



WELCOME TO THIS

**BHTA**  
British Healthcare Trades Association

# British Healthcare Trades Association

**ANNUAL REVIEW  
2023-2024**

# Foreword



**Welcome to the 2023-2024 Annual Review of the British Healthcare Trades Association (BHTA). We appreciate you taking the time to reflect on our activities and achievements over the past year.**

This period has been a remarkable testament to the resilience, creativity, and collaborative spirit that defines our industry. It is through the collective efforts of our members, Sections, and partners that we have successfully navigated the challenges and opportunities of the last twelve months.

The past year has seen significant developments in the healthcare landscape, and BHTA has remained steadfast in its commitment to support our members in adapting to these changes. From responding to shifting policy priorities and navigating the implications of a new government, we have worked tirelessly to ensure our members can continue the delivery of essential healthcare products and services. Our proactive engagement with policymakers, regulators, and stakeholders has been critical in advocating for the needs of our members and the patients they serve.

As we look back on the period from July 2023 to June 2024, we are proud of the progress the association has made and we are grateful for the dedication of our members. This Annual Review offers an overview of the initiatives, achievements, and milestones that have defined this year. We hope it provides valuable insights and inspiration as we continue to shape the future of healthcare together.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Stockdale', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**David Stockdale**  
BHTA Chief Executive Officer

# About the British Healthcare Trades Association

Representing over 400 companies in the healthcare and assistive technology industry, the British Healthcare Trades Association (BHTA) supports its members to help ensure people can access the products and services they need, when they need it, and at a fair price.

BHTA members are committed to the association's Code of Practice, requiring companies to offer a level of service above and beyond the legal requirements. The BHTA collaborates with members, policymakers, and stakeholders to shape a healthier future for all.

## OUR VISION

Fair and equitable UK health and social care systems, where people have access to the right product and service, at the right time, at the right value.

## OUR MISSION

To champion our members, protect consumers, shape policy, and drive standards.



**1**

CTSI-approved  
Code of Practice



**£3.7bn**

of goods/services to  
NHS and social care



**100k**

weekly face-to-face  
patient interactions



**19k**

staff employed by  
member companies



**400+**

member companies



**12**

BHTA Sections

# Political engagement

Over the last 12 months, the BHTA has continued to engage with Parliament and campaign for change within the UK healthcare sector. Through advocacy, lobbying efforts, and engagement with policymakers, the BHTA aims to ensure that the interests and concerns of its members are effectively represented.

By actively participating in consultations and discussions with government officials, the BHTA plays a vital role in shaping healthcare policies that promote innovation, quality, and accessibility for patients across the UK.

In August 2023, the BHTA launched its campaign to “scrap the heart restart tax”. VAT on defibrillators considerably increases their cost, making them less accessible for small businesses and community spaces. The BHTA campaign calls on the government to remove the tax, so more of these life saving devices can be made available.

The campaign immediately received press coverage in The Mirror, and the BHTA is continuing to raise awareness via social media and digital channels.

In October 2023, the BHTA held a parliamentary event in Portcullis House, London, to lobby to MPs directly. The event offered a platform for open discussions, data sharing, and an exchange of ideas on how the government and the healthcare industry can collaborate to make defibrillators more affordable and accessible.

The campaign is still ongoing, with the petition gaining almost 90,000 signatures.



Head of Policy, William Lee, at the Scrap the Heart Restart tax Parliamentary event.

In November 2023, the BHTA launched its 2023 Manifesto, calling on the government to work with industry to improve health and social care across the UK. The parliamentary reception was held in the Churchill Room at the House of Commons.

The event brought together MPs and peers, as well as BHTA members and industry representatives, to discuss UK healthcare, current barriers, and ways these can be overcome.

In the 2023 Manifesto, the BHTA calls for collaboration among stakeholders, policymakers, healthcare professionals, and industry to improve healthcare in the UK.

The manifesto centres on five key asks that the BHTA believes require government attention:

- Release NHS capacity
- Regulate for safe, effective UK medical devices
- Rethink innovation adoption and procurement
- Regularise sustainability and social value
- Reduce export barriers

One of the biggest changes this year, that has undoubtedly impacted the sector, is the election of the new Labour Government.

BHTA welcomed the new DHSC ministerial team and key civil servants with policy briefs setting out our core beliefs for Med Tech – what the Government must get right, how they can save money, time and resources, and how BHTA members can help.

Working with Tendo, our political consulting partners, the BHTA created the “Preparing for a new Parliament: how to plan for the first 100 days of a new government” document to help guide members through the transition.



The BHTA Team at the Manifesto launch.



# Member activity

**This year, members have faced a new government as well as a changing policy landscape.**

The BHTA's First Aid Medical Equipment (FAME) Section created guidance on how to ensure defibrillators are "ready to rescue". They also worked together to agree on a suggested standard for cabinets that house public-access automated external defibrillators.

