

Minutes of the 42 meeting of the BDA England Board (EB) held on Friday 14 May 2021 via Teams from 14:00 – 16:00

Present:

Julie Abayomi (JA)	Board Chair
Belinda Mortell (BM)	Board Member
Fiona McCullough (FMc)	Board Member
Gill Shinkwin (GS)	Board Member
Christian Lee (CL)	Board Member
David Simms (DS)	Board Member
Rasleen Kahai (RK)	Board Member
Tabitha Ward (TW)	Board Member
Kate Hall (KH)	Board of Directors Link

In Attendance:	James Sandy (JS)	BDA, Policy Officer (England)
	Jessica Carter (JC)	BDA, Director of Membership, Marketing and Communications

Item

ACTION

42/1 Welcome and Apologies & Introductions

Apologies were received following the meeting from Diana Markham and Jane Brophy who both experienced technical difficulties.

Linda Hindle will appear at future meetings by request (see 42/3).

Tabitha Ward gave notice that she would need to leave the meeting at 2.30pm.

The Board noted their congratulations following BDA Awards 2019/20 to: **Diana Markham** joint winner of The Mary Turner Award which recognises excellence and commitment in our trade union representatives and to **Kate Hall** who has been awarded a Fellowship which is the highest honour which the Association can bestow upon a member in recognition of their achievements.

42/2 Minutes of previous meeting, 19 March 2021

The minutes were approved as an accurate record.

42/9 Feedback from Attendance at Meetings

The Chair agreed that this item be brought forward in the agenda.

KH updated the Board on recent items considered by the BDA Board of Directors (BoD) which would have relevance to the further items for discussion on this agenda:

A meeting has been scheduled (18th May) to discuss the role of Deputy Chair on the Country Boards with Andy Burman (AB) (Chief Executive) and Caroline Bovey (CB) (BDA Chair) and the respective Policy Officers. The aim is to explore the role and consider it in relation to the Board constitution.

42/9
Continued

It is also an opportunity to discuss joint working and improving communication across the Boards. KH will report back to the next EB meeting.

KH also outlined an important update regarding the continuation of members indemnity insurance (following changes to the UK Legal framework) and the organisation's sound financial position. KH also noted the BDA have become a signatory of the Scottish Food Coalition and are developing the organisation's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion approach. BDA AGM will take place on the 7th July 2021.

RS reminded members of the opportunity to feedback on the Eating Well content from the 'My Covid Recovery' website that was circulated to via email. JS will collate this a response by the 18th May. RS also reported that the national taskforce convened a response to Long Covid will be broken down into themes and topic to make its workload more manageable.

42/3

Appointments and EB Membership

JS outlined that after a review of the Board's constitution and consultation with JA and KH, a number of appointments now need to be considered:

Deputy Chair

EB needs to appoint a Deputy Chair, pending the discussion highlighted by KH above.

There remains a question of how this role would be supported and if it would be a remunerated post.

JA asked for initial expressions of interest to be forward to JS.

AHP Federation Representation

The Board's constitution requires core members to include:

'Representatives from the Allied Healthcare Professional Federation (England, Scotland and Northern Ireland) or Wales Therapy Advisory Committee as appropriate'.

KH reported that she has raised this with AB and the suggestion is that a summary be provided as a standing item to this Board and that AB attend annually (or by request) to update or provide further information on key items. This was approved by the Board.

CL pointed out that BDA is not mentioned as a member of the AHP Federation on their website. JS to action an update.

JS

Co-opted Members

The Board's constitution provides an option to:

'...co-opt non-voting members who will be identified according to the work priorities of that Country Board. The remit of a Co-opted Member shall be agreed by the Core Membership prior to co-option. Co-opted Members can play a full part in a Country Board's proceedings, but shall not be able to vote. There shall be no more than 2 Co-opted Members on a Country Board'.

Currently Linda Hindle, Deputy Chief AHP Officer for England, is the only co-opted member of the Board. Following discussion with the Chair it has been agreed that she attend on request due to current work commitments.

42/3
Continued

JS suggested the Board consider co-opting Tanya Rumney (TR) who currently serves as the EB's nominated representative on the BDA UK wide primary care working group. This was supported by the Board and JS will contact TR with the invitation to join.

JS

Trade Union Representative

The Board's constitution requires core members to include:
'A BDA Trade Union Representative who is a member of the Employment Relations Committee for the Country'.
JS has contacted the Chair of the successor committee the BDA Trade Union National Executive Committee seeking a nomination. An update will be available by the next EB meeting.

JA approved that a standing item be added to the agenda for an update report from TUNEC and that its members should be afforded an open invitation to attend future of this Board.

42/4

Members Survey- Key themes and data

JC gave a short introduction to members, highlighting that responses had been challenging in the context of Covid-19 and a growth on the volume of surveys. This part explained the lower response rate of around 10% of members.

JC gave a presentation based on the slide contained in **Appendix (A)**.

Summary:

- No surprises in terms of demographics, reasons for joining or perceived key benefits
- Positive reaction to COVID-19 support and content
- Reoccurring ideas around sustainability – of the cost of membership, materials and the profession itself
- Increased desire for online learning following the last year
- Demand for work and content to be less NHS and England focused

Next Steps:

- April 2021 – Results shared with staff, with detailed info provided where it relates to their work
- May 2021 – Report and presentation to Board of Directors
- August 2021 – Run a 'You said, we will do' campaign. This will appear in Dietetics Today, on the website and in Members' Monthly
- December 2021 - Review on action taken so far as part of an end of year review

TW left the meeting at 2.38pm.

