



AMSPAR

Annual Report

of the Council

2005 - 2006

The Association of Medical Secretaries, Practice Managers,
Administrators and Receptionists
Tavistock House North
Tavistock Square
London WC1H 9LN

Reg Charity No. 313310
Reg Co. No. 850300

President's Report

Head Office staff were on the front line of the global terrorism that has beset our world. In July last year a bus exploded just in front of the building that houses AMSPAR. As I waited for news a text message from Tom, our Chief Executive, told me that all the team were safe.

It was a terrible time for everyone touched by the horror of the bombings that struck down ordinary people just travelling to work or setting off on a day's site seeing in the capital. This report is an opportunity for all of us involved in AMSPAR to reflect on the horrors, count our many blessings and remember all those who died and those who lost loved ones.

A few men with electronic devices ended and changed lives, and the team at AMSPAR are undoubtedly different following the events on July 2005. I live in Brighton and clearly recall the night the IRA blew a hole in our beloved Grand Hotel in an attempt to murder Margaret Thatcher. An atrocity so close to home is never forgotten.

Following the attacks on bus and underground, the work of AMSPAR hardly faltered, even though staff weren't allowed into the building. The servers were accessed remotely and other pending work was started on. Students and tutors probably hardly noticed the blip.

This report is also an opportunity for me to thank our Head Office team for their resilience, their commitment and their willingness to *just get on with the job* despite the terrifying events of that July morning and the effects these events must have had on each and every one of them.

Life and work goes on ... and AMSPAR has used 2005-6 to consolidate the growth and development reported on in the last few annual reports.

This year we repeated the residential planning event that had been so useful last year. A major result then was the production of Corporate Plan for 2006-11. On this occasion Head Office staff, Council members and Chief Examiners worked on a variety of important issues that will bear fruit in the coming years.

It would be easy, as a small organisation, to spend much time reacting to the vagaries of our governing bodies – remember, we are required to react to government initiatives and the inspiration of civil servants working in both Education AND Health Care. We could fill our days responding to ideas formulated by others. However, we have always tried to remain proactive, using our knowledge of external drivers and our communication with members to develop qualifications and courses that provide AMSPAR students with what they need to do their jobs effectively. We hope the time away from the office will become an annual event where we can allow ourselves time for creativity and product innovation.

Make no mistake, ALL those working to deliver cost effective health services need recognition, support and a range of development opportunities. AMSPAR remains committed to providing this for its members and those who access our courses and qualifications.

Pauline Young
President

Treasurer's Report

I am pleased to say that after the 'swings' of previous years our accounts demonstrate that our Association is in a stable position. Although income from Membership is slightly down, the balance is redressed by the increase in Education income. Hopefully, with the new initiatives taking place whereby everyone is being encouraged to have skills for life coupled with promotion of continuing professional development, our qualifications and programmes will become even more popular.

As those of you who read last year's balance sheet will remember the Association invested £50k in a CAF Bond Income Fund which this year has yielded nearly £1.5k in dividends as well as growth in value. It is anticipated that this will continue at approximately the same level for the coming year.

Our post and telephone charges have fallen against previous years but we have to be aware that with the new postal charges that were introduced at the beginning of April along with PPP these may in fact rise. For those who may have missed PPP in the news, there is now a wider spread of charges for letters, packages, etc which are of non-standard sizes. This will obviously make a difference when we have to send out examination papers etc.

Coming up in the next year we envisage further expenditure in upgrading the computer system (it is almost three years since its last upgrade). We are awaiting details from QCA with regard to technical specifications that Awarding Bodies and others may require in the future.

I hope you will accept this report as it stands. It is not the most exciting thing to read but at least as I said at the beginning, we are in a stable position.

Jennifer Kerry
Treasurer

Chief Executive's Report

The past year is one that will remain in the memory for a long time for a variety of reasons. The most painful one should be dealt with first: the events of July 7th and its consequences.

The explosion of the bus outside BMA affected staff in a variety of ways; some were in the office at the time while others were still embarked on their journey. We all have our memories of that day and our thoughts remain with those who are no longer with us or who still bear the scars.

However, AMSPAR still had its obligations to meet and, despite being denied access to the office for 12 days, staff worked to ensure that all the published result dates were met.

I believe it is particularly appropriate to thank the staff at the outset of this report as they have had a number of obstacles to overcome during the year. The terrorist attack aside we have also had to cope as a number of people have come and gone. But I do want to thank Donna Daniel, Mike Kay, Ann Roberts, Marta Palaczynska, Debbie Warren, Penny Bateman, Michael Fiennes and Annie Matthews for their contributions over the period and Nerys Cater who has since joined us. Apart from this team I also record my thanks to the numerous examiners, volunteers and casual staff who ensured that AMSPAR had a successful year.

