



Annual Report

For the year ending 31st March 2008

AMSPAR

The Association of Medical Secretaries, Practice Managers, Administrators and Receptionists

(A company limited by guarantee)

Company No: 850300

Charity No: 313310

President's Report



Where has the last year gone? It doesn't seem a year since my last report so I must be getting old as they say 'time goes quicker the older you get'.

Once again, this has been a busy year. Both for the NHS and AMSPAR it has been a year facing many pressures and challenges. Here I must pay tribute and send heartfelt thanks

to Tom Brownlie (our Chief Executive) and AMSPAR Head Office, for their resilience, commitment and willingness to get on with the job in what has been a 'trying year'. AMSPAR has had to move office and work closely with City & Guilds on the development of our National Framework Qualifications, whilst keeping the organisation running smoothly on a day-to-day basis, but I will leave Tom to include more detail of these changes in his report.

As I am writing this, the Darzi report is due to be published this afternoon. I wonder what further changes for the NHS will be highlighted in his report? Let us hope that the report will offer opportunities as well as major challenges to modern health care. I believe the NHS needs time to consolidate and grow, but as the NHS is such a huge vote spinner, we need to constantly react to the vagaries of government.

Do patients understand and acknowledge the effort of those working in health and appreciate the breadth of knowledge needed to cope with the workload? In addition to this do they understand that we have to respond to challenging government reforms and come out of them on the other side continuing to offer a first-class service with very limited staffing levels? All NHS staff want to, and do, is give their best for the benefit of patients. But there is a limit to 'unsocial' hours and poor pay levels that these staff will tolerate.

Good health care is about teams of health professionals working together for the benefit of patients – not just the service that GPs, nurses and other clinical staff offer.

AMSPAR needs to react to these changes as well as the changes introduced by education bodies, and be proactive using our knowledge of external drivers to provide our members with up-to-date qualifications and short courses to ensure our students and members are fully equipped to do their jobs effectively. Continual change and the pursuit of improvement place great demands on the individuals who are expected to help deliver these improvements. A positive sign is that those experiencing these changes are encouraged, or even expected, to take charge of their own professional development. Everyone working in the health service could benefit from taking stock of the changes planned and currently underway, that they face and reviewing their personal development needs to assess honestly their training and development requirements to help them keep pace with the changing face of the NHS.



Lord Darzi

AMSPAR is looking to build on its relationship with its members to better support their needs and remains committed to its members and those who access our courses and qualifications as we look forward to another year of being YOUR professional association.

Elaine Guy
President

Chief Executive's Report



I concluded my report last year with the sentence "Difficult times – but we will come through with the support of our members." Happily, we return to the NEC for our AGM in October able to say that: yes, it has been tough, and we have been forced to make many difficult decisions, but we are here on solid ground looking forward to the future with optimism.

Education

I also mentioned the change in funding policies of the Learning and Skills Council which affect the students enrolling on the IDMR and ADMS courses. Whilst these changes were in the process of implementation we also received notice of the intention to run down the LSC and return funding to local government.

Further change came with the announcement that the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) was to be split with Ofqual taking the role of regulator (reporting directly to parliament) and the remainder of the organisation fulfilling an advisory role to government. Although the legislation is not in place to allow this to happen the government has been keen to press ahead and the organisations are already taking shape.

Questions do remain about lines of demarcation and this has involved extra work in clarifying who is responsible for what.

We were pleased that the Award in Medical Terminology for Non-Clinical Professionals was accredited to the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) at the end of 2007 whilst work preparing the IDMR for the new credit framework neared completion.

The first teaching of the new 14 - 19 Diplomas takes place this autumn. Four of our framework qualifications are included as additional learning and we are delighted that the Business, Administration and Finance Diploma, due in 2009 wish to include our qualifications as specialised learning. The IT infrastructure required to ensure the diplomas can function has lagged behind. The development of this has been particularly time-consuming for Awarding Bodies. This is very much a fore-runner to the new Credit and Qualifications Framework (CQF) which suggests a further call on resources would be required in order to facilitate its operation.

