

## BAHNO Newsletter Autumn 2021



### The President's Letter

### Professor Vinidh Paleri

It has been a rollercoaster of a time since I took over in May '21. The COVID news cycle has been relentless with the number of cases see-sawing. The CRUK report from October '21 shows that the 31-day and 62-day performance targets continue to be missed in England (no targets in the devolved nations). There have been significant challenges in managing cancer referrals across the UK, with telemedicine playing a greater role; [the remote triage national study that was supported by BAHNO](#) demonstrated some metrics of efficacy. Several networks are using the risk calculator and while this remains the best validated instrument for the purpose, no such tool can be perfect. Please note that the pitfalls are very clearly stated in the paper and each clinical team should be cognizant of these issues before adopting it.

On a slightly positive note, the numbers of urgent referrals and numbers starting treatment are exceeding pre-pandemic levels, including people in the most

deprived quintile. This indicates that patients are finding their way into tertiary care, where I am sure all BAHNO members are kept tremendously busy.

Head and neck cancer care in the UK continues with no national audit. You may be aware that the national cancer board approved five new national clinical audits in October 21, which didn't include head and neck. BAHNO has been in talks with IQVIA, one of the founding partners of DATA-CAN (the Health Data Research Hub for Cancer) to explore other ways of collating a national picture of head and neck cancer services across England. All I can say at this stage is, watch this space!

The meetings calendar is slowly picking up, with the new buzzword for conferences being "hybrid". Several BAHNO members were present at the recent multidisciplinary "Unknown primary of head and neck" consensus day, which demonstrated a successful hybrid model.

BAHNO has been invited to offer a symposium at the IFHNOS meeting to be held in Rome, September 2022. The UK trainee networks have made excellent progress in producing high quality work and, given that similar models don't exist elsewhere in Europe, Council agreed unanimously that this would be a good topic that will demonstrate the prowess of UK trainees. We have therefore suggested a symposium centred around the UK

national trainee research collaboratives in clinical oncology, maxillofacial surgery and otolaryngology-head and neck surgery.

Over the years, I have heard several tales of woe associated with diversity issues among the membership. One of my first tasks as President, therefore, was to create BAHNO policy for equality, diversity and inclusivity (EDI). We discussed this at Council and Lorna McCaul, Restorative Dentistry representative on council, led on generating the policy with Peter Brennan, our Honorary Secretary. This has been ratified by Council and is now posted on [our website](#).

Although we are a multidisciplinary association, surgeons form the largest professional group within BAHNO. Compared to other medical specialties, surgery has historically been less diverse. Many of you would have read [the Royal College of Surgeons of England's independent review of diversity and inclusion in the college](#) which laid bare the issues relating to diversity and inclusivity in surgery, leading to a robust plan for reform. Some of the findings on the report are very much applicable to BAHNO. While we are a much smaller organisation, I am also fully conscious that the council doesn't fully reflect the diversity of the surgical workforce and I am committed to working on this during my term.

I hope you enjoy the festive break this year more than the last, which was sadly, non-existent for many. We hope to have a face-to-face meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2022 and Ceri

Hughes, Conference Secretary, has set out his plans for the day below.

I shall close this missive by expressing my profound thanks to all the council members who have juggled all commitments to deliver for BAHNO supported me during the early months, and Laura Manning, a one-woman army who keeps us all right.

I look forward to seeing many of you in May 2022 in more formal wear rather than the scrubs many of us have been lounging in for the last 20 months!



Report from  
**Professor  
Peter  
Brennan**  
Honorary  
Secretary

Membership continues to grow and we should shortly pass 500. With equality, diversion and inclusion being so important in everything we do, Lorna McCaul (Council member for Restorative Dentistry) and I have recently written an EDI policy for BAHNO. This is [posted on the website](#)

We have recently sent out a call for BAHNO President Elect. As Vin Paleri is the current President, as per the articles of the Association, the next President cannot be

elected from ENT. We welcome nominations from the other specialties. To ensure equal opportunities for all specialties, we would respectfully ask that no canvassing is done for this election - I have recently written a statement about this which is [published on the website](#)

We sent a request recently for nominations for Affiliate Representative(s) and Honorary Secretary. Dr Justin Roe and Ms Florence Cook will have completed their joint term of office by the AGM 2022. They are eligible to apply for a second term (2022 –2025) and have indicated their willingness so to do.

