

## Presidents Report

As most of you already know I took on the role of President at our Scientific Meeting in Henley in October. David Scott-Coombes will be a hard act to follow but he remains on our executive committee for a further year as Immediate Past President. As well as making the most of David's experience I have asked him to think about how we can strengthen our links with colleagues in Europe and build on the international friendships we already enjoy.

Meanwhile at home there is plenty for your President and the Executive to be getting on with. Our membership is growing in number but there is still work to be done persuading more ENT and General surgeons with significant thyroid practices of the benefits of membership. We should continue to encourage those surgeons who only occasionally operate on the thyroid to reflect on the advantages of specialization.

I see access to our Registry of Endocrine and Thyroid Surgery as one of the principle benefits of membership. The executive will continue to work hard developing the register and make it increasingly relevant for ourselves and our patients.

Data can however be open to misinterpretation. We will make it clear when data are accessed by the public that differences in case mix and individual practice (e.g. timing of post operative cord checks) make direct comparison of outcomes between surgeons difficult. I see the outcome data as something a patient might want to discuss in relation to their own treatment rather than a mechanism for choosing a surgeon.

Patients sometimes ask patient support groups to recommend a surgeon. Obviously being a member of BAETS and submitting data to UKRETS is a good way of highlighting your expertise as all the relevant patient groups are aware of the register. BAETS continues to strengthen our links with the patient support groups particularly BTA, Butterfly and AMEND and more recently HypoPara UK. I am now a Trustee of BTA and we are working with them to improve patient information leaflets, theirs and ours!

Lastly, over the next two years I want to increase the profile of BAETS with the Colleges, ASGBI, ENT UK and DH etc. BAETS as a society is the richest source of knowledge concerning the delivery of endocrine and thyroid surgery in the UK as well as the requirements for training, whether that begins as an ENT or General Surgeon.

Mark Lansdown  
President, BAETS

## **Past Presidents Comments**

In Henley I handed over the Chain of Office to Mark Lansdown. The meeting in Henley was a great success for a number of reasons. Steve Courtney's strong leadership as the local host supported by the ASGBI office and our Secretary and Treasurer was the key element and we are very thankful. The dinner was truly memorable if not deafening! The clinical case discussion at the start of the meeting appears to have been very popular and is likely to be repeated. The combined meeting with the UK endocrine pathologists reinforces my personal opinion that multidisciplinary meetings are best.

On the subject of pathology, I have had two personal communications with colleagues treating parathyroid carcinoma and I think that the BAETS should explore the development of a national MDT - some food for thought. On the subject of national guidelines, BAETS must seek to remain engaged with the development of the guidelines on thyroid cancer as we seem to stagger towards over diagnosing micropapillary carcinoma (too much ultrasound) and over treating low-risk disease (TNM rather than MACIS).

Finally I thank all the members of the executive committee of BAETS who have supported me and work very hard on your behalf. I wish Mark every success.

David Scott-Coombes  
Immediate Past-President, BAETS

## **Secretary's Report**

### Members Dashboard, BAETS Website

BAETS members will hopefully have noted some further developments on the BAETS website. The Members Dashboard gives our members access to an expanding range of resources. For example, once logged into the Dashboard, members will have access to a range of webinars covering a variety of Endocrine Surgery topics. These are available indefinitely with no restriction on the number of views a member may make. See Education Update below for further details.

In the very near future we hope to have intra-operative videos available from a number of operations.

Over time the number of webinars and operative videos will be increased and updated, providing, we hope, a great resource for our membership.

We also hope to add to the Dashboard, on an on going basis, literature updates on pertinent Endocrine Surgery topics. Registration for future BAETS

annual scientific conferences (2017 onwards) will be possible from the dashboard. Members will also be able to edit their individual Members Profile. This profile is public facing and allows any member to display professions details if they so wish.

#### Patient Information Leaflets

Leaflets for patients explaining the nature of thyroid surgery (Leaflet T1) and potential consequences of thyroid surgery (Leaflet T2) have been produced by BAETS.

The leaflets, produced with the involvement of patient groups, are freely available for BAETS members to download and hand to patients. Alternatively, members are encouraged to direct patients to the BAETS website where they can be viewed and downloaded.

Patients can easily find the leaflets by navigating to the BAETS website home page ([baets.org.uk](http://baets.org.uk)) and clicking on the “patients” tab.

#### Postoperative Hypocalcaemia Guidance

Data from the UK Registry of Endocrine and Thyroid Surgery ([www.baets.org.uk/audit](http://www.baets.org.uk/audit)) shows that post thyroidectomy hypocalcaemia rates can reach 27%.

BAETS recommends that each endocrine / thyroid surgery unit has documented guidelines for the treatment of post thyroid surgery hypocalcaemia and that this document is available to all team members involved in the care of thyroid surgery patients.

