



BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR THE
STUDY OF HEADACHE

[Events](#)

[Membership](#)

[Contact](#)

BASH Newsletter

Issue 4 (May 2026)

Hello ,

The BASH Council warmly welcome you to the May 2026 edition of the BASH Newsletter. Just as spring is well underway outside, so too is the BASH Council's work for the year.

As outlined in this newsletter we report on developments on the website and the BASH guidelines. Such developments are part of an incremental process and we will continue to report updates throughout the year. Separate to this, **we are also working on BASH Position Statements** which address important aspects of advanced migraine management and we will highlight these when they are available on the website, via the newsletter. We are delighted to share details of two books by BASH members (*both of whom are former Chairs of BASH*) and we hope you will derive some inspiration from them.

As always, we include details of upcoming events, and in this edition of the newsletter we highlight the upcoming **MTIS 2026** and **EHC 2026** events.

As you know, BASH supports clinicians who manage all types of headache disorders and in this edition we interview **Professor Joanna Zakrzewska, who is an expert in the excruciating painful condition Trigeminal Neuralgia.**

We hope you enjoy the newsletter. If you are not yet a member of BASH, please see the links to our membership in this newsletter. If you would like to be involved in BASH activities, please do not hesitate to contact us.

[Click here to join BASH today!](#)

The BASH Council

May 2026

BASH Guidelines

New website “*click in clinic*” rapid access format

The screenshot displays the BASH Guidelines website interface. At the top, there are navigation buttons for "PREVIOUS SECTION" and "NEXT SECTION". The main content area is divided into a left sidebar and a central content pane. The sidebar contains a "Table of contents" with sections for "Overview", "Section 1: The Clinical Approach", "Section 2: Primary Headaches", "List of abbreviations", and "References". The central pane shows the BASH logo (British Association for the Study of Headache) and the heading "2.1. Migraine". Below this, the "2.1.3 Management" section is visible, including a sub-section for "General principles" which discusses patient expectations and management strategies. The text in the screenshot is partially obscured by a dark red box.

The BASH council continue to update the BASH website.

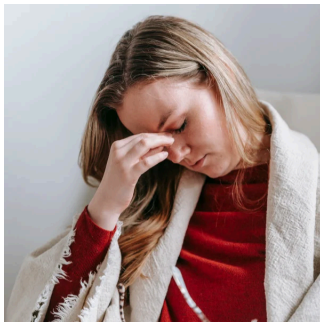
The 2019 BASH guidelines (*Headache Management System*) were previously hosted on a separate website. The guidelines have now been moved over to the BASH website and the various sections are being updated incrementally.

The version number and date of update are indicated at the foot of each guideline page. The guidelines are formatted to suit the busy clinician who can open these in clinic and click on the relevant tab in order to quickly access the relevant section. We hope you will find this update valuable.

Dates for your diary...

17 June 2026 | 6:00–7:00 pm | Zoom Meeting

Migraine and Stroke: Recognising Risk, Red Flags and Management



This webinar is **exclusively available to BASH members** and will explore the important links between migraine and stroke, with a focus on recognising risk, identifying red flags, and considering practical management approaches in clinical care.

Speaker:

Dr Mireia Moragas, Consultant Neurologist

To register, please click link below, or visit the [events page](#) on our website.

Join the Zoom Meeting

MTIS 2026

**3–5 September
2026 | Glasgow
(UK)**



The **Migraine Trust International Symposium (MTIS) 2026** will be held in **Glasgow (UK)** from the **3–5 September 2026**.

This world-renowned event offers registration discounts for students, trainees, and professionals practicing in low and middle-income countries.

As in previous years, attendees can also register for specialised teaching courses designed to support frontline healthcare professionals in managing headache disorders.

Abstract Deadline:

Friday 15 May 2026

Early Bird Deadline:

Friday 17 July 2026

If you'd like any further information, please visit **The Migraine Trust** website for full details:

[MTIS Website](#)

EHC 2026

**9–12 December
2026 | Hub27
Berlin (Germany)**



The **20th European Headache Congress (EHC26)**, organised by the European Headache Federation, will take place at **hub27 Berlin (Germany)** from **9–12 December 2026**.

Co-chaired by Professor Uwe Reuter and Professor Mark Braschinsky, this landmark 20th edition will be conducted in English and features a comprehensive scientific programme. Early registration is encouraged to secure the best rates before the first tier expires in August.

Abstract Deadline:

Sunday 28 June 2026

Registration Deadline:

Early (until 10th August 2026); Regular (until 9th October 2026); Late (from 10th October 2026)

If you'd like any further information, please visit the **Headache Congress** website for full details:

[The Headache Congress Official Website](#)

Interview

Trigeminal Neuralgia (TN): An Expert Q&A

Trigeminal neuralgia (TN) is one of the most disabling pain conditions encountered in neurology and in medicine as a whole. In this interview, BASH talked to Professor Joanna Zakrzewska (UCLH, UK) who is a world expert in TN.

She explored the complexities of real-world TN management, including diagnosis, medical therapy, surgical decision-making, psychological support, and future directions for services.

Key Clinical Messages:

- Trigeminal neuralgia should be diagnosed and referred early – delays may worsen outcome and decision-making.
- High-quality MRI and early multidisciplinary discussion are central to best care.
- Neurosurgical opinion should not be delayed until patients are in crisis; age and frailty alone are not barriers.
- Long-term pharmacological therapy can carry risks and should be actively reviewed.
- Nurse-led support, psychological support and clear flare-up plans have the potential to greatly reduce emergency presentations.

Q: What does an ideal TN care pathway look like?

