

IN CONVERSATION WITH

Professor Tim Woolford: BACO International 2018

4-6 JULY 2018

The British Academic Conference in Otolaryngology (BACO) will take place at the Manchester Central Conference Centre next July. To give you an idea of what to expect at this major UK conference we interviewed **Professor Tim Woolford**, Consultant Ear, Nose and Throat Surgeon and Chair of the local BACO organising committee.

Firstly Tim, I know you want to begin with your thoughts about the terrible events which took place in Manchester on 22 May 2017.

So shocking, so sad and my heart goes out to all those who have lost loved ones and those so badly injured, many of whom were treated here at this hospital. For these people life will never be the same, however I hope that the response of the people of Manchester – which has really been magnificent – gives them some comfort. The way the whole city has come together has made me rather proud actually. Restores your faith in human decency and kindness at a very sad time.

Can you tell us about your involvement in BACO events so far?

BACO has always played a big part in my ENT career from attending as a registrar and speaking at all of the conferences since I became a consultant. I have watched the event change and grow enormously over the years. I was Chairman of the Academic Committee in 2012 for the Glasgow BACO and this was really the first big national role I had taken on. We made some significant changes to modernise the conference, introducing cadaveric dissection and setting up a clinical skills centre for the first time. I am particularly proud of the skills centre which Professor Nirmal Kumar and I organised for the Liverpool BACO. The skills centre was sold out with close to 400 delegates and the feedback we had was very positive.

For BACO International 2018 I am Chair of the local organising committee and I am delighted that Manchester has been chosen to host our conference next year.

What are you most looking forward to about BACO International 2018?

Well, I am confident we can put on an excellent conference here in Manchester

next year. The Conference Centre is a great facility right in the centre of the city. Hosting such a high profile event is a great honour and, as local organisers, we will be doing everything we can to showcase the city of Manchester, welcoming our UK and International guests, and staging an enjoyable conference.

How will BACO International 2018 build on previous BACOs?

Professor Valerie Lund, Professor Vin Paleri and I have had a lot of discussion about this. There is no doubt that BACO is a very strong brand and part of the fabric of ENT surgery in the UK, however there are a lot of conferences and we will make sure BACO 2018 sets the standard for a modern international conference. Of course, a strong academic programme with wide appeal is essential and Vin Paleri as academic Chair will certainly deliver this with a theme of 'Innovation and collaboration in ENT'. The Conference Centre in Manchester is a great venue, featuring the iconic GMex Building, and Professor Simon Lloyd as 'venue lead' on my committee will ensure that the delegate experience is first class.



Professor Tim Woolford,
Consultant Ear, Nose and Throat Surgeon and Chair of the local BACO organising committee.

Professor Valerie Lund is 'Master' of BACO, and wants to extend the international profile of our conference, so for the first time BACO in Manchester will be called BACO International.

Tell us more about the social events – we hear there may be some action at Old Trafford!

We thought we would liven up the social events in Manchester! Rather than have a more formal dinner, we are planning on having a BACO party night on Thursday. Mr Jonathon Hobson is organising this and has promised to put on a lively event with international food and drink, an excellent band followed by a disco into the early hours. Tickets will be highly subsidised and we are hoping that everyone will join us for what will be a great night out!

One thing I have learnt coming from Manchester is that wherever I travel in the world, people immediately ask me if I am a Manchester United fan. Always slightly



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tricky as I am originally from London and a lifelong Spurs supporter! We all recognise that Manchester United is such a famous club, and Premiership football has worldwide coverage, so I'm delighted that Manchester United have agreed to host an event for us on Wednesday evening.

Straight after the conference buses will take delegates to Old Trafford where they will have drinks and canapés whilst they have a guided tour of the famous Manchester United museum with a chance to have photographs taken with all the trophies. There will also be a chance to meet a legendary Manchester United player and

go pitchside into the Old Trafford stadium. Having been to many matches at Old Trafford over the years I can confirm that it really is one of the great sporting stadiums and I think this will be a very memorable experience for our delegates.

What is the latest news about the cadaveric and clinical skills sessions?

The cadaveric dissection sessions have been a great feature of recent BACOs and, on this occasion, are being organised by my colleague Mr Raj Bhalla. Live cadaveric dissection will again be screened directly into the Conference Centre. Over the three days, all aspects of ENT surgery will be covered and I am sure these will be popular with delegates.

Professor Neil Tolley is leading on the clinical skill centre on this occasion. I know Neil has very ambitious plans for this part of the conference with numerous skills and simulation training opportunities for ENT surgeons, nurses, speech therapists and medical students. One new innovation is that, for the first time, we are planning on having some educational sessions for local

school children, with an introduction to our specialty and a chance to perform some surgical simulation which I am sure they will really enjoy.

Finally, do you have any special message for our international readers who might be planning to attend?

My message is very clear, and is that all of us involved in BACO International 2018 would extend a warm welcome to any of your international readers. On this occasion, India and Brazil have been designated as our international partners and delegates from these countries will receive a reduced conference rate.

Manchester and the surrounding areas offer so much for international visitors and I do hope that many will choose to join us next year. We'll make sure they have a great all round conference.



www.bacointernational.org