

Performing Arts Medicine News Spring 2020

Director's Message

Welcome to our spring newsletter. We really hope you are doing OK and keeping well in this difficult and challenging time. It's good to see the industry and benevolent funds come together to create hardship funds and here at BAPAM we are doing what we can to support your playing and creative practice-related health needs.

The first thing to say is that we are open and can take your calls. We moved the service to a remote platform in mid-March and can offer telephone and, increasingly, video-conference consultations with many of our practitioners. Please do take advantage of this and give us a call on **0207 404 8444** to book an appointment.

In addition, we are offering some new services. We are mindful that creative professionals may be having difficulty accessing the normal range of healthcare provision whilst health service resources are focusing on patients with COVID-19, so we are expanding our services to provide interim support in the following areas and are very grateful to our practitioners for offering these services at a discounted rate for BAPAM patients.

Vocal Health

For patients with vocal health problems, we would generally advise a referral to an NHS Professional Voice User Clinic. These clinics are currently closed and we are very pleased that our Vocal Rehabilitation Coaches have agreed to offer a telephone/video advice session to singers unable to be seen by the NHS, to provide some support meanwhile. Please phone the Helpline to arrange a session.

Mental Health

We are continuing to offer free assessment and advice sessions with our doctors and clinical psychologists, and counsellors and psychotherapists on our Directory are available for online therapies if funding is available. Equity's mental health support and counselling scheme is still live, and Help Musicians and the Royal

Society of Musicians as well as other charities are still able to provide funding for therapies if applicants meet the criteria.

In addition, BAPAM will be offering online group therapy for patients where our clinical assessment suggests that this would be helpful.

Musculoskeletal Health

We are providing telephone or video consultations with hand and orthopaedic surgeons, rheumatologists, physiotherapists and osteopaths. We are also able to offer follow up appointments during this time. Hands-on treatment/procedures, and physical examinations, are not available but clinicians will be able to provide support and advice on what to do in this interim period. Our hand surgeon, Mr Mark Phillips is also offering joint consultations with coaches so that performers can develop performance techniques which do not exacerbate an injury but allow you to continue to practise.

Our **Healthy Performance Training Series** is now FREE, thanks to support from our funders. We will be continuing the series over the summer, focusing on healthy practice strategies. Look for our sessions and book your place at www.bapam.eventbrite.com. We are so grateful to our trainers for making the shift from face to face to online sessions at a week's notice! Feedback from these sessions has been very positive and we have included comments on what participants found valuable below:

Encouraged me to believe that with proper care I can continue with my goals as a musician

Talking about strategies for overcoming anxiety

The after-performance stretching

I've come away with a bunch of concrete practical tips that I've put immediately into practice and will keep doing when I get back to performing

Thinking about finding a safe space before and after shows. Trying to find more ways to self-care

Making me think about posture and position, both while playing and teaching. Though none of my physical health problems are a direct result of playing, they do impact it

Difficult as the current situation is, it is also an opportunity to solve health problems that have arisen and develop healthy practices which will keep you mentally and physically fit and help you to sustain your career.

Many of our industry and academic colleagues are undertaking **research** at this time to understand better what is happening to our performing arts community during this period. One of these studies is being coordinated by the HEartS research team ([Health, Economic and Social impact of the Arts](#)), based at the Royal College of Music and Imperial College London, in collaboration with leading research teams worldwide. If you have time please complete the survey here:

https://imperial.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3afY43j8pFhfwb

Wishing you all good health and wellbeing at this time.

Claire Cordeaux

Director

British Association for Performing Arts Medicine