To aid this goal BAETS has produced post thyroidectomy hypocalcaemia guidance. This is indicative, not prescriptive, and it is hoped that members can use this document as a starting point for discussions with local medical endocrinology, biochemistry and pharmacy colleagues to produce local post thyroidectomy hypocalcaemia guidelines for their practice.

The guidance is available on [www.baets.org.uk/guidelines/](http://www.baets.org.uk/guidelines/)

#### BAETS Annual Conference 2015, Henley-on-Thames/Reading

Oral presentations from this years Annual Scientific Conference were published in abstract form in the European Journal of Surgical Oncology 41(10), October 2015 and thus are citable.

Congratulations to Mr Owain Rhys Hughes, Institute of Child Health, University College London for winning this years BJS Prize for best oral

presentation with his presentation entitled “Is it Possible to use Acoustic Analysis of a Patient’s Voice, Measured on a Mobile Device, to Accurately Exclude Vocal Cord Paralysis After Thyroid Surgery”.

The best poster prize was awarded to Dr Georgia Hammond, Department of Endocrine Surgery & Oncology, Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust for her poster “Evaluating the Costs Associated With Radioactive Iodine Ablation in Patients With Thyroid Cancer”.

### BAETS Annual Conference 2016, Berlin

Next years annual conference promises to be a memorable event. It is to be held in Berlin and will be a joint conference with our German surgical colleagues as well as colleagues from Austria and Switzerland. The language of the conference will be English.

The Berlin conference dates are 10-12 November. Details about the conference will emerge in the New Year.

Ashu Gandhi  
BAETS Secretary

### **Education Update**

The 10 endocrine webinars that were undertaken in conjunction with the RCSEd are now complete and on the website in the Members Area, providing a wide aspect of all aspects of endocrine/thyroid surgery - they should be an excellent facility for those undertaking the FRCS exam in the near future and for anyone wanting to update their knowledge.

This years Ethicon Educational Collaboration has been sent out within the last few weeks. The training programme includes the BAETS Thyroid & Parathyroid Masterclass, Wet and Dry Lab Skills in Hamburg and arrangement of one to one skills training. The entire programme is free to successful applicants.

This is an excellent link with the generosity of Ethicon and all attendees from last year benefitted significantly. Details of the course and application process can be found here. Please note that the closing date is the end of December

The date for next years BAETS Thyroid & Parathyroid Masterclass is 29th February and is open to all senior trainees and consultants; the emphasis this year is on aspects of lateral neck dissection and calcium management as well as the workshops, so there is something for all, whether from general surgical or ENT background. Further details for the Masterclass can be found here.

Work is progressing well with simulated CBDs covering aspects of endocrine

surgery (adrenal third and parathyroid) that are required by General Surgical trainees for ISCP curriculum - many thanks to Helen Doran, Sebastian Aspinall and Saba Balasubramanian for their help with this. ISCP have agreed to link to these CBDs direct from the ISCP website. Senior endocrine trainees require 10 CBDs to complete their coverage of the curriculum so we will put the 10 webinars into an online package that will generate a certificate for each of the webinars for their ISCP portfolio

Finally, in order to get trainees more involved, we have appointed Emma Collins as lead trainee to help from an educational perspective to see what areas within education the trainees would like to see covered. Emma's report from the 2015 Ethicon Educational Collaboration is below.

David Smith  
BAETS Education Lead

### **BAETS / Ethicon Educational Collaboration: Thyroidectomy and Head and Neck Training Programme 2015**

The following candidates benefitted from the generosity of Ethicon in attending the 2015 educational collaboration.

#### General / Endocrine Surgery

Rae Brindle  
Natasha Choudry  
Emma Collins  
Beverly Lim  
Abi McWhinney  
Andrew Sutherland

#### ENT Surgery

Paul Counter  
Shalani Patiar  
Tom Rourke  
Joel Smith  
Paul Stimpson  
Richard Townsley

#### Delegates Report

Following application, 12 senior trainees and newly appointed Consultants in either ENT or General Surgery were selected onto this fully funded programme.

The programme commenced with the BAETS Thyroid & Parathyroid Masterclass at the Royal College of Surgeons of England in March. This one day masterclass was a mixture of seminars, debate and break-out workshops led by renowned Surgeons in both Endocrine and ENT Surgery. The excellent seminars covered varied topics including central node dissection in papillary thyroid cancer, technical tips on parathyroid surgery, management of multinodular goitres and recurrent laryngeal nerve injuries. An entertaining debate followed discussing risk stratification in differentiated thyroid cancer, lobectomy versus total thyroidectomy.

The diverse workshops covered a range of topics and allowed discussion of management and investigation of a number of case studies brought by faculty and delegates. This was a well-organised and educational day that all of the Masterclass attendees as well as the 12 BAETS training programme delegates thoroughly enjoyed.

In June, the 12 BAETS/Ethicon training programme delegates attended the Ethicon Head, Neck and Thyroidectomy Course at the European Surgical Institute, Hamburg, Germany. The two day course began with an introduction to Energy devices before the afternoon was spent in the Dry Lab performing thyroidectomies and neck dissection. This was run by an excellent faculty of Professor Tom Lennard, Mr Sean Jackson and Mr Graham Smith, as well as the knowledgeable staff of Ethicon and ESI.

