



Chair's report for BAPA AGM 31st January 2025

Welcome to the BAPA AGM

BAPA Trustees

There are currently 5 BAPA trustees: Anne Marsden; Ann Large (treasurer); Jo Harris (current chair); Shailaja Kottapalli (meetings rep); Rakesh Tailor (RCPCH rep). Ann Large and Jo Harris are retiring and standing for re-election.

I took over as Chair from Anne Marsden after the last BAPA conference in 2024, having been asked by the trustees.

BAPA Executive Committee

The BAPA Exec has met for three meetings virtually over 2024. Thank you to Veronica Hickson our honorary secretary for the organisation of our meetings.

We welcomed Sonia Bank-Theilen as deputy rep for Scotland, taking over from Joanne Kilpatrick who is now Scottish rep following the retirement of Martina Stones. Martina retired during 2024 and we thanked her for her work for BAPA and wished her a happy retirement.

I have taken over from Anne Marsden attending BACCH Exec meetings and Anne Marsden has kindly continued to attend RCPCH research committee and specialty board through this year.

Shaila Kottapalli has taken over as meetings rep this year and we thank her for the efficient organisation of this year's conference which is set to be a great day. Rakesh Tailor has continued as our rep to RCPCH.

We would welcome and really encourage any members interested in becoming involved in the BAPA Exec committee to contact us via the website.

BAPA Administrative Support

We have always been grateful for the administrative support of Isabelle Robinson, who previously worked both for BACCH and for us. Over the course of the last year she has stood down from her BACCH role but we are delighted that she has been able to continue her work with us.



BAPA Award for Outstanding Contribution to Audio vestibular Paediatrics 2025

The BAPA Prize was renamed the *BAPA Award for outstanding contribution to audio vestibular paediatrics* to distinguish it from the prizes for audit presentations etc. at the conference. The criteria/rules and process are unchanged, and details are on the BAPA website. Applications for 2026 are welcome up until the end of September 2025 to allow time for assessment. The award went to Shankar Rangan last year. We did not receive an application for this year - please do bear the award in mind for next year.

Consultations

In recent years, we have also commented on draft guidelines from NICE and the UK NSC via the RCPCH Quality Improvement committee although there have been no consultations circulated relevant to AV Paeds this year.

Education and training

BAPA January 2024 Conference

Our 2024 Annual Conference covered a wide range of topics including ANSD, misophonia, deafness and dysmorphia, cCMV and sign language/Deaf culture. The event was an online Teams event and the course evaluations were very positive. Following discussions and after consultation with BAPA members regarding the benefits of online versus face-to-face conferences for the future, the executive committee made the decision for future conferences to alternate between online and in person. This format will naturally be reviewed over time. We have another interesting and varied programme to look forward to this year.

Aetiological Investigations course

The annual aetiological investigations course went ahead between 23-24 September 2024 at the RCPCH in London. Thank you as always to Shankar Rangan for facilitating this. This is always a popular and oversubscribed course. There are no details yet on dates for 2025 but I suggest any expressions of interest in attending are forwarded to Shankar Rangan srangan@nhs.net. Once dates are confirmed they will be posted on the BAPA website.

BACCH annual scientific meeting

The BACCH annual scientific meeting took place in-person in Glasgow in October 2024. Shankar Rangan and Jo Harris facilitated a workshop, *Functional hearing loss: Why does it happen and could we do anything to help?* The feedback from attendees was very positive.



RCPCH Conference 2024

This year the conference was an in-person event in Birmingham and BAPA ran a joint session with the Down Syndrome Medical Interest Group (DSMIG) on 27th March. Thanks again to Rakesh Tailor for his work in making this such a successful event.

RCPCH Conference 2025

For 2025 the College are hosting an in-person event in Glasgow. Our session is on 26th March 2025 and for the first time this year we shall be running a session alone. Presentation topics are to be: *“Autism and hearing loss – challenges with testing and management”* and *“Vestibular assessment of the wobbly child”*. Shankar Rangan and Soumit Dasgupta have very kindly agreed to speak for us at the conference and it stands to be an excellent session.

Details of the conference can be found via the link below:

[RCPCH Conference 2025 - Event programme | RCPCH](#)

Work with the BPNA

The British Paediatric Neurology Association (BPNA) runs a paediatric neurology Distance Learning course which includes a vision and hearing module. The module is in need of update and revision. We are working with the BPNA to review and update the hearing impairment component with the intention of it being a standalone hearing impairment module.

Regional meetings

BAPA regional educational meetings have been held virtually.

Thank you to all those members involved in organising these meetings, which in addition to educational content provide opportunity for networking and peer support. Meetings are open to non-BAPA members for a small fee.

Paediatric Audio vestibular SPIN Module

The SPIN module is open to applications from trainees, consultants, and eligible specialty doctors.

<https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/resources/special-interest-spin-module-application-guidance>

Work is ongoing to identify training sites and trainers. We appreciate the commitment of several audio vestibular medicine colleagues who are also involved in training. The challenge of providing a wide geographical access to trainers continues. We would like to hear from any colleagues in the Northeast, Southwest and Northern Ireland, where we have fewer members than the rest of the UK to learn how we can support access to the SPIN. Shaila Kottapalli has now taken over as SPIN lead from Tracey Davis following Tracey's retirement. I'm sure that you will all join me in thanking Tracey for her time and the tireless work she put into setting up the SPIN module.



NHS England Quality Improvement of Paediatric Hearing Services Programme

Following on from the Independent Review of Audiology Services in Scotland the above programme began in April 2023. Anne Marsden and Ann Large have continued to represent BAPA in this process.

The review is ongoing with NHS England working with the ICB's. Details can be found at the following websites:

[NHS England » Paediatric Hearing Services Improvement Programme: system recommendations for immediate action](#)

[NHS England » Addressing concerns in children's hearing services](#)

Members will be aware that a number of services have had external reviews with concerns raised. Doctors doing this work might be directly or indirectly affected and the impact of any investigation can be significant. Please let myself or any of the BAPA Exec know how this process is impacting your work and wellbeing, whether support is needed and anything to feedback.

BAPA Website

The new BAPA website is now completely up and running. Thank you to Ann Large for her invaluable work on this. The website includes a members' area, facility to join BAPA and pay meeting fees via the website and enable easier communication with members.

In summary then, another busy year! Many thanks to all those who have been involved in any of the above and elsewhere for BAPA. I am fully aware that we are all busy at work and home and so contributing your time to BAPA is so very much appreciated.

Jo Harris, BAPA Chair
January 2025