

BAUS Annual Scientific Meeting 2024

BY TONI HUW MIHAILIDIS AND MRIGANKA MANI SINHA



An excellent discussion on the 'feminisation' of the workforce.

Day 1

Toni Huw Mihailidis and Mriganka Mani Sinha

Another year and another brilliant meeting in which urologists from the UK and around the globe assembled for a highly entertaining event. Day one kicked off with a topical and ever-pervasive matter: physician associates. Whilst media coverage has sadly portrayed a fractious, hostile debate, this year's BAUS provided an excellent forum for opinions to be conveyed professionally. Another great topic ensued on the 'feminisation' of the surgical workforce. The main takeaway was the future opportunity to reframe the conversation regarding feminisation and productivity, and to start to look at changing how we work to continue to recruit the surgical workforce which is likely to be at least 50% women.

Our eyes and attention engrossed in these great talks, we might have struggled to turn our attention to the course 'Hands-on Ultrasound Training', though it was more than worth it. It was an excellent course, providing ample opportunity to practise on real-life patients with real-life pathology.

We also attended the paediatric urology course which had a rich consultant body. The session was aimed at keeping up with the latest practice and aiding a discussion about paediatric urology and the challenges faced within it. It helped shed light on the management of uncommon paediatric emergencies, with a focus on preparation for the FRCS exam.

Returning to some more thought-provoking talks, 'The Invisible Threat of Burnout' I'm sure hit home with us all. It reminded us of the statistics taken from a national survey reporting that 23.8% of trainees and 21.2% of trainers felt burned out to a high or very high level. Jim Adshead's valiant personal account was incredibly well received, impressing upon the audience that the key to maintaining enthusiasm in our work life is to maintain what matters to us in our personal lives.

The day closed with medal and award presentations, not forgetting Boston's silent disco!



Jim Adshead (left) and Toni Huw Mihailidis at the Urology News stand.



Jo Cresswell presenting Prof Ian Pearce with the BAUS Presidential Medal.



The excellent course on managing active surveillance for prostate cancer.

Day 2
Toni Huw Mihailidis

Inspired by the events of day one, I was primed with enthusiasm for the day ahead. It began with the President’s Address by Jo Cresswell. It was inspiring to listen to how she has helped springboard several initiatives over her two-year tenure and ‘21,000 miles later’ what has been achieved. Most exciting of all was the exclusive preview of the BAUS Digital launch and BAUS app. This was followed by the investiture of Ian Pearce who discussed the strategic aspirations of BAUS over the coming years based on the three main pillars of membership, education, and care provision.



John Hartson (left) and Toni Huw Mihailidis after John’s inspiring talk.

Following on and boomeranging practice into reality, former Welsh professional footballer John Hartman shared a touching lived experience as a testicular cancer survivor. It was invaluable to listen to his first-hand patient experience. Surviving this and inspiring others remains his proudest achievement, above all his footballing accolades. He concluded by expressing his heart-warming gratitude to the entire array of NHS healthcare providers who contributed to bringing him to where he is today and how he now cherishes the simple pleasures of life – a lesson we can all assimilate.

In keeping with this theme, a second soul-stirring disquisition on living with advanced metastatic prostate cancer touched and inspired us all. It also provided insight into the patient experience of participating in clinical trials, which in this case was the STAMPEDE trial.

Enlivened with real-life patient experiences, I attended a second course, entitled ‘An Evidence-Based Approach to Managing Active Surveillance for Prostate Cancer’. The course excelled its high expectations and offered wonderful clarification of topics some may find complex or in which there seems to be a diversity of practice. It was particularly helpful to learn how to convey risk to patients.

Concluding the second day of BAUS was an exciting insight into artificial intelligence in urology which will, in some ways, change the future of our speciality.

Day 3
Toni Huw Mihailidis

I embarked on the final day of BAUS slightly more expeditiously with an earlier start for the Management / Governance / Quality Improvement session, where I presented a project on reusable equipment in urological practice. A wonderful array of other speakers followed covering many topics from sustainability in surgery to PSA testing in the over 80s group.

Professor Wallis from Canada delivered an excellent talk on how surgeon sex influences patient outcomes. Some striking findings were divulged to the audience: there is a relative 5% reduction in risk of mortality when patients are treated by females; a systematic review showed that females spent more time with their patients, and obtained biopsychosocial information from patients better than males do, capturing the patient experience a bit better; the probability of survival of having an MI is higher if the physician on call showing



An early start of the session on Management / Governance / Quality Improvement.

FEATURE

up at that time is a woman. Indeed, we were suitably reminded that the responsibility of reducing gender bias ought to be shouldered equally by men and women. This was aptly followed by Susan Willis who explicated how we can diplomatically practise active by standing.



Following on was Colin Jackson, CBE the triple world champion sprinter, from Wales. Humorously and anecdotally, he impressed upon the audience the importance of “daring to dream,” of not quitting in the face of adversity, and of inspirational mentors. Drawing parallels amongst surgeons where burnout and ‘failure’ exist, in the operating theatre or otherwise, Colin left us with a memorable acronym for “FAIL: first attempt in learning.” It is vital to learn and “keep moving.”

My penultimate session was ‘Controversies in Uro-Oncology’. This provided very valuable updates across the breadth of uro-oncology, from screening for patients who may be suitable for cytoreductive nephrectomy to imaging in urothelial cancer, pitched to a perfect



level for both consultants and trainees. It’s very exciting to think that the results of the highly anticipated TRANSFORM trial will be available to our specialty within two decades.

What could be a more fitting way to conclude the event than with a thought-provoking discourse on how we envisage the urology service in 2040? Overall, I was enormously grateful for the opportunity to be a part of this conference and to everyone who made such an incredible meeting come to fruition by offering their valuable time. I leave with enthusiasm, new knowledge, and much to ponder, and already eagerly anticipate BAUS 2025!

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BAUS 2025
16–18 June 2025
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