



**Dr Nick Thompson**  
BAPEN President

# An Update from BAPEN

**It's a pleasure to contribute my first column to *Complete Nutrition* as BAPEN President. First and foremost, I want to thank and congratulate Dr Trevor Smith for his stellar work in leading the organisation. I am looking forward to continuing his efforts to improve nutrition care across the UK, and working alongside a brilliant team.**

For those who don't know me, I'm a Consultant Gastroenterologist at Freeman Hospital, Newcastle upon Tyne, which became one of the regional Integrated Intestinal Failure (IF) centres in 2022. I helped establish the Northern Nutrition Network in 2004 and have enjoyed a close connection with BAPEN over many years. During the next three years, I'm keen to continue pursuing BAPEN's strategic objectives across knowledge, reach and sustainability. Nutritional care in hospitals is delivered by teams and I am keen that we support those multi-disciplinary nutrition teams to help deliver the best care possible to patients. I would like to help strengthen our regional networks with regional representatives and regular meetings so that all hospitals across the UK are involved. Please let me know if you would like to be involved in regional networks at [Nick.Thompson@nhs.net](mailto:Nick.Thompson@nhs.net) – I will get a BAPEN email address once we have migrated our email system to 'the cloud'!

## **New BAPEN website**

At our very successful BAPEN Conference 2023, with >700 delegates, we unveiled our new website. The aim of the updated version was to provide more intuitive navigation across all our content. Hopefully, you will find it easier to access key information, whether that's BAPEN guidelines, 'MUST' or details of the annual Conference. The website also hosts a range of vital resources and policy engagement updates, including the important ongoing work of the Covid-19 Airborne Transmission Alliance (CATA), our podcast series and more.

I'd also like to draw your attention to the availability of the recent annual Conference presentation recordings for members. Do take a look at these presentations if you were unable to attend Conference, or perhaps missed a session you wanted to attend. There is a comments box now included on the website, and we would love to hear your thoughts on the functionality, look and feel of the site – this can be found at the bottom of the landing page.

## **Personal achievements of BAPEN members**

I would also like to take this opportunity to spotlight some of the achievements of those closely connected with BAPEN. Firstly, please join me in celebrating Dianne Jeffrey who was awarded a Damehood in the New Year's Honours list. This is in recognition of Dianne's fantastic work in creating Age UK and Age International, alongside which she has been a valued member of the board of BAPEN Trustees and helped to

establish the Malnutrition Task Force. On behalf of BAPEN I send our sincere congratulations.

Dr Rebecca Stratton was awarded the prestigious John Lennard-Jones medal at BAPEN Conference 2023. Dr Stratton has been a part of BAPEN since she was a PhD student and has contributed over 25 years of work towards bettering nutrition care in the UK, helping establish 'MUST' as a leading screening tool across the world, and it has been a privilege to have Rebecca as Chair of the Malnutrition Action Group.

## **Upcoming events & new developments**

I hope the Conference presentations and awards won at #BAPEN2023 has whet your appetite to join us in Gateshead this year. The **2024 Annual Conference will take place between 5th-6th November**, and will without doubt be another fantastic opportunity to meet colleagues and hear from a range of nutrition care experts. Do come and see what Gateshead and Newcastle have to offer!

Sooner in the year, Nutrition and Hydration Week 2024 is taking place later this month (11th–18th). Amongst promoting good nutritional care for the wider population, the awareness week promotes professional development for nutrition staff and for nutrition advocates across health and social care settings. Make sure to keep an eye out on the events page of our website to stay informed about more upcoming dates for your diary.

Two new and important developments for BAPEN; a Sustainability Special Interest Group with a newly appointed Lead (to be announced very soon) and the new Patient Network Group. These are both exciting and really important developments for our members and we will hear a lot more about their plans as they are developed over the coming months.

Finally, on a personal note and to celebrate (?) being 60, I'll be walking the Via Francigena, from Canterbury to Rome, alongside my wife (Ruth) and two long suffering friends (Simon and Rosie). We're planning to make the journey in two sections, the first in Spring, starting on the 14th April and the second in Autumn. We will be using this opportunity to raise money for PINNT and nutrition research at Newcastle University and Trust. We'll be setting up a JustGiving page very soon for anyone who would be kind enough to sponsor us! I'll also have an Instagram account to show our progress, once I have worked out how to set this up! So, the year is set to be full of all sorts of challenges.

**BAPEN's new strategy, 2022-2027: [www.bapen.org.uk/pdfs/bapen-strategy-2022-2027.pdf](http://www.bapen.org.uk/pdfs/bapen-strategy-2022-2027.pdf)**

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