

BAAT Chair's Update – December 2022 to February 2023

It is often lovely to start a new year, as this can bring a sense of optimism and freshness that is particularly welcome after the challenging year just past. I hope that the year that lies ahead will bring many opportunities for our BAAT members and our profession.

BAAT is starting to widen our reach in raising awareness of art therapy, which we know is very important to our members. We were delighted to be approached by Mind to talk about art therapy for their membership magazine. Each edition of this widely distributed publication has a Guest Editor, who is a member of Mind. Their Guest Editor for the Winter edition asked to learn more about our profession, which was exciting to hear! They interviewed me about art therapy and training to be an art therapist for the article, which we will distribute when it is released. We also have a new Communications Officer at BAAT and she will be able to build on this and other opportunities that come this year, alongside drawing on the many amazing interviews, articles and podcasts that we can see our members do about their amazing work across the UK.

We have continued to liaise with the HEE Arts Therapies Apprenticeship working group, as there have been on-going questions about personal therapy requirements for apprentices. We have now started to work with BAMT and BADTh, to develop guidelines from our professional bodies that can ensure that appropriate provision is in place for each of the professions. We are pleased to be joined by Tim Wright for this, as he helped to develop the standard. In preparation for this work, I have requested an update from our current art therapy educators as to their own arrangements and expectations.

Our CEO and I met Andrew Smith last month, the new HCPC Interim Deputy Chief Executive. The meeting was very positive and he showed a real enthusiasm for on-going direct engagement with BAAT, which we really welcomed. As you will be aware, the new HCPC Standards of Proficiency come into effect in September 2023 and we shared with him our plans for members' events to ensure that we are all ready for these changes. We also discussed misuse of the protected title and the best process to use to report these to HCPC. And we talked through some of the questions that had arisen from the developing apprenticeship pathway work.

I have taken part in the e-Delphi process that ANZACATA running. As you may know, they are the association/self-regulating body of all creative arts therapists in Australia, New Zealand and Asia. They accept qualified practising members from 10 universities and higher education institutions offering clinical Masters level courses in Arts Therapy. There are six such courses in Australia, two in NZ, one in Singapore and one in Hong Kong. ANZACATA are using the e-Delphi process to review the competencies they believe that qualified creative arts therapists need to be admitted to their Association. Part of the process is to consider the competencies needed to work successfully in many sectors (private practice, small community service organisations, major hospitals, schools and so forth) across these regions. This has been very interesting and I was pleased to give feedback from a UK perspective.

Our Council members induction programme continued in January, with a training provided by Andy Burman – a consultant with expertise on membership body governance. Gary and I met Andy to look at how best to undertake the review of the Articles of Association, which Council aims to complete in time for the AGM in June 2023. He will provide workshops for members, so that everyone is well informed about the options and the implications for BAAT and our shared work.

Ongoing regular meetings and tasks: Liaised with our Professional Officer about members' enquiries; held monthly Chair drop-in meetings for members.