The following day in the Wet Lab, we had the opportunity to perform extensive neck surgery including raising skin flaps, parotidectomies as well as neck dissections and glossectomies. Time allowed for further informal discussion with the faculty about careers and consultant jobs before flying back to the UK.

All delegates agreed that both the Masterclass in London and the Ethicon course in Hamburg provided fantastic opportunities to discuss both clinical and surgical management of thyroid and parathyroid diseases as well as improving practical techniques in dealing with these conditions. We would like to thank both BAETS and Ethicon for organising and sponsoring this programme and hope it will continue in the future.

Emma Collins  
ST8 General & Endocrine Surgery

### **Report from the UK Registry of Endocrine & Thyroid Surgery**

Final preparations are underway for this year's Consultant Outcomes Publication release. Results of thyroid surgery performed between July 2010 and June 2014 will be uploaded onto the existing website, and also included in the updated NHS Choices website, along with data from other national audits. A link to view your data will be released to members, as in previous years, two weeks ahead of the public launch date. Unfortunately, our proposal to include some parathyroid outcomes this year was not approved for funding from HQIP. It is clear that for future years we will need to discuss possible other sources of funding, if we are to achieve the full aspirations of our Association in open publication of our outcomes.

Data release has been slightly delayed this year, due to some concerns about data quality, and ongoing debate about the inclusion of information on vocal

cord function. This latter issue was debated at length at the recent Annual Meeting in Henley, where it was agreed that this year's COP would include basic information on rates of performance of, and completeness of, data on post-operative laryngoscopy, plus crude numbers of persistent vocal cord palsy at late follow-up.

Data quality is currently not reliable enough to allow for meaningful statistical comparisons between surgeons, and appropriate text to explain the limitations of the data will accompany all analyses. It is hoped that future rounds of COP will include more detailed information on this important outcome measure, but this will require development of risk-adjustment models able to allow for case-mix and different rates of performance of post-operative laryngoscopy between surgeons. Work is underway to address this. High rates of missing data, particularly for late outcomes such as persistent vocal cord palsy, also compromise our ability to produce meaningful information for COP, and members are encouraged to make sure that their own data are as complete and accurate as possible.

Several members have made suggestions over the last year or so for improving the functionality of the database. Common themes include: improving the ability to review/scroll through all cases more rapidly, and to identify cases with incomplete data; some improvements to the layout of data fields e.g. the order of pre-operative investigations for parathyroid disease; improved functionality of the funnel plot facility; ability to delete cases more easily; and issues with re-logging in after automatic timeout. I plan to meet with the Dendrite team shortly, to discuss these suggestions, and upgrade our database accordingly.

Finally, I hope to start work shortly on the next (5th) national report of the audit, with a view to publication of this next year. As the database expands, our national report's impact and relevance continue to increase, as does the range of questions which can be addressed. I welcome any suggestions from the membership for areas of enquiry to include in the forthcoming publication.

David Chadwick, BAETS Audit Lead

## **Messages from Patients Groups**

### The Butterfly Thyroid Cancer Trust

Butterfly Thyroid Cancer Trust is planning to host a conference meeting late in 2016. The subject matter is yet to be decided but we aim to partner clinicians and patients together at the meeting. The aim is to do something new.

Funding is in place, we will apply for CPD and would expect to publish following the meeting. If you have any ideas or would like to partner with us for this exciting project please email Kate Farnell: [enquires@butterfly.org.uk](mailto:enquires@butterfly.org.uk)

We can confirm that the Butterfly Research Grant Award 2015 went to Dr Kate Newbold for her project: *Study of the molecular profile of Thyroid Cancer*.

#### The British Thyroid Foundation

The BTF trustees are in the process of developing a strategic plan for the charity that will establish priorities and confirm the direction and key objectives for the charity during the next five years. To assist them in this process they welcome the views, suggestions and feedback of all doctors, nurses and patients who use the BTF resources.

If you'd like to take part you can find the survey on the BTF website. The closing date for contributions is 15 January 2016.

<http://bit.ly/1RN89kc>

[full link] [www.btf-thyroid.org/get-involved/201-surveys](http://www.btf-thyroid.org/get-involved/201-surveys)

#### BTF Research Award 2016

We are also now welcoming applications for our annual research award which offers up to £20,000 to fund one-year research projects into thyroid function or thyroid disorders. This year's award has been funded by a legacy and will be known as The BTF Doris Godfrey Research Award.

For further details about how to apply go to the BTF website. The closing date for applications is 31 January 2016.

<http://bit.ly/1kcpFUM>

[full link] [www.btf-thyroid.org/professionals/research-award/159-btf-research-award-application](http://www.btf-thyroid.org/professionals/research-award/159-btf-research-award-application)