

BAA President Blog – 10th November 2025

Last week I was fortunate enough to attend two events which were both thought-provoking and inspiring. On Tuesday evening I was invited to attend the All Party Parliamentary Group's (APPG) Speaker's reception in the Speakers rooms at the Houses of Parliament. This event was to recognise and celebrate Deaf culture and Deaf people's success within the arts and sport. There were representatives from charities, authors, Olympians, actors and a range of MPs were there. After mingling, canapes and a drink we were able to view a sample of the inspiring Deaf Mosaic photography exhibition and then heard from a range of speakers.

We were welcomed by Sir Lindsay Hoyle, Speaker of the House of Commons, who explained how he has championed accessibility within the House. The Rt. Hon. Catherine Aitkins, the previous Chair of the APPG introduced us to a range of invited speakers. Hearing personal stories about what it is like growing up deaf, experiences in the workplace, and in society is always both inspiring and grounding. Natasha Ghouri ended the evening with her own story and spoke about the true meaning of inclusion, she claimed to be nervous but delivered a truly powerful speech.

The other meeting was all about Auracast and its uptake and potential as an accessibility tool in theatres. Once again I heard emotional, personal stories from several people about how transformative Auracast has been for them, hearing productions in high quality audio for the first time. The wide application of Auracast for many is one of its strengths, and it was heartening to hear those from London's theatres really engage with the discussions.

This year, our conference has its own Auracast broadcast to enable you to learn more about it. Within the exhibition you can learn more from several of our exhibitors, and indeed from our joint stand with the RNID where we will be showcasing accessibility ideas for departments. You can also hear Natasha's story for yourself and hear what it means to be fully inclusive as she is speaking on our sponsor track.

Today, as you will have seen from your Horizon email, the long awaited Kingdon review is published. Receiving this after two days of listening to the lived experience of several deaf adults, simply made it feel even more important that we get this work right. For those of us working within paediatrics this is an important, yet challenging read. Please do take time to read it as it has the potential to have far reaching consequences for our profession.

At BAA we have put out our response to the review highlighting what work has already taken place, where we support the recommendations and how we plan to continue to do so. We will be waiting for the DHSC's response, expected at the beginning of the new year, to see what potential funding there will be to implement the recommendations. We do not want the same to happen in England as it did in Scotland where still not much tangible change has occurred following their review. Again, personal stories from families and audiologists within the Kingdon report are very powerful. Whilst to some extent we are all complicit in allowing the situation to happen, we are all very much part of the solution. All of the BAA Board and I are committed to delivering the change that is required.

With best wishes,

Claire Benton
BAA President

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

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