Figures for registrations and assessments are in the table provided.

Finance

The accounts in this document show a deficit for the year of £40,365. The Council anticipated the financial difficulties which coincided with the end of the lease of the office we occupied. Savings were required in a number of areas and, after exploring numerous options, it was



The new certificates

agreed to take smaller premises at Tavistock House North. Initially it had been hoped that our move would take place over Christmas. This didn't prove possible and it will be the new financial year before savings are made in this area.

Our overall running costs have remained consistent over the years. One variation is the Auditor's Fee. In line with our policy of rotation we appointed Kingston Smith. Additional payments were needed in order to align our accounts with their requirements. Inevitably we have had to dispose of the CAF

Bond - and this has happened in a particularly poor economic environment. Whilst there has been a loss on the sale it should be noted that it generated £8,426 in income over its investment period.

Negotiations

All the above have had and will continue to make a significant impact on ourselves and other Awarding Bodies. The insecurity of funding and the investment likely to be required in the future forced Council to re-evaluate its position. We know our qualifications are valued. We know that they are not perfect but we do have the expertise and the contacts to improve them and keep them current. However, without the resources, we could not continue in the circumstances we were in. For this reason AMSPAR has negotiated an arrangement whereby City & Guilds will take over the administration of our National Qualification Framework awards handling all the regulatory requirements. On the National Qualifications database these will now appear under City & Guilds but they will be marketed as AMSPAR awards and the certificate carries the AMSPAR logo. We are pleased that this will enable all students part way through a course to complete and it will widen the accessibility of the awards throughout the UK.

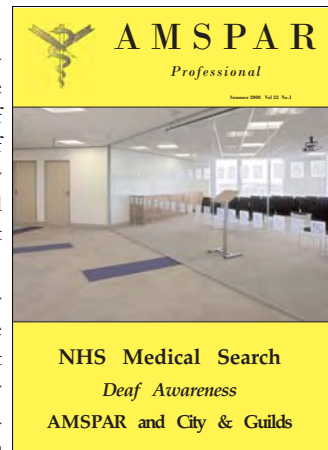


AMSPAR continues to work with Management in Practice

Staff

In this difficult year I am particularly grateful for the support of the Voluntary Council and the Chief Examiners with their teams of markers. With all the uncertainty we have endured they have all contributed to limiting any impact on members, centres and students.

The staff have been particularly supportive. Although Christine Denmark and Nerys Cater left during the year for new posts they continue to help AMSPAR. Donna Daniel also left but continues to visit weekly to assist with the financial records. The only post we have had to make redundant was that of the Qualifications Manager and Mike Kay left in January. Ann Roberts is the one full-time member of staff working with me in the office at present. We cannot thank her enough for the work she has carried out on behalf of AMSPAR.



NHS Medical Search
Deaf Awareness
AMSPAR and City & Guilds

AMSPAR Professional

Looking Forward

AMSPAR will not be withdrawing from its educational and training role. It is our intention to be more responsive to the needs of the members and the sector as a whole. We are exploring new short courses and investigating delivery on-line. This is an exciting time for us and we want to involve as many members as possible to ensure we are meeting your needs.

Tom Brownlie
Chief Executive



AMSPAR at Management in Practice October 2007

Examination results for the year to 31 March 2008 are summarised below:

Intermediate Diploma in Medical Reception - June 2007 (NQF Level 2)

	Entries	Pass	Refer	Pass %
Module 1	251	211	40	84
Module 2	230	172	58	75
Module 3	240	180	60	75

Advanced Diploma for Medical Secretaries - June 2007 (NQF Level 3)

	Entries	Pass	Refer	Pass %
Module 1	279	206	73	74
Module 2	275	230	45	84
Module 3	313	214	99	68
Module 4	321	237	84	74

Award in Medical Terminology for Non Clinical Professionals (NQF Level 2)

	Entries	Pass	Refer	Pass %
January 2008	9	8	1	89

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

	Entries	Pass	Refer	Pass %
May 2007	507	346	123	74
November 2007	94	64	17	79
February 2008	172	81	19	79

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 177 new candidate registrations. 97 diplomas and 9 certificates were awarded.

