

BAPA Annual Conference Programme

Friday 30th January 2026

Virtual via MS Teams

08:50-09:20 [BAPA AGM](#) (For BAPA members only – separate Teams link)

Morning Plenary Session

Chair: Dr Rakesh Tailor

09:20- 09:30 Welcome and introduction

09:30-10:15 *An approach to molecular testing in a child with Hearing loss*

Dr Joanna Jarvis, Consultant Clinical Geneticist, Clinical Genetics Department, Birmingham Women's Hospital

10:15-11:00 *Genetic Counselling and hearing loss*

Leanne Barrett Genetic Counsellor, Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children NHS Trust

11:00-11:15 *Break*

11:15-12:00 *Tinnitus counselling- a child friendly approach*

Dr Veronica Kennedy Consultant Audiovestibular Physician, Paediatric Audiology, Bolton NHS Foundation Trust

12:00-12:45 *Putting families at the heart of our support' with the National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS)*

Alison Worsley: Platform Lead Develop and Influence, Anushri Patel: Paediatric Audiologist / in-house advisor, Liz Sidell: Head of Policy and Influence (International), Emma Papakyrakou: Family Engagement lead (UK wide), Simon Want: Head of Policy and Influence (England) and Hazel Badjie: Head of Policy and Influence (Wales)

12:45-13:45 *Lunch*

Afternoon Plenary Session

Chair Dr Shankar Rangan

13:45-14:30 *Paediatric vestibular assessment*

Dr Waheeda Pagarkar Consultant Audiovestibular Physician, UCLH and GOSH, London

14:30-15:15 *Vestibular screening in infants*

Professor Soumit Dasgupta Consultant Audiovestibular Physician, Alder Hey Children's Hospital, Liverpool

15:15-15:30 *Break*

15:30-16:15 *Surely children don't need vestibular rehabilitation? How to develop a fun filled, individualized and evidence-based programme for those who do*

Debbie Cane Audiology Lecturer and Senior Clinical Scientist, University of Manchester

Prize and Audit Presentations

- 16:15-16:30** ***Hearing Difficulties in Children Referred with Speech Concerns***
Dr Sabarinath Vijayakumar, Specialty Trainee in Audiovestibular Medicine
- 16:30-16:45** ***A survey of clinicians' experience on paediatric patient and caregiver attitudes towards hearing aid(s) in the UK***
Dr Natallia Kharytaniuk, Specialty Trainee in Audiovestibular Medicine
- 16:45-17:00** ***Management of Ototoxicity in Non-NHSP Auditory Brainstem Response (ABR) referrals***
Dr Shobha Rajagopal, Specialty Trainee in Audiovestibular Medicine
- 17:00** **Close of meeting**

Book your place by 25th January at:

www.bapa.org.uk/events/bapa-annual-conference-2026

Speaker biographies

Dr Joanna Jarvis

Dr Jarvis has been a Consultant in Clinical Genetics in the West Midlands for 16 years; and has worked in Deaf Genetics clinics for 14 years. As part of her interest in genetics of deafness, she holds MDTs with adult ENT specialists in the West Midlands CI team. She currently holds quarterly deaf genetics clinics in central Birmingham area, with the aim of investigating aetiology of deafness and providing genetic counselling. She also has an interest in Renal Genetics and is currently the joint Clinical Service Lead for the West Midlands Regional Genetics Service.

Leanne Barrett

Leanne is a registered genetic counsellor based at the North East Thames Regional genetics service with over four years' experience working across rare disease, cancer and prenatal genetics. Leanne developed a special interest in genetics and hearing loss and supports these patients and families within her specialist hearing loss clinic. Leanne explains genetic diagnoses and concepts to patients but also explores the impact of a diagnosis, testing and family planning on the patient and their family. Leanne also has a particular interest in addressing the barriers ethnic minority groups face when accessing genetics services and healthcare and shares information for the public to improve awareness and understanding via social media: @geneticlea

Dr Veronica Kennedy

Dr Kennedy works as a Consultant and Clinical Lead in Audiovestibular Medicine at Bolton NHS Foundation Trust. Her special interests are paediatric tinnitus and hyperacusis and paediatric balance disorders. Dr Kennedy has published widely in peer-reviewed journals and textbooks. She presents her work regularly in national and international courses and conferences. She has been the topic advisor for several NICE Tinnitus and OME guidance. She is the professional advisor and trustee of Tinnitus UK Association and the member of British Society of Audiology Hyperacusis Specialist Interest Group. She is actively involved as medical advisor to the NHS England Paediatric Hearing Services Improvement Programme.