Whilst we were tackling our routine business we have had much to contend with on the regulatory front where many proposals and innovations have been taking place. Many of you will be aware of the Charities Bill which has been working its way through Parliament. Whilst consultation and debate continues, ahead of this is the new reporting requirements which has entailed extra work for our Annual Report this year.

QCA are now at a two year 'Test and Trial' stage of their qualification reform proposals. AMSPAR is not part of this due to criteria set down for participation. However, should the proposals come into force, there will be many implications for our organisation and others.

All QCA accredited qualifications will have to be restructured and we will require further investment in our IT resources. The latter is likely regardless due to the imminent introduction of the Unique Learner Number next year coupled with the Learner Achievement Record. We also await to hear what the IT requirements will be for the Common Centre recognition proposals.

On the plus side we are well positioned to move towards a unit and credit based framework. AMSPAR has been in the vanguard as one of only 9 Awarding Bodies to have a credit based Qualification in the Credit and Qualifications Framework for Wales – our Certificate in Medical Terminology for Non-Clinical Professionals (it is also now within the NQF).

Another developing area we have been closely involved in with QCA and Skills for Health is the introduction of the new Specialised Diploma for 14-19. Although not normally the age group AMSPAR would be involved with, components within the Health and Social Care Diploma are very much our specialist field.

As you will gather from the above it has been a busy year – and the forthcoming one will be no less hectic as the outcomes of the Health White Paper 'Our Health, Our Care, Our Say' begin to be rolled out. Other initiatives are already underway through Choose and Book, Connecting for Health and Practice Based Commissioning. Members should keep abreast of such developments through www.amspar.com and I would urge you all to make use of the Member's Forum to exchange news and ideas. After all, no-one knows better what's going on than you do.

Whatever the future brings, AMSPAR will be there to support members in carrying out the work and ensuring that staff are qualified to meet the tasks they are asked to fulfill.

Tom Brownlie
Chief Executive

Membership Report

Repetition is, I know, very boring, but once again I am pleased to be able to repeat my annual announcement about an increase in new member recruitment this year. Taking into account the number of new members and the number of lapsed memberships at the end of the 2005/2006 membership year, we have a credit balance of 510. From my contacts with other membership managers during the year, I find that most, but not all, are still reporting net losses. Interestingly, those that are reporting gains all represent professional secretaries working in different disciplines.

As ever, our members are coming to us from different sources; successful candidates in our examinations, those recommended by friends and colleagues, people finding our website on the internet and deciding that we have something special to offer them and, very gratifyingly, lapsed members who have realised what they are missing, so come back to us. All are very welcome, as will others who wish to join us.

As further evidence of AMSPAR's raised profile, we are working with a number of organisations. One of the most important is the Primary Care Forum of the NHS Security Management Service, which is looking at ways of reducing the unacceptably high level of violence faced by front line staff. Another is a reference group at the Disability Rights Commission which is working on guidance to NHS staff, to ensure that disability equality is embedded in the way that public bodies carry out

their business. It has been a particular pleasure for me to be involved in such essential work.

Guidelines have been produced to inform our members (and those non-members who are prepared to pay for them) on a variety of topics during the past year. Probably the most important is the AMSPAR anti discrimination legislation pack, which brings together information about all forms of anti discrimination legislation in one document.

We have given a large number of media interviews on the subject of the increasing number of trusts that are outsourcing their medical transcription work. We firmly believe that the right people to do this important work are properly trained medical secretaries, and this is the message that we have given in all our television, radio and newspaper interviews.

Finally, our AGM/learning event for 2005 was held at the Assembly House, Norwich on 7th October. The guest speaker at the event, Iain Henderson, is an expert in conflict resolution, and his excellent presentation was greatly appreciated by those present. The support of our members will be essential in the coming year if we are to maintain our position in the healthcare arena.

Michael Fiennes
Communications Manager

Education Report

Examination results for the year to 31 March 2006 are summarised below:

Intermediate Diploma in Medical Reception - June 2005 (NQF Level 2)

	<u>Entries</u>	<u>Pass</u>	<u>Refer</u>	<u>Pass %</u>
Module 1	444	362	82	82
Module 2	481	381	100	79
Module 3	434	356	78	82

Advanced Diploma for Medical Secretaries - June 2005 (NQF Level 3)

	<u>Entries</u>	<u>Pass</u>	<u>Refer</u>	<u>Pass %</u>
Module 1	473	372	101	79
Module 2	417	365	52	88
Module 3	539	408	131	76
Module 4	533	393	142	73

Diploma in Primary Care Management (NQF Level 5)

This qualification is assessed on the submission of five assignments and a business project and does not have an examination. During the period covered by this report there were 192 new candidate registrations and 117 diplomas were awarded.