In July 2023, the BHTA held its first joint meeting for the Children's Equipment, Independent Living, and Mobility Sections, which received high praise from attendees. Members and key stakeholders were able to come together face-to-face to network and gain insights from knowledgeable speakers on a diverse range of relevant and important topics.

Glynn Jones, Deputy Agent for the West Midlands & Oxfordshire for the Bank of England, presented a UK economy forecast. Susan Roe, Trade & Customs Specialist, and Sandra Cooper, International Trade Consultant, both from the Institute of Export and International Trade, shared key considerations for firms when exporting to the EU and beyond. Professor Laure Rowe, Founder of Red MedTech, discussed medical device registration. Andrew Stevenson, BHTA President and Wheelchair Alliance Committee Member, gave an update on the Wheelchair Alliance.



**Glynn Jones, Bank of England, presenting at the Joint Section Meeting**



**Andrew Stevenson, BHTA President and Wheelchair Alliance Committee member presenting at the Joint Section Meeting**

In February 2024, the BHTA worked in partnership with Trusted Assessing and Care Training (TACT) to launch a brand-new course designed for retailers of independent living equipment.

The 'Trusted Assessors: Assessing in the Retail Environment' course is designed to accredit retailer members as Trusted Assessors.

This new training-based programme enables customer-facing staff to learn the skills involved in assessing for suitable home adaptations equipment. The course was developed by TACT in consultation with the BHTA and its members, and it is accredited by OCN London.



**Trusted Assessors training-based programme launch**



**The conference in Northampton**

This year, the BHTA and its members also supported a new government training initiative for ground handlers transporting mobility equipment.

The Department for Transport initiative aims to ensure mobility equipment is being handled correctly and minimising damage to vital mobility aids.

BHTA members took part in creating the training video, supplying the equipment that was used in the guidance demonstration. Additionally, the BHTA updated its online Air Transport Information pages, which give detailed information about how to transport, remove the battery of, and safely store mobility equipment.

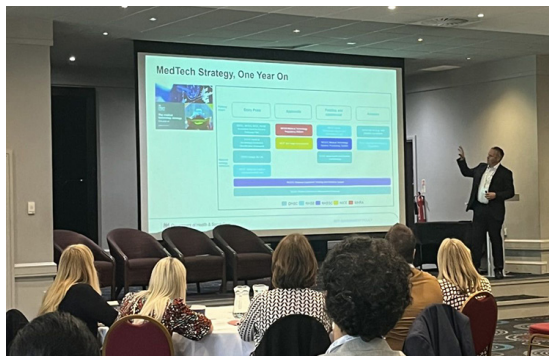


**The BHTA's 2024 annual conference**

In May 2024, the BHTA held its annual conference, in Northampton, titled “Health Tech in the UK: The next 5 years”. The conference brought together healthcare leaders and suppliers to discuss how the changes made today will impact the future of the health service. Boasting an impressive roster of key government and NHS speakers, engaging presentations throughout the day included the MedTech Strategy one year on, the Procurement Act 2023, late-stage medical device assessments, practical export support for UK SMEs, UK medical device regulation changes, and much more.

In June 2024 a joint Section meeting was held at Woodland Grange, Leamington Spa presented by the Stairlifts & Access, Children’s Equipment, Independent Living, and Mobility Sections.

The Stairlifts & Access Section ran a campaign to raise awareness of they key points to consider when buying a reconditioned or second-hand stairlift. The aim was to help keep consumers safe when adapting their homes with second-hand equipment.



**David Lawson presenting at the conference**

# BHTA Section activity

Each of the BHTA Sections have been working on a strategy plan with key aims and goals.

## Children's Equipment

The Section spearheaded the organisation of the first Joint Section Meeting, which took place in July 2023 and acted as a springboard for closer collaboration within the BHTA and, in particular, with the Independent Living and Mobility Sections. It continued to work closely with stakeholders, including the charity Newlife, with the aim of pooling time and resources on shared objectives and in preparation for the anticipated new government. Looking forward, the Section is working to establish a wide-ranging stakeholder group (and potential APPG) to speak with one voice on how to make improvements to equipment provision for disabled children. Additionally, there is a focus on supporting occupational therapists and other healthcare professionals with signposted training and resources provided by BHTA members.

## Stoma and Continence Manufacturers

**Target:** Utilise national reimbursement systems that facilitate the use of the most appropriate product for the clinical needs of the patient.

**Focus:** Promote the benefits of the Drug tariff for Part IX products, utilising the Part IX Position Paper, to maintain the prescription route of supply as the only route for patients to obtain their product of choice.