I will have also completed my term at the 2022 AGM. Given that Andrew Schache has expressed an interest in the role and with ever increasing work for RCS Council and BAOMS, I shall stand down at the end of the term in 2022. May I take this opportunity to thank Council for their support over the last 4 years and particularly to Laura Manning for her guidance and vigilance. I wish Andrew all the best for his term of office.

The BAHNO guidelines document published earlier this year in the Journal of Oral Pathology and Medicine as open access (so available for all to download) has attracted widespread interest from colleagues around the world.



Report from  
**Mr James  
O'Hara**  
Honorary  
Treasurer

BAHNO remains in a healthy financial position. The Annual Scientific Meeting in 2021 was a cause for financial concern, given the uncertainty regarding attendance and the high cost of running a virtual meeting. It proved a huge success and returned a profit to the association. In addition to BAHNO's keenly contested research and travel grants, the council would like to invest funds in ventures that will further benefit our members.

We would like to remind members to consider purchasing their Amazon orders through [smile.amazon.co.uk](https://smile.amazon.co.uk), supporting BAHNO through donations on each transaction.



Report from  
**Mr Ceri  
Hughes**  
Conference  
Secretary

As I am sure everyone has mentioned we have had another interesting year. We ran

with a series of webinars during last year which were very successful. I think in truth, clinicians eventually became weary of this format.

Looking back at BAHNO council's discussion at the onset of the pandemic, any hope of a live conference was thought risky and we nervously opted for the 'All Virtual' format we enjoyed. The conference this year was a great success with nearly 350 attendees registering for the virtual conference. We are really grateful to those who had faith in us to deliver a worthwhile educational event.

The platform performed well and the new format added many surprise benefits with regards timing of presentations: everyone had to run to time ! This is a feature we may continue with in some form next year. Bryan Bell's 'early hours of the morning' performance was a treat and left us in no doubt as to the value of the science behind his clinical practice.

Hopefully we will see a gradual return to near normal before next year's conference, which is scheduled for Friday May 13th. The conference theme will "**Health Inequity and Inequality in Head and Neck Cancer Care**". We are planning to open to abstract submissions before Christmas.

We look forward to your support again this year

## UKNFR reports

Peter Kalu, the UKNFR Audit Lead prepares a report every three months which is available on the BAHNO website.

[UKNFR Reports | BAHNO - British Association of Head & Neck Oncologists](#)

Members are reminded that the UKNFR remains an excellent tool for GMC directed audit of practice, appraisal and revalidation. Beyond personal metrics, the high-quality data submitted to the UKNFR has been of assistance to units struggling to justify re-commencing local services.

## BAHNO Travel Grants

Members wishing to embark on career-enhancing study, either in the UK or abroad, are invited to apply for a travel grant towards the costs.

The deadline for applications is 21<sup>st</sup> January. [Further details on the website.](#)

## BAHNO Research Grants

Up to £6,000 is available in grants to BAHNO members for research funding. The research needs to substantially contribute to the body of knowledge in head and neck or thyroid cancer and its management. Further details are available [on the website](#) and the closing date for applications is 21<sup>st</sup> January 2022.

## Lost members

There are number of members of BAHNO who have 'fallen off' the list because their contact details are no longer current. We

would very much like to keep in contact with these people – if you know anyone on this list, please ask them to contact the secretariat.

Mr P Anderson  
Mr A R Birzgalis  
Mr St J Crean  
Mr J C Devine  
Dr D D Errington  
Dr Alice Freebairn  
Mr P Gurr  
Mr A W Hilger  
Mr J B Kinsella  
Mr S G Langton  
Mr E B Larkin  
Mr P Martinez  
Mr R H Phillips  
Mr D P Pierse  
Mr B D Swinson  
Mr P C Weaver  
LHLC Ltd

Please let the secretariat know of changes of address – particularly of emails and mobile phone numbers.

## Membership fees

These will be due in January. Invoices will be issued and for those of you who pay by Direct Debit (thank you!) notification will be given in advance of the payment being requested. If you still have an old Standing Order instruction in place with your bank, **please ensure it is for the correct amount.**

The fees remain unchanged at:

Full	£80
Associate	£40
Overseas	£40
Affiliate	£25

Membership of BAHNO also gives you membership of the European Head and Neck Society and of IFHNOS.

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