

BAA President Blog – 22nd June 2026

Reflections on the 2026 Heads of Service Meeting

Connection, clarity, and collective purpose

I've just returned from our 2026 Heads of Service Meeting, and I'm still carrying that familiar mix of inspiration, realism, and renewed determination that only comes from spending a day in a room full of people who truly understand the pressures and possibilities of leading audiology services.

There is something uniquely valuable about this annual gathering. It isn't just a meeting — it's a moment of alignment for our profession.

A day built on shared challenges and shared ambition

This year's programme brought together a rich blend of national updates, service innovation, workforce discussions, and practical problem-solving. What struck me most was the honesty in the room. Leaders spoke openly about the realities they're facing: recruitment difficulties, rising demand, the complexity of paediatric pathways, and the ongoing need for robust quality frameworks that support rather than overwhelm.

And yet, alongside the challenges, there was a strong sense of momentum. We heard from services trialling new models of care, teams strengthening governance structures, and leaders finding creative ways to protect clinical time and staff wellbeing. These conversations matter — they shape the direction of the profession.

The power of being in the same room

No online meeting, however efficient, can replicate the value of face-to-face peer support. Throughout the day, I saw:

- heads of service comparing notes on similar issues
- new leaders being welcomed and supported by more experienced colleagues
- spontaneous problem-solving happening over coffee
- people realising they're not alone in the pressures they're carrying

There's a particular kind of reassurance that comes from hearing someone across the table say, "Yes — we're dealing with that too, and here's what we've tried."

That's the strength of this community.

Workstreams that will shape the future

BAA is excited about the streams of work that emerged and strengthened during the meeting. From quality standards to education pathways, from paediatric care to workforce development, the themes raised by Heads of Service are the same themes shaping our national agenda.

These conversations don't end when the meeting closes. They feed directly into the work of our committees, our collaborations with partner organisations, and our advocacy across the four nations. Your insights guide our priorities — and your leadership drives the profession forward.

Why your presence matters

Every person who attended contributed to something bigger than their own service. You helped build a clearer picture of what audiology needs right now, and what it can become with the right support, visibility, and shared purpose.

If you were in the room, thank you.

If you couldn't make it this year, I hope you'll join us next time — your voice is needed.

Feeling inspired? It might be your moment.

If the energy and collaboration of the Heads of Service Meeting have sparked something in you — a desire to shape the future of audiology, to influence national workstreams, or to support colleagues across the UK — then this is the perfect time to step forward.

Nominations for BAA Board are now open.

We need leaders (at whatever point you are in your career) with vision, curiosity, compassion, and a commitment to strengthening our profession. If that sounds like you, I warmly encourage you to consider standing.

Together, we can continue building the future audiology deserves.

With best wishes,

Claire Benton

BAA President

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

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

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