Summary of Full Audited Accounts 31st March 2008

Report of the Directors

The directors present their report and audited accounts of the company for the year ended 31 March 2008.

Legal and administrative information

Charity name: AMSPAR (Association of Medical Secretaries, Practice Managers Administrators & Receptionists Ltd)

Charity No: 313310

Company No: 850300

Registered office: Rooms 66-69, Tavistock House North, Tavistock Square, London WC1H 9LN

Elected Council

President Elaine Guy

Vice Presidents Dr Vincent Leach
Tracy Grafton

Treasurer Jennifer Kerry

Other members Grizelda Moules
Myra Upton
Rita Pickering

At the AGM on 10th October, 2008 Margaret Coker and Margaret Spence were elected to Council. Jennifer Kerry stood down as Treasurer and Rita Pickering was elected in her place.

CEO and Secretary Tom Brownlie

Auditors Kingston Smith LLP,
Devonshire House, 60 Goswell
Road, London EC1M 7AD

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 are confirmed by the members at the Annual General Meeting. Other than the office bearers, who are required to offer themselves for re-appointment on an annual basis, 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.

Induction and training of members of council

Trustees are elected directly from the membership and they therefore have prior knowledge of the history and purpose of AMSPAR. On election a Trustee is provided with an induction pack, minutes of prior meetings and a mentor.

Risk management

Council has conducted a review of the major risks the charity faces. Where appropriate, systems and procedures have been established to mitigate those risks. 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's Council 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 three 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.

Objects

The principal objects of the charity are:

- 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.

Activities, achievements and performance, financial review and plans for the future

A detailed review of the above matters is provided in the Chief Executive's introduction to this report.

Reserves policy

The charity has developed a reserves policy. At 31 March 2008 the charity holds free reserves of £63,703. Free reserves are those funds not tied up as 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 Council are of the opinion that a level approximating to 3 months Total Resources Expended is necessary to ensure that the charity continues to meet its obligations on an ongoing basis. This equates to approximately £70,000 at current levels of expenditure.

Auditors

During the year Kingston Smith LLP were appointed auditors. Kingston Smith LLP have indicated their willingness to continue in office and in accordance with the provisions of the Companies Act it is proposed that they be re-appointed auditors to the company for the ensuing year.

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
- State whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements

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 and signed on its behalf by:

Elaine Guy
President

Kingston Smith LLP

We have audited the financial statements of AMSPAR for the year ended 31 March 2008 which comprise the Balance Sheet Statement of Financial Activities and related notes. These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out therein and the requirements of the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective January 2007).

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members, as a body, in accordance with Section 235 of the Companies Act 1985. Our audit work has been undertaken for no purpose other than to draw to the attention of the charitable company's members those matters which we are required to include in an auditor's report addressed to them. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to any party other than the charitable company and charitable 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 financial statements 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 financial statements 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 financial statements give a true and fair view and are properly prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 1985. We also report to you whether, in our opinion, the information given in the Directors' Report is consistent with the financial statements. In addition we report to you if, in our opinion, the charitable company 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 other transactions is not disclosed.

We read the Trustees' Annual Report and consider the implications for our report if we become aware of any apparent misstatements within it.

Basis of Audit Opinion

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 financial statements. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgements made by the trustees in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the charitable company'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 financial statements 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 financial statements.

Opinion

In our opinion:

- the financial statements give a true and fair view, in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice applicable to Smaller Entities, of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2008 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- the financial statements have been properly prepared in accordance with the Companies Act 1985; and
- the information given in the Directors' Report is consistent with the financial statements.