**Focus:** To promote the high-quality and innovative products produced by the manufacturers.

## Independent Living and Mobility

A review of the SME retail membership sparked a new event that took place in February, BHTA Retailers' Day. The Sections welcomed some fantastic speakers, including 'The Retail Champion', Clare Bailey, and it was well supported by members. The Section continued to work with NHS Supply Chain, finishing up a project on

walking aids and starting to look at sling sizing. BHTA President Andrew Stevenson was appointed to the Board of the Wheelchair Alliance, and he has worked closely with members to encourage the flow of information and feedback to ensure the voice of industry is being heard. A fantastic resource was produced aimed at supporting members with managing their responsibilities for lithium batteries and further work on classification of mobility scooters is in development.

## Beds and Support Surfaces & Pressure Care, Seating and Positioning

The Section is working to increase awareness of BHTA and the advantages of buying from BHTA members amongst occupational therapists (OTs) and tissue viability nurses (TVNs):

- The BHTA has been presenting and distributing resources at some of the Occupational Therapy Adaptation Conferences (OTACs) in 2023 and 2024, engaging with organisations and OTs to increase awareness of BHTA.
- Following a speaker slot for Jeannie Donnelly at a Section meeting last year, a relationship was established to help increase awareness and understanding of standards within the Section for TVNs and other clinicians. Barend ter Haar has worked alongside SoTV to create blogs. There are plans to continue to work with The Society of Tissue Viability raising awareness of BHTA and the work the Section members do on standards with their network. Jacqui Fletcher spoke to members in October this year to update the Section on the Stop the Pressure campaign and share resources.
- Plans to continue the campaign to increase awareness of standards within the industry.





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## Stairlifts & Access

The Section agreed to focus on training and raising professional standards in the industry. As a result, Dementia Awareness Training was hosted by the BHTA as well as a good take-up of Trusted Assessor training. Members have been active in engaging their local MPs in industry issues with a number of BHTA-supported MP visits carried out. In addition, the development of a cross-Section working group has been formed to look at methods of supporting members to provide excellent training and support for their staff and, importantly, how to highlight this as a gold standard for the industry.

## FAME and Defibrillator

The BHTA created guidance documents in the form of a toolkit to help retailers in identifying non-compliant products. This was finalised and shared with members earlier this year.

- Amazon has begun using this toolkit and has invited the BHTA to represent the UK medical device sector on its forthcoming trusted expert network. The BHTA will continue to work with Amazon, and more news will follow in 2025.
- Influence and lobby to government and key stakeholders. The BHTA will continue to work with Tendo Consulting.
- The Scrap the Heart Restart Tax campaign has been ongoing throughout 2024 and has gained traction with much support in parliament. This will continue into 2025.
- The Section would like to raise awareness regarding Martyn's Law and the first aid requirements; this is currently in early days but hoping to gain some attention before its next hearing.



## Prosthetics and Orthotics

The Section is working alongside other professional bodies to help support and promote their projects that will improve recruitment, retention, and development of prosthetists, orthotists, technicians and support staff.

- The BHTA has continued to engage with BAPO, and members are regularly consulted for input on their workforce reform projects.
- Continue to develop better relationships with procurement bodies, with the aim to improve communication regarding contracts, price increases, and innovation.
- NHS Supply Chain and Health Trust Europe have spoken at meetings this year, as well as engaging with Section members throughout the year. The Section is hoping to continue to establish closer relationships with key members of staff in order to ensure that the tender process runs smoothly.



## Dispensing Appliance Contractors

**Target:** To ensure all patients have equal access and choice to the most clinically appropriate products and services and maintain the current reimbursement and remuneration systems across the UK.

**Focus:** Encourage the maintenance of specialist clinicians as the key adviser to patients.

**Focus:** Challenge any restriction of patient or HCP choice of dispensing services.

**Focus:** Continue to ensure swift access and adoption of new service developments.

# The BHTA Board

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**Andrew Stevenson**  
President



**Phil Rice**  
Board Member



**Leyton Stevens**  
Chairman



**Bob Russell**  
Board Member



**Ian Jones**  
Vice Chairman



**Ian Wenman**  
Board Member



**Jill Morony**  
Board Member

# Financial summary

## Statement of income and retained earnings for the year ended 30 June 2024.

	2024 £	2023 £
<b>Income</b>	1,276,405	914,962
Administrative expenses	(1,118,212)	(904,530)
<b>Operating surplus</b>	<u>158,193</u>	<u>10,432</u>
Interest receivable and similar income	386	1
<b>Surplus before taxation</b>	<u>158,579</u>	<u>10,433</u>
Tax on surplus	(23,946)	(1,319)
<b>Surplus for the financial year</b>	<u>134,633</u>	<u>9,114</u>
Retained earnings brought forward	453,595	444,481
Retained earnings carried forward	<u><u>588,228</u></u>	<u><u>453,595</u></u>



[www.bhta.com](http://www.bhta.com)

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The BHTA is a trade association with members in healthcare and assistive technology, all of whom commit to the BHTA Code of Practice, the only one in this industry to be approved by The Chartered Trading Standards Institute. BHTA member companies operate to higher standards of customer protection than the law requires.