A: The pathway should begin in primary care, with early diagnosis supported by screening tools for GPs and dentists. Carbamazepine remains first-line treatment, though oxcarbazepine is often preferred due to fewer interactions. Medication intolerance, red flags and ongoing symptoms should be flagged to specialist services on an urgent basis. Best practice is that most patients should be referred to secondary care. The Royal College of Surgeons has [published guidelines](#) on management of trigeminal neuralgia.

Q: Where should patients be managed after referral?

A: Professor Zakrzewska advocated management within specialist centres involving headache neurologists, pain specialists, oral medicine and neurosurgeons. All patients should have high-quality MRI, ideally reviewed by neurosurgeons familiar with posterior fossa anatomy. Professor Zakrzewska advised 'What patients really value is seeing a physician and a surgeon together – it completely changes the quality of decision-making.'

Q: When should surgery be discussed?

A: Neurosurgical discussion should occur early, once diagnosis is secure and medical therapy started – not when patients are in extremis. Clear neurovascular compression indenting the trigeminal nerve is the key imaging feature. Microvascular decompression (MVD) is preferred where appropriate, with around 70% long-term pain freedom. Professor Zakrzewska advised 'If decisions are made in extremis, they're often the wrong decisions.'

Q: How should medication weaning be handled?

A: Patients are often fearful of relapse and reluctant to taper effective medication when they are symptom free. Very slow down-titration, reassurance that drugs can be restarted, and strong nurse support are essential. Long-term risks of pharmacological therapy– including drug interactions and cardiac conduction effects – should be discussed openly. 'At any point, patients need to know they can always go back on the medication.'

Q: What role do nurses and psychologists play?

A: Advanced nurse practitioners and psychological input are central to good TN care. Structured pain programmes, flare-up plans (Plan A/B/C), and patient-initiated follow-up significantly reduce GP visits and A&E attendance while improving quality of life. 'Having a plan – knowing what to do in a flare-up – is incredibly powerful for patients.'

Q: What's on the horizon for TN services?

A: Priorities include national and international registries, development of centres of excellence, and new drug therapies such as selective sodium-channel blockers. TN is estimated to affect 30–40,000 people in the UK, highlighting the need for improved service capacity and training. Professor Zakrzewska believes "We need to broaden headache services beyond migraine and properly address facial pain. We have set up a charity The Trigeminal Neuralgia Institute to enable all patients with trigeminal neuralgia to have equal access to evidence based management provided with understanding and compassion."

Q: How can headache clinicians help you learn more about pathways for TN patients?

Professor Zakrzewska is keen to hear from headache clinicians as she is concerned that it can take up to seven years for patients to see a specialist. If you have the time, she would love to hear from you (j.zakrzewska@ucl.ac.uk), and in particular the answers to these questions:

1. How long does it take for patient with TN to be referred to a specialist services?
2. For those who work in specialist services where do the referrals to your specialist service come from (dentists, ENT, GP etc?)

This interview highlights a clear message:

Early specialist involvement, multidisciplinary care, and shared decision-making can dramatically improve outcomes for people living with trigeminal neuralgia.

Organising Your Next BASH Meeting: A Quick Guide



Planning a regional BASH meeting? The latest **Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)** is now available to help organisers streamline the process and ensure a successful event. The full version is available upon request at info@bash.org.uk. Whether you are a seasoned host or planning your first meeting, here are the essential steps to keep in mind:

Timelines and Approval +

All applications must be submitted to the BASH Secretary (secretary@BASH.org.uk) at least six months before your intended date. Dates should typically fall in the March–April or September–October windows. The BASH voting group must approve both the application and the proposed budget.

Budget and Logistics +

Standard budgets range from £10k–£12k, covering venue, catering, and administrative support. Organisers are encouraged to hire administrative help (recommended at £15/hour) to manage registration, GDPR-compliant attendee lists, and CPD certification. When selecting a venue, ensure it is “Pharma compliant”.

Programming and Marketing +

Aim for a blend of national experts and local talent. BASH encourages "Save the Date" posters and wide circulation via specialist networks.

Post-Meeting Requirements +

Within three months of the event, organisers must provide a feedback summary to the voting group and a short report for the BASH website. Remember, formal RCP application for CPD isn't required—certificates can be managed locally by your administrative support.

Books



Managing Migraine Holistically, Dr David Kernick

As clinicians who look after headache, we all get asked by patients *"What can I do to make my migraine better?"*

Sometimes we will need more than one consult to address all



Beneath The Dust, Professor Fayyaz Ahmed

This book from Professor Fayyaz Ahmed (Hull) serves as a memoir from a long and distinguished career, and recounts experiences from his

of the issues, and non-medical approaches can often be practically challenging to address. BASH member (and former BASH Chair) Dr David Kernick (Exeter) has explored the body's intrinsic ability to heal itself and has expertly compiled a hand book which can help both clinicians and those who experience migraine, alike.

The content is free to download by clicking the button below, or if you prefer, it can be purchased via Amazon.

Managing Migraine
Holistically

childhood through to his times as a Professor of Neurology.

Professor Ahmed has been involved with BASH for the last 25 years serving on the Council (2001-2005), Secretary (2005-2008), Vice Chair (2008-2010), Chair (2011-2013), Past Chair (2013-2014), Educational Officer (2014-2023) and Honorary Advisor (current). We hope that this book will serve as an inspiration to doctors at all stages of their career.

Copies of Beneath the Dust are available from Debbie via email: debbie.buttle@nhs.net

Book is priced at £15 inclusive of postage and packing (*book price £10*). Please see the Migraine Trust website for more details.

Beneath The Dust



Events | Membership | Contact

British Association for the Study of Headache

Department of Neurology
Hull Royal Infirmary, Anlaby Road,

HU3 2JZ, Hull.
United Kingdom

You have received this email because you signed up on our website or have previously made a purchase from us.

[Unsubscribe](#)

