

## **BAAT Chair's Update – July to September 2020**

We have had a very busy summer supporting our members and responding to issues, with many of our BAAT staff still on furlough. In my July AGM report back to members, I noted the impact of the uncertainty and change that we had faced since lockdown. Sadly, this has not lessened. Despite this we have continued to arrange events for the autumn, develop relevant guidance, and to work on the approach we can take as a community in response to the racism and inequality that still blights our work.

### **1. Engaging with BAAT Members:**

I have held two drop-in meetings for BAAT members and I found it so helpful to speak with members directly and to hear about their experiences in different parts of the UK. It is clear that many art therapists have lost some of their work over lockdown and the situation is particularly hard for our self-employed members. We also have many members working in education, with valid concerns about the very different approach being taken to managing risks relating to Covid-19 in different sectors, for example, working in the NHS compared with working in schools.

### **2. Engaging with BAAT Groups**

- a) Special Interest Groups: I have followed up on the issues raised by BAATs SIG coordinators, which I outlined in my last report. Some of these have led to on-going pieces of work for BAAT Council, like the development of an *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion* policy. There are some technical issues that are still in the process of being worked on by the BAAT staff team, but as many of the businesses who provide these services have staff on sick leave or on furlough too this is to be expected. I also attended the SIG meeting for all art therapists working with children and young people in education, which was very helpful.
- b) Regional Coordinators: I held two meetings for our BAAT Regional Coordinators over the summer. These were very interesting, as some amazing and really creative work is being done. Coordinators reported finding it helpful to have a space to share ideas and good practice.
- c) IJAT-Inscape: I will be attending the IJAT Editorial Board Meeting next week and have undertaken two peer reviews for articles submitted for the special issue on Online Therapy. The team of editors and associate editors work so hard and deserve our thanks for the time that they volunteer to support and develop our profession.

### **3. BAAT Staff**

I've spoken regularly with our CEO in order to keep abreast of issues that have arisen and to feed back from my other meetings. I have also liaised other members of the staff team to share issues that members had brought to my attention.

### **4. BAAT Council**

I have continued to liaise with elected members of Council, particularly to hear about how our working groups are progressing with their projects. I've also liaised regularly with BAAT Vice-Chair.

### **5. HCPC, Partners and Stakeholders**

- a) I attended the strategy development meeting that the HCPC arranged for stakeholders to set out their draft strategy. I am also now a member of the HCPC Equality, Diversity and

Inclusion Forum and attended the first meeting to look at how to develop a strategy. These will both go out to consultation in October 2020.

- b) I have continued to liaise with the Chairs and CEO of our fellow HCPC Arts Therapies professional bodies, HEE and AHPs networks. I attended the AHPF meeting on BLM and diversity. I have also attended the fortnightly HEE/Professional Body Education and Training Network meetings.

### **Next Steps**

The coming months look like they will be even more challenging, as we head into winter. It is vital that we support one another in these difficult times.