GS expressed her thanks to the Communications team for their good work in pulling together the information from the survey.

42/4
Continued

RK asked how reliable the data was, particularly the findings on Covid- 19 support given it only represented 53 responses. JC clarified that this was an optional question in the survey and that not everyone had chosen to give feedback on this issue. JC agreed that it was a very small response number and that we would need to be cautious in how we used this going forward. There is also a need for further research on the expectations and outcomes since this survey was conducted.

BM asked if these were the same questions that had appeared in previous surveys and suggested that the psychology of that maybe influencing people's responses. It might be that adding in different, more probing, questions and language could provide better results.

JC acknowledged this was an interesting comment and that generally the aim of the survey is to build trends data, but it might be worth considering additional or rephrased questions to meet new pieces of work or projects in future. Survey fatigue could have been a factor and there is a need to include fewer qualitative responses in favour of data sets and short questions.

CL asked if a 10% response rate was standard. He felt it was unacceptable and indicated a potential apathy amongst members. The danger was that it only captured polarising views and many didn't bother. Incentives and marketing must be better utilised to improve engagement.

JC replied that the best response rates come from structured follow-ups and prompts (usually via email). She agreed that there are definitely options to increase engagement and the current context (of the pandemic) may also have put people off.

CL asked if specialist groups could be better used to help spread the survey amongst their own memberships. He added that there is also a need for more challenge to the broader BDA agenda, as the HQ view could sometimes be very bland.

BM agreed that the survey may be more effective by area or by specialism. The survey needs to be framed as a way of getting more useful and productive criticism, not just people complaining about fees or costs.

JC responded that she wanted to ensure a clearer data set and selection of questions rather than a very broad qualitative approach.

JA, on behalf of the Board, thanked JC for attending and presenting the update.

42/5 **Primary Care Work**

GS agreed to circulate the final draft of the agreed Job Description produced for Primary Care Networks (PCN) currently in the recruitment of Dietitians within multi-disciplinary teams.

GS also highlighted a recent webinar for Dietitians on the PCN roles and a planned webinar with RCOT and HEE on 26th May at 18:00-19:00. Details of these would be sent to members following this meeting.

CL noted that he had fed back a change to the wording concerning a '*dietary interventions test*' which he did not support and will monitor with interest. This was a suggested inclusion by the RCP. Furthermore, he felt that the evidence base for this used a small study and confused language. It was important to avoid sweeping statements about depression and mental health. DS also supported this observation.

42/5 JS agreed to follow this up with Eleanor Johnstone in the EPP Team and
Continued also noted some ongoing work to separate out the short-term and long term
aims of this work.

JS

BM highlighted the risk of saving GP appointments as the driver for this work. It appeared to be an attempt to shift the volume of mental health cases. The four pillars approach used needs to remain the evidence base of practice.

GS responded that the GAP analysis for the training elements focused on mental health had been informed by MIND research and did seem comprehensive. GS agreed it was essential that this was included as part of the recognising symptoms and signposting aspects.

42/6 Workplan 2021/2 (for info)

JS outlined that;

- The current version of the workplan is updated in the England Board Dropbox. Members are advised to request via email if they would like a word version sent to them.
- The Iodine Awareness work is progressing well with the article and podcast completed and ready for further promotion in Dietitians Week 2021.
- In relation to the potential project on the Community Mental Health Framework a similar approach could be adopted as the new adopted for the Iodine work. This would be considered towards the end of this year.
- A short mapping exercise will be conducted across June to support the regional engagement aims in the workplan.

42/7 Public Health Reform - Update/Response

This item was for information only.

42/8 AOB- Links to Association for Nutrition (AfN)

CL asked if EB could explore the links BDA has with AfN and what they may look like going forward. This was part of a consideration regarding improving understanding of knowledge and expertise across the wider discipline.

FMc outlined the role of The Academy of Nutrition Sciences (ANS) which is a joint initiative between the Association for Nutrition (AfN), the British Nutrition Foundation (BNF) the Nutrition Society (NS) and BDA. The academy aim was to lobby, develop policy and secure funding across both pure and applied dietetics. FMc serves as a Trustee of the ANS for BDA, along with Kevin Whelan.

The ANS will hold its AGM on the 19th May 2021 and is still developing as a body, identifying key projects.

JA suggested that the EB receive an update from Andy Burman at a future meeting to coincide with the agreed action relating to the AHP Federation updates. This was agreed by the Board.

42/10 AOB

None.

42/11

Date and times of 2021 meetings and CLOSE of Meeting

- Friday 16 July from 10:00 – 12:00
- Wednesday 8 September from 14:00 - 16:00
- Friday 19 November from 14:00 - 16:00

JA added that Meetings will continue to be online via MS Teams for the foreseeable future, but hopefully we will get to meet in person eventually.

The meeting closed at **3.52pm**

Appendix (A): 'Key Results from 2020 Member Survey'.

Documents relating to the England Board Meetings (including appendices and supporting papers) are stored via Dropbox:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/b8eyl5q6mibg3re/AAC80D8RkIfiSH0M6tzKoQiNa?dl=0>

These are also available on request.