Devonshire House
50 Goswell Road
London
EC1M 7AD

Kingston Smith LLP
Chartered Accountants
and Registered Auditors

Date: 6th September 2008

Statement of Financial Activities

	Note	2008 £	2007 £
INCOMING RESOURCES			
Incoming resources from generated funds:			
<i>Activities for generating funds:</i>			
Advertising		6,488	7,073
Investment income	1	2,485	3,627
Incoming resources from charitable activities:			
Education		207,900	237,785
Membership subscriptions		46,793	45,533
Merchandising and other income		<u>2,659</u>	<u>8,891</u>
Total incoming resources		<u>266,325</u>	<u>302,909</u>
RESOURCES EXPENDED			
Charitable activities			
Education and membership services		271,241	282,744
Governance costs		<u>34,407</u>	<u>41,260</u>
Total resources expended	2	<u>305,648</u>	<u>324,004</u>
Net outgoing resources (and net deficit) before other recognised gains		(39,323)	(21,095)
Other recognised gains/(losses)			
(Loss)/Gain in revaluation of investment		-	(2,239)
(Loss)/Profit on sale of investment		<u>(1,042)</u>	<u>-</u>
Net movement in funds		(40,365)	(23,334)
Reconciliation of funds			
Total funds brought forward		<u>108,669</u>	<u>132,003</u>
Total funds carried forward		<u><u>68,304</u></u>	<u><u>108,669</u></u>

All incoming funds relate to unrestricted funds.

Balance Sheet

	Note	2008	2007
		£	£
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets		2,601	3,901
Investments		<u>-</u>	<u>49,617</u>
		<u>2,601</u>	<u>53,518</u>
Current assets			
Debtors		54,513	51,302
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>25,351</u>	<u>16,973</u>
		<u>79,864</u>	<u>68,275</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year		(14,161)	(13,124)
Net current assets		<u>65,703</u>	<u>55,151</u>
Net assets		<u><u>68,304</u></u>	<u><u>108,669</u></u>
Unrestricted funds			
General funds		<u><u>68,304</u></u>	<u><u>108,669</u></u>

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part VII of the Companies Act 1985 relating to small companies and in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standards for Smaller Entities (effective January 2007).

The notes on pages 7 to 11 form part of these financial statements.

Approved and authorised by the Council on 6 September 2008
and signed on its behalf by:

.....
Elaine Guy
President

.....
Rita Pickering
Treasurer

Notes

1. Investment income

	2008	2007
	£	£
Interest receivable	770	1,022
Distributions from common investment fund	<u>1,715</u>	<u>2,605</u>
	<u>2,485</u>	<u>3,627</u>

2. Total resources expended

			2008	2007
			£	£
	Education & membership services	Governance	Total	Total
Direct cost of charitable activities				
Staff costs	118,696	13,188	131,885	147,251
Membership services	10,787	-	10,787	9,209
Examination costs	21,745	-	21,745	23,136
Conference and meetings	278	2,502	2,780	8,093
Purchase of merchandise	-	-	-	1,018
Telephone, postage, printing & stationery	17,290	1,921	19,211	15,109
Support costs				
Premises costs	43,430	4,826	48,255	49,055
Staff costs - finance and administration	28,026	4,946	32,971	35,000
Purchase, hire and maintenance of office equipment	18,046	950	18,996	20,993
Consultancy	1,217	135	1,352	1,338
Subscriptions, publications and sundries	2,795	699	3,494	3,221
Advertising, website and public relations	1,957	103	2,060	2,943
Audit and accountancy fees	5,091	5,000	10,091	5,459
Depreciation	1,235	65	1,300	1,329
Bank charges	649	72	721	850
Total resources expended	<u>271,241</u>	<u>34,407</u>	<u>305,648</u>	<u>324,004</u>