

BAA President Blog – 8th June 2026

A fortnight ago, I was on the other side of the world at the World Congress of Audiology (WCA) in Seoul. As a clinician and not a researcher did I ever think I would get to go to an audiology conference in South Korea? No, it is something has only happened due to my decision many years ago to volunteer for my professional body, which was then the BAAS, to support the CAC committee (Certificate of Audiological Competence), and in one way or another I have been involved in the professional body ever since, latterly as Conference Lead and now I find myself here, as President. Along the way being involved has given me opportunities my 21-year-old self, at the beginning of my Audiology MSc, probably would have found hard to believe.

The Seoul WCA was enormous. 1,540 participants from 82 different countries, 1018 presentations, 337 posters, and speakers from 35 different countries. The Korean Audiological Society were very welcoming hosts. The impression I had about the WCA was that it was mainly aimed at researchers, but no, there was a wealth of clinical content, research being shared that you could see would directly impact patients, and service models shared by the global south that we could learn a lot from with our current stretched resources. At times the amount of useful information being delivered felt overwhelming, yet so exciting at the same time.

BAA had been asked to host a session as part of the affiliated societies content. We spoke about quality in paediatric audiology. We invited Nicole Eglinton along to talk about her experiences of raising concerns about quality in Australia, mainly within the cochlear implant community, and the similarities between the themes of what had gone wrong in Australia and what we have experienced here in the UK were astonishing. Our Vice President Saima Rajasingam ended the session explaining how the newly developed workforce tool was designed and what it showed about our future needs for audiologists. The session was moderated by our own David Maidment, who led the Q&A session, there was lots of interest and discussion in the room at the end which was great to see.

Part of our job whilst at the WCA was to begin to promote the next one, Edinburgh 2028 and learn from the Korean team about managing such a large congress. We had lots of really positive conversations with delegates and speakers who assured us they were intending to come along already with many signing up on our website. Putting on a World Congress is daunting but exciting. It feels a little like my career has come full circle. Whilst at Southampton doing my MSc, Kevin Munro was my supervisor, and in Edinburgh 2028 he will be President (along with his Co-President Saima) of the Congress I am responsible for creating – perhaps this time I will heed his advice of “Claire if you want to get a distinction, perhaps don’t go to the pub of an evening stay in and do more work”.

Oh, and I must not forget: registration for BAA Conference 2026 has just gone live. A fantastic two days have been arranged for you. Make sure you benefit from your member discount and early bird pricing to really get value for money for the two days. Have a look at what we have planned here: www.baaudiology.org/conference

I hope to see a lot of you in Liverpool in October, for my last conference as President.

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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