Certificate in General Practice Reception (not included in NQF)

	<u>Entries</u>	<u>Pass</u>	<u>Refer</u>	<u>Pass %</u>
June 2005	134	109	25	81
Nov 2005	80	60	20	75

Certificate in Hospital Reception (not included in NQF)

	<u>Entries</u>	<u>Pass</u>	<u>Refer</u>	<u>Pass %</u>
June 2005	3	3	0	100
Nov 2005	0			

Certificate in Medical Terminology (discontinued)

	<u>Entries</u>	<u>Pass</u>	<u>Refer</u>	<u>Pass %</u>
May 2005	658	485	173	74

Certificate in Medical Terminology for Non Clinical Professionals (NQF Level 3)

	<u>Entries</u>	<u>Pass</u>	<u>Refer</u>	<u>Pass %</u>
Nov 2005	178	130	48	73
Feb 2006	322	265	57	83

Student appeals on results

Thirty 26 appeals from students of which 7 were successful in having their appeal upheld.

Michael Kay
Qualifications Manager

Summary of Full Audited Accounts 31st March

Report of the Directors

The directors present their report and audited accounts of the company for the year ended 31 March 2006.

Legal and administrative information

Charity name: AMSPAR (Association of Medical Secretaries, Practice Managers, Administrators & Receptionists Limited)
Charity No: 313310
Company No: 850300
Registered office: Rooms 66-69, Tavistock House North, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9LN

Elected Council

President: Pauline Young
Vice Presidents: Dr Vincent Leach
Elaine Guy
Tracy Grafton
Treasurer: Jennifer Kerry
Other members: Diane Gayle (to 2/7/05)
Grizelda Moules
Myra Upton
Rita Pickering
Suzanne Bosworth (elected 2/10/05)
CEO & Secretary: Tom Brownlie
Auditors: Harry Nicolaou & Co Limited, 38b Stroud Green Road, London N4 3ES
Bankers: NatWest Bank, 10 Marylebone High Street, London W1A 1FH
Solicitors: Stephenson Harwood, 1 St Paul's Churchyard, London EC4M 8SH

Structure, governance and management

Governing document

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 27 May 1965 and registered as a charity on 21 June 1965. The company was established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company. It is governed under its Articles of Association. In the event of the company being wound up members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1.

Recruitment and appointment of members of Council

The directors of the company are also charity trustees for the purposes of charity law and under the company's Articles are known as members of Council. Under the requirements of the Articles of Association any two members of the company within a region may nominate another member of that region to serve on Council and confirmed by the members at the Annual General Meeting. A member of Council is elected to serve for a term of three years after which they must be re-elected at the next Annual General Meeting.

Risk management

Council has conducted a review of the major risks the charity faces. Where appropriate systems and procedures have been established to mitigate the risks the charity faces. In particular a Quality Assurance Framework has been developed to ensure standards set by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) are achieved and maintained.

Organisation structure

The charity has a Council of up to thirty members who meet at least four times a year and are responsible for the strategic policy and direction of the charity. At present Council has eight elected and seven co-opted members from a variety of professional backgrounds relevant to the

work of the charity. A scheme of delegation is in place and the day to day responsibility for the provision of the services rests with the Chief Executive. He manages the operations of the charity, supervises the staff team and ensures that the team continue to develop their skills and working practices.

Objectives

The object of the charity is to raise the professional standards of those who are and those who aspire to be Medical Secretaries, Practice Managers, Administrators and Receptionists and support them in attaining high levels of expertise and effectiveness by improving their knowledge and skills. To develop and provide a clear framework of qualifications which will be valued and recognised by Health Care Employers as key indicators of competence.

Reserves policy

The charity has developed a reserves policy. At 31 March 2006 the charity holds free reserves of £75,025. Free reserves are those funds not tied up in fixed assets. Free reserves are held to ensure the continuity of educational services to registered students and to ensure the long term viability of the charity. Having considered the projected income and potential risks the charity faces, the directors consider that the level of free reserves is adequate, representing cash flow expenditure of approximately 2.6 months.

Disclosure of information to auditors

So far as each director at the date of approval of this report is aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the company's auditors are unaware; and
- the directors have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

Directors' responsibilities

Company law requires the directors to prepare accounts for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company and of the surplus or deficiency of the company for that period. In preparing those accounts, the directors are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- Prepare the accounts on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in operation

The directors are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and to enable them to ensure that the accounts comply with the Companies Act 1985. They are responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions for small companies under Part VII of the Companies Act 1985. Approved by the Council on and signed on its behalf by:

Pauline Young (President)

Harry Nicolaou & Co Limited

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF AMSPAR

We have audited the accounts of AMSPAR for the year ended 31 March 2006 which comprise the Balance Sheet, Statement of Financial Activities, and related notes. These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out therein and the requirements of the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities.

