

The finances of Association Mieux Prescrire : 2013 Prescrire annual report

Association Mieux Prescrire (AMP), a non-profit organisation governed by the French law of 1 July 1901, publishes the journals *la revue Prescrire* and *Prescrire International*, and offers several continuing education programmes for healthcare professionals.

As AMP is engaged in a form of economic activity, it is subject to the regulations governing taxation, employment and accounting that apply to companies based in France. It therefore pays corporate tax and complies with employment legislation. Its accounts are audited and approved by a firm of chartered accountants.

Since 1992, with a view to full transparency, AMP has published its annual financial report in the March issue of *la revue Prescrire* and in *Prescrire International's* June issue.

Stable circulation for *la revue Prescrire*

Fiscal year 2012-2013 ran from 1 September 2012 to 31 August 2013, in a challenging climate. In addition to general difficulties linked to the economic situation in Europe, healthcare professionals had to contend with specific problems related to the chaotic

launch in France of the new continuing professional development (CPD) system for health professionals, and to the despondency many feel when faced with the challenges of their everyday practice, often compounded by overwork and worry.

The number of paid subscriptions to *la revue Prescrire* nevertheless remained stable during this fiscal year: with 33 532 subscribers at the end of August 2013, compared with 33 545 one year earlier. The number of subscribers to the *L'Intégrale Prescrire* package also remained stable: 5891 paid subscriptions at the end of August 2013, compared with 5910 one year earlier. This package includes a subscription to *la revue Prescrire* together with *Prescrire's* electronic library, which allows subscribers to download a database containing the journal's entire back catalogue onto two personal computers. An increase in subscriber numbers would have been more satisfying, but maintaining stable subscriber support is a very positive achievement in itself in these difficult times.

The breakdown of our subscribers by occupation is similar to last year (see the table below).

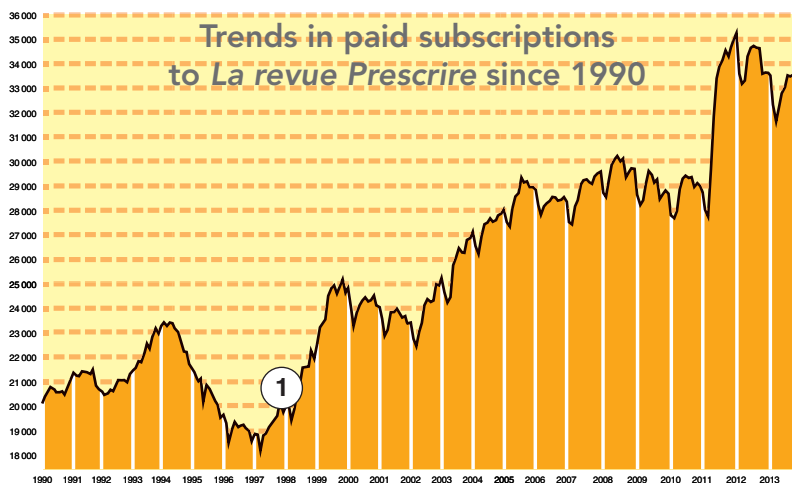
Slightly fewer participants in some of our educational programmes

In addition to publishing its two journals, *Prescrire* offers healthcare professionals continuing education and programmes for improving professional practice.

Prescrire's Monthly Readers' Test is our longest-running continuing education initiative. A record 4273 health professionals chose to participate in the 2012-2013 session; the results, published in January 2014, show that a record number earned the title of *Lecteur Émérite de Prescrire*.

Enrolment in *Prescrire's* Thematic Training Programme, which enables participants to learn more about a range of topics at their own pace, fell by just under 10%, with 4348 participants by the end of August 2013.

Enrolment in *Prescrire's* online educational programme for nurses



1- This fall in the number of subscribers in 1994-1996 was the result of a lack of mail promotion for 18 months.

Breakdown of paying subscribers to *La revue Prescrire*

| OCCUPATION | n° 347 September 2012 | | n° 359 September 2013 | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|------------|-----------------------|------------|
| | number | % | number | % |
| General practitioners | 16 128 | 48.1 | 16 289 | 48.5 |
| Specialists | 1 861 | 5.5 | 1 810 | 5.4 |
| Pharmacists | 6 362 | 19.0 | 6 418 | 19.1 |
| Medical students | 4 988 | 14.9 | 5 107 | 15.2 |
| Pharmacy students | 551 | 1.6 | 512 | 1.5 |
| Drug companies | 168 | 0.5 | 155 | 0.5 |
| Miscellaneous (1) | 3 487 | 10.4 | 3 241 | 9.8 |
| Total circulation | 33 545 | 100 | 33 532 | 100 |

1- Civil servants, other health professionals ; etc.

remained stable this year, with 838 participants at the end of August 2013. This encourages *Prescrire* to continue offering rigorous and completely independent courses for these primary care professionals.

Prescrire launched a new practice improvement programme for health professionals this year: “*Question de Pratiques*”.

The first session of this programme began in March 2013 and attracted 1134 participants. This figure was lower than expected. The confusion surrounding the launch of the CPD system in France did not help encourage enrolment.

“*Question de Pratiques*” will continue in 2013-2014. The new session began in March 2014, with two topics to choose from: “Patients taking oral anticoagulants” or “Patients with hypertension”.

Many new projects

As forecast, our financial statements for 2012-2013 showed a net loss of about €312 000 (for a total revenue of around €10 million) (see charts opposite). *Prescrire*'s finances remain solid however, mainly because this fiscal year was preceded by several that showed a net profit, which enabled AMP to consolidate its financial situation.

This net loss is mainly due to continued investment despite a less favourable situation than in previous years. This investment is necessary to ensure that *Prescrire* continues in the future and to enable us to successfully complete new projects, such as: recruiting extra support and additional staff; refurbishing our premises to improve working conditions; and diversifying and improving the quality of our publications and continuing education programmes, for example by adding new sections to *la revue Prescrire*, such as “*Signes à la loupe*”, which examines the evidence on the value of clinical signs in the diagnosis of a particular disease, “*Premiers choix Prescrire*” which reviews the first-choice treatments for a particular disorder, and “*Femmes enceintes et médicaments*” on managing specific clinical situations during pregnancy, or by publishing our guide to drug interactions in a format that can be read on tablets or smartphones.

Our overriding aim is always the same: to offer healthcare professionals resources to obtain information and education to provide higher quality care, first and foremost in the interest of patients.

©Prescrire

