



Dr Nick Thompson
BAPEN President

An Update from BAPEN

As this is my first CN Magazine column of the year, I'd like to wish everyone a (belated) Happy New Year! I hope you had the opportunity to spend valuable time with loved ones over the festive period and are feeling refreshed for the challenges of 2025 – hopefully, now with the worst of winter behind us. With this in mind, I'm pleased to share some reflections on 2024 and look ahead to some of the milestones we have to look forward to.

Political engagements

Last year BAPEN submitted a response to the independent Darzi Review of NHS Performance, stressing the risk of malnutrition in health and social care settings and the opportunity for care improvements, and then submitted to the 10-year health plan for England. Alongside colleagues from PINNT (Carolyn, of course!) and the BDA, we met with the Health Minister for Northern Ireland, Mike Nesbitt, and his team, to lobby about the importance of disease-related malnutrition and for greater resources for clinical nutrition teams.

BAPEN's own indefatigable Dr Barry Jones, Chair of the Covid Airborne Transmission Alliance (CATA), has participated in the independent UK Covid-19 Inquiry, offering evidence of the experiences of healthcare professionals throughout the pandemic and the risks of infection they experienced in order to deliver care to those in need. We will continue our political engagements in 2025 across all parts of the UK.

Carolyn Wheatley in the King's New Year's Honours

On behalf of all members of BAPEN I would like to extend the warmest congratulations to Carolyn on being awarded an MBE. This is very, very well deserved. Carolyn has been a passionate and dedicated advocate for patients needing artificial nutrition – she has been a great source of sensible, firm and measured advice to BAPEN Council, Executive and Presidents for many years and we are in her debt.

Call for submissions – BMJ Open Gastroenterology

I have the pleasure of being a guest editor of the *BMJ Open Gastroenterology* alongside my learned colleagues Dr Trevor Smith and Dr Ally Speight. We're encouraging readers to submit their work on advancing nutritional support and developing best practices in care. Submissions can come in different shapes and sizes; whilst research studies are most common, we'd also love to read your reviews, clinical guidelines or quality improvement reports. If you submitted an abstract to BAPEN Conference 2024, why not submit for inclusion in print and have your efforts showcased? Submissions are open until the end of March and can be made via: <https://bit.ly/3CtKnOe>.

BAPEN's Edgbaston Course 2025

This May, we're excited to launch a new 3-day course for multidisciplinary nutrition teams across the UK. Running from the 19th-21st May, we're inviting teams of 4-6 from hospitals across the four nations to come together in Edgbaston to learn and develop as a team. The course is fully funded by BAPEN meaning teams only need to cover travel and accommodation expenses. We're keen for our first edition of the Edgbaston Course to be a great success and have a fantastic teaching faculty. If you missed applying this year we hope to run again in 2026!

BAPEN Conference

A huge thank you to everyone who showcased their work and offered their time to help make last year's Conference a huge success with 720 delegates! As a BAPEN member, you now have access to recordings of all the presentations from our Conference in Gateshead last November. Feel free to catch-up on sessions you missed or recap on some of our fantastic speakers.

This year, we're heading to the International Conference Centre, Newport, Wales on 11th-12th November, so do put this date in your diary and I urge you to begin thinking about your abstract submissions. Please see the website for details about abstract submission.

Grants

There will be the opportunity to apply for grants again this year. This can either be through Core Groups and Committees of BAPEN or through individuals applying for research or quality improvement projects – do keep an eye out for adverts and application details through the website and social media.

In November, we will also be appointing our President-elect, to take office in November 2026. I've loved my first year as President of this fantastic charity and having the opportunity to connect with nutrition teams up and down the country. If you're interested in the position, keep an eye out for an advert over the summer. If it isn't the President role that you feel ready for then there are lots of other roles to get involved with – a spring board for Presidency next time round??