This report is made solely to the company's members, as a body, in accordance with Section 235 of the Companies Act 1985. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the company and the company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Respective responsibilities of the trustees and auditors

The trustees' (who are also the directors of AMSPAR for the purposes of company law) responsibilities for preparing the Directors' Report and the accounts in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) are set out in the Statement of Directors' Responsibilities.

Our responsibility is to audit the accounts in accordance with relevant legal and statutory requirements and International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland).

We report to you our opinion as to whether the accounts give a true and fair view and are properly prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 1985 and whether the information given in the Directors Report is consistent with the accounts. We also report to you if, in our opinion, the charity has not kept proper accounting records, if we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit, or if information specified by law regarding trustees' remuneration and transactions with the charity are not disclosed.

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) issued by the Auditing Practices Board. An audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts and disclosures in the accounts. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made by the trustees in the preparation of the accounts, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the charity's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

We planned and performed our audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which we considered necessary in order to provide us with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the accounts are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud, or other irregularity or error. In forming our opinion we also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the accounts.

We have undertaken the audit in accordance with the requirements of APB Ethical Standards including APB Ethical Standard - Provisions Available for Small Entities.

In our opinion:

- the accounts give a true and fair view, in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice applicable to Smaller Entities, of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 March 2006 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- the accounts have been properly prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 1985; and
- the information given in the Directors' Report is consistent with the accounts.

HARRY NICOLAOU & CO LIMITED

Registered auditors
38b Stroud Green Road
London N4 3ES

Balance Sheet (as at 31st March 2006)

	2006 £	2005 £
Fixed assets		
Tangible assets	5,122	7,683
Investments	51,856	51,214
	<u>56,978</u>	<u>58,897</u>
Current assets		
Debtors	45,620	8,278
Cash at bank and in hand	44,334	44,837
	<u>89,954</u>	<u>93,115</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	<u>(14,929)</u>	<u>(16,819)</u>
Net current assets	<u>75,025</u>	<u>76,296</u>
Net assets	<u>132,003</u>	<u>135,193</u>
Unrestricted funds		
General funds	130,147	133,979
Revaluation reserve	1,856	1,214
Total funds	<u>132,003</u>	<u>135,193</u>

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part VII of the Companies Act 1985 relating to small entities.

Approved by Council on and signed on their behalf by

Pauline Young
President

Jennifer Kerry
Treasurer

Statement of Financial Activities

	Note	2006 Total funds (Unrestricted) £	2005 Total funds (Unrestricted) £
INCOMING RESOURCES			
Incoming resources from generated funds:			
<i>Activities for generating funds:</i>			
Advertising		7,148	8,894
Investment income	2	3,551	3,588
Incoming resources from charitable activities:			
Education		274,253	234,766
Membership subscriptions		51,345	51,046
Workshops and conferences		2,680	-
Merchandising and other income		606	188
Event income		-	3,897
Total incoming resources		<u>339,583</u>	<u>302,379</u>
RESOURCES EXPENDED			
Charitable activities			
Education and membership services		318,154	329,271
Governance costs		25,261	21,938
Total resources expended	3	<u>343,415</u>	<u>351,209</u>
Net outgoing resources (and net deficit) before other recognised gains		(3,832)	(48,830)
Other recognised gains			
Gain in revaluation of investment		642	1,214
Net movement in funds		<u>(3,190)</u>	<u>(47,616)</u>
Reconciliation of funds			
Total funds brought forward		135,193	182,809
Total funds carried forward		<u>132,003</u>	<u>135,193</u>

Notes to the Accounts

2. Investment income

	2006	2005
	£	£
Interest receivable	783	1,743
Distributions from common investment fund	2,768	1,845
	3,551	3,588

3. Total resources expended

		2006	2005	
		£	£	
	Education & membership services	Governance	Total	
			Total	
Direct cost of charitable activities				
Staff costs	130,324	11,222	141,546	130,209
Membership services	11,206	-	11,206	11,521
Examination and verification costs	31,031	-	31,031	38,492
Conference and meetings	5,293	588	5,881	11,483
Purchase of merchandise	1,534	-	1,534	-
Telephone, postage, printing & stationery	23,679	1,245	24,924	28,356
Support costs				
Premises costs	45,178	2,377	47,555	47,432
Staff costs - finance and administration	32,340	3,047	35,387	43,404
Purchase, hire and maintenance of office equipment	19,067	1,004	20,071	16,589
Consultancy	7,710	-	7,710	8,644
Subscriptions, publications and sundries	5,238	472	5,710	3,059
Advertising, website and public relations	2,318	-	2,318	2,740
Audit and accountancy fees	-	5,102	5,102	4,517
Depreciation	2,433	128	2,561	3,784
Sank charges	803	76	879	979
Total resources expended	318,164	25,261	343,415	351,209