BRITISH ACADEMY OF AUDIOLOGY

British Cochlear Implant Group

COCHLEAR IMPLANT CHAMPIONS NEWS September 2026

Welcome back to the CI Champions Newsletter

It's great to be back!

After a little break following our last edition, we are delighted to be reconnecting with our cochlear implant champions and mentors.

We want to bring together the latest insights, updates and news in a bite-sized format to help you keep up to date with what's happening across the cochlear implant community.

We also want this newsletter to be relevant to you so please get in touch if you think there is something valuable other clinicians should know about.

And, of course, we want to celebrate the people and teams making a difference. Any achievements, big or small, we would love to hear about them and share your success with our incredible CI champions. Email any suggestions or celebrations to: admin@baaudiology.org

There have been some changes in the CI Champions Committee since we have been away. New members have joined and we have introduced sub-groups to help spread our attention to where it's needed; from training and E-learning to the mentor's network to communications and resources.

Let's get started with the outcome of the CI Champions survey and a roundup on BCIG 2026. Enjoy!

Champions Survey What did we find out?

Method

A cross-sectional survey was distributed to 192 registered CI Champions in November 2025; closed January 2026. 69 responses were received (36% response rate).

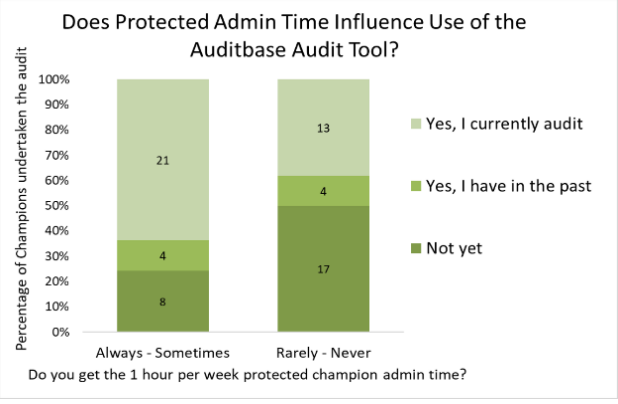
Results

68% of respondents (41/60) rated mentor approachability as 5/5 (Very Approachable).

Category (Metric)	**Average rating**
Mentor Responsiveness (Avg 1-5)	4.18
Mentor Approachability (Avg 1-5)	4.39
Confidence in Speech Testing: Instructing the Patient (Avg 1-5)	3.91
Confidence in Speech Testing: Scoring the Test (Avg 1-5)	4.04
Confidence in Speech Testing: Explaining Results (Avg 1-5)	3.75
Confidence: Optimal Aiding (2025 Guidance) (Avg 1-5)	4.08
Increased Confidence in CI Conversation since champion role (% Agree/Strongly Agree)	**89.9%**
Increased Referral Influence (% Agree/Strongly Agree)	**71.6%**
Receives 1hr Protected Time "Always" (%)	**16.4%**

Average 1-5, with 1 being not at all; 5 being very.

Champions' admin time is most commonly 'Never', with 'Rarely' or 'Never' combined making up 50.8% of responses. Yet the infrequent admin time only mildly impacted the likelihood of auditing – suggesting we have some very motivated champions!



