Adult Rehabilitation Special Interest Group (ARIG) Spotlight

February 2026

There have been a few more changes in ARIG since the last update! We regretfully said goodbye to Ian McKendrick and would like to take this opportunity to thank him for his hard work and contributions over the years. However, we were thrilled to welcome 3 new members to the committee – Katie Hargreaves, Annabelle Owusu-Ansah and Stine Lawton-Smith – who have already made fantastic contributions to our work. Mel Ferguson has also taken on the Vice-Chair role which will be a great support to the group.

With these more significant changes in membership, we met in February 2026 to reflect on our progress over the past three years and to agree priorities for the 2026–2029 strategic period. The discussion focused on where ARIG can have the greatest impact within a rapidly changing NHS and mixed economy of hearing care.

The group agreed three core areas of focus for the next three years:

- **Working-age adults** – improving support across employment, mental wellbeing, transitions into adult services, and advice around hearing technologies. Initial work will focus on reviewing existing evidence and identifying where audiologists need clearer guidance and tools.
- **Remote care and service redesign** – exploring current practice across services, sharing protocols, and supporting equitable access to remote care as part of the wider shift from hospital-based to community care (aligning ARIG activity with the NHS 10-Year Plan).
- **Direct-to-consumer (DTC) hearing devices** – a longer-term area of work exploring the role of DTC devices within adult rehabilitation, and how these may link with remote care and the needs of working-age adults.

In the meantime, we continue our ongoing development of guidance on hearing aid fitting, assistive listening devices, and verification using probe microphone measurements.

Finally, we'd like to highlight the NEW **Sound Practice Contributor of the Year Award**, recognising the most outstanding contribution published on Sound Practice over the past year. This inaugural award celebrates work that demonstrates originality, clinical relevance, and a clear impact on audiology practice. The winner will be selected by the ARIG Committee, and all published contributions during the award period are eligible.

The inaugural winner will receive:

- A feature in the next edition of Audacity

- A striking Jade Oblivion Crystal Glass Award trophy
- An official certificate marking this first-ever achievement

Please consider submitting your evidence of good practice as we launch this exciting new award and shine a spotlight on excellence within our audiology community. If you want to discuss your idea before submitting, contact us at ARIG@thebsa.org.uk.

Best Wishes

Shahad Howe
Chair of the Adult Rehabilitation Special Interest Group