National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) Team

Hazel Badjie, Head of Policy and Influencing, Wales

Hazel has worked with the National Deaf Children's Society for 18 years in various roles concerned with policy influencing at the national, regional and local levels. She works closely with stakeholders across Wales to influence change and quality improvements across education, health and social justice. She is currently leading on our lived experience contribution to the policy proposals in newborn hearing screening Wales.

Hazel will lead our contribution and chair the discussion/questions.

Anushri Patel, Audiology Advisor

Anushri has worked with the National Deaf Children's Society for nearly two years as an advisor, bringing 16 years of experience as a paediatric audiologist in the NHS. She supports teams across the organisation, working towards ensuring families have access to timely, high-quality audiology services. She also works with Deaf Child Worldwide on the introduction of universal newborn hearing screening in low- and middle-income countries. In today's presentation, Anushri will outline the principles of Family-Centred Early Intervention (FCEI), emphasise the importance of family-centred care, and share resources available for families and professionals.

Liz Sidell, Head of Policy and Influencing, International

Liz works with the Deaf Child Worldwide team to systemically advance early identification and intervention support for deaf children in low- and middle-income countries. Her background is in international policy; advocacy to the U.S. Congress, UK parliament, and global fora; and pan-disability rights. Liz will share how Deaf Child Worldwide leverages the FCEI principles in its global and country-specific work.

Emma Papakyriakou, Involvement & Engagement

Emma has worked with the National Deaf Children's Society (NDCS) for three years, leading involvement and engagement initiatives that place lived experience at the core of decision-making and policy influence. She collaborates with NDCS Policy Leads and external stakeholders across all four nations to ensure families remain central to the organisation's work. Emma will outline NDCS's approach to meaningful involvement and how lived experiences can inform information, support and service improvements that meet family's needs.

Dr Waheeda Pagarkar

Dr Pagarkar is a consultant in audiovestibular medicine at UCLH and Great Ormond Street Hospital, She is the Lead Clinician for the Paediatric Balance Clinic at Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children. She is an expert in Paediatric balance disorders, genetic hearing loss and dual sensory impairment and has conducted substantive research in these areas. She is published regularly in peer-reviewed journals and textbooks. She lectures on various professional audiovestibular courses and has presented her research at national and international conferences. She was the Chairman of the Clinical Standards Subcommittee of the British Association of Audiovestibular Physicians (BAAP) and was involved in drafting guidelines for investigation of children with permanent hearing loss.

Professor Soumit Dasgupta

Professor Dasgupta is a Consultant Neurotologist and Audiovestibular Physician and Clinical lead at Alder Hey Children's Hospital. He is an Honorary Senior Clinical Lecturer at the Faculty of Health & Life Sciences, University of Liverpool, Consultant at the Hypatia Dizziness and Balance Centre, an Honorary Visiting Professor in Otology at the University of Siena and an Honorary Lecturer at the University of Manchester. He is the Secretary of Vertigo Academy International and core member of the International Paediatric Balance Network. He is the Education and Academic Hallpike Secretary for British Association of Audiovestibular Physicians (BAAP).

Professor Dasgupta is an acknowledged global leader in paediatric audiovestibular medicine and has been bestowed with several awards for his outstanding contributions in the field. He has done extensive research and is well published in several peer reviewed journals and textbooks. He presents regularly at national and international conferences and courses.

Debbie Cane

Debbie qualified as a Clinical Scientist in Audiology in 2003. She led the adult Diagnostic Audiovestibular Services at the Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust for 10 years before taking up an Audiology lectureship at Manchester University in October 2015.

Debbie teaches at BSc, MSc and doctoral level as well as supervising Masters-level dissertations.

In her academic work Debbie plays a clinical role in as part of the MRC-funded 'Stardust' research team, looking at motion perception in those with 3PD.

Her clinical work focuses on vestibular rehabilitation. In particular her specialist area of interest is the rehabilitation of patients with persistent or episodic dizziness such as 3PD using CBT and mindfulness techniques. She is a qualified mindfulness teacher. She also interested in raising awareness of vestibular disorders in patients of all ages, and in optimizing pathways and resources for patient's timely diagnosis and management.