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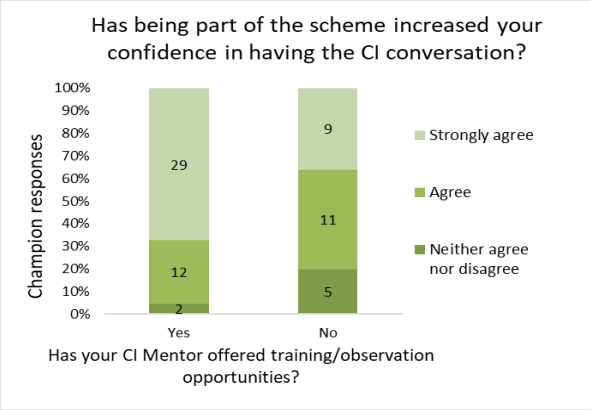
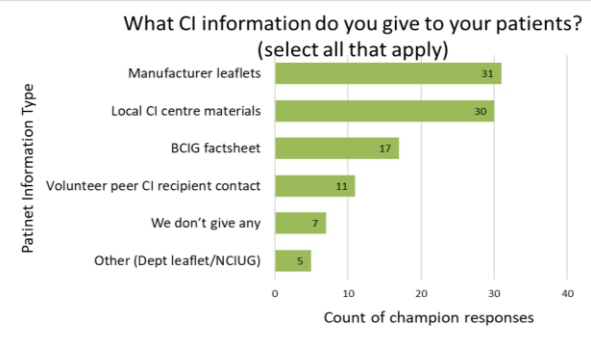
89.7% of champions agree or strongly agree that being part of the scheme has increased their confidence in having CI conversations. Additionally, being offered training or observation opportunities by CI mentors increased confidence significantly compared to those without observation experience.



The most common resources used are manufacturer leaflets and CI centre materials. Though 13% of respondents report not currently providing any written materials to patients



Conclusion

The CI Champion scheme successfully facilitates approachable mentorship and clinical advocacy. Increased mentor access and protected admin time are the main drivers of clinician confidence within the CI champion's role.

Mentors Network Group: Share learning, ideas and resources

Are you a CI **mentor**? The new Teams space has launched for mentors to share experiences and collaborate with others across the UK. Please share any resources you think others will benefit from. If you are a mentor and haven't joined the CI mentor group (or you think your mentor would be interested), mentors can request access by emailing admin@baaudiology.org.

A half-day mentor training event is also coming soon – watch out for details.

New Board Director Chris Cartwright

The CI Champions committee are delighted to welcome Chris Cartwright as the new Board Director, bringing his expertise and experience in professional development to oversee the scheme.

Chris leads BAA's professional development portfolio, working with the E-Learning lead to deliver expert-led education to our CI champs – coming soon!

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BCIG Meeting 2026 Sound Futures: Innovation, Access and Collaboration

This year BCIG was hosted in Scotland, with an excellent programme of talks on the future of cochlear implants.

Key themes included access to services, the growing role of AI, rehabilitation, and music perception. Sessions also covered emerging technologies and expanding candidacy criteria. Alongside the main programme were breakout sections for CI and Rehab Champions and interactive workshops from all CI manufacturers. We're already looking forward to BCIG 2027 in Oxford.

BCIG 2026: CI Champions Event

We had another incredible CI Champions event on day 1 of BCIG - great to see another sell out attendance.

This year focused on professional development, service development and confident conversations. Petrina Checkland and Rhian McTaggart delivered an inspiring talk that has been recreated as a webinar and now available on the BAA CI champion webpage or on this webinar link: https://baaudiology.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/baa_bcig_ci_champions_webinar_july_2026_v3-720p.mp4

BCIG 2026: Rehab Champions Event

This year marked an exciting milestone for the Rehabilitation Champions network: for the first time, rehab champions joined the main conference programme before their own dedicated workshop. The network is comprised of Teachers of the Deaf and Speech and Language Therapists.

Talks covered parent-child interactions relating to mental health and the importance of family engagement and emotional wellbeing during the CI journey. The interactive workshop let champions share innovative practice and discuss common challenges. We look forward to what comes next for them.

BAA Conference 2025

It was amazing to see so many enthusiastic CI champs at the BCIG stand chatting to the committee. Awareness of CI referral criteria was significantly higher than in previous years - really encouraging for professionals and patients.

Our presentation “The first conversation: opening the door to CI” is on the BAA CI Champs web page: CI Champion Resources - British Academy of Audiology

Come and see us at the BCIG stand at BAA Conference 29-30 October 2026 at the Liverpool Experience Campus (LEX)! Registration is now open: Pricing and Registration - British Academy of Audiology