we sought input from those in the room regarding their ideas, wishes, and thoughts on the future of our service delivery. With a challenged workforce and scarce financial resources, we need to think differently about what the future will look like. It isn't a case of simply lifting and shifting patients from one provider to another – we heard from Kevin Munro and Crystal Rolfe (RNID) about what patients want and who they want delivering services. This feeds into BAA's work with the All Party Parliamentary Group and NHS Supply Chain in influencing our future technology and pathways.

It was a productive and enjoyable day, marked by numerous networking opportunities and supportive conversations. I want to thank everyone who attended for throwing themselves so thoroughly into the day. The PowerPoint presentations from the day can be found in the members' area of the website [here](#).

At our Board meeting, as well as our usual business, all Board Directors were asked to complete the same exercises on future planning as those who attended the Heads of Service day. We also heard from Laura Booth from UKAS on the new supportive, staged approach to IQIPS accreditation. This should help those in the early stages of accreditation stay on track as they prepare for the comprehensive accreditation assessment. Again, it was a busy day, and I am always astounded by the amount of work that the Board Directors and their committees accomplish. I hope you can also see this, as we continue to share each Director's portfolios in the Horizon emails.

Before the next blog, we expect the Kingdon review to be published. Hopefully this consolidates the views of many in the profession and offers solid recommendations for how, in England, we can move forward with the improvements in paediatric audiology. We will let you know once we are aware it has been published.

We continue to be more transparent about many aspects of our work on your behalf. To this end, we share some insight into the meetings in which we are invited to participate. If you scroll down the page, we also include overviews of our monthly Exec Board and quarterly Board meetings: BAA Board Meetings.

As always, you can contact me or any of our board directors here: admin@baaudiology.org

Take care

Claire

BAA President

Interested in joining a committee? Complete this, please: [Expression of Interest form](#)

Read our [Joining a BAA Committee Policy](#)