

## **Frequently asked questions (FAQ's) and answers about AAST's change in management and transition**

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**1. Why did AAST decide to engage the services of a new association management company?**

In 2003, AAST made the prudent decision to enter into a management contract with AASM, which has helped us achieve a significantly improved operational and financial foundation.

As the healthcare industry and our profession continue to evolve, our association must be responsive if we want to continue to grow and meet the rapidly changing and increasingly complex needs of our membership. The Board of Directors recognizes that AAST members have high expectations of our value and relevance, and that there are many time pressures on our members that can make it challenging to find time for day-to-day, operational volunteer duties. AAST wants to set our sights on a stronger vision and future for the organization.

**2. Can you describe the process by which the new management company was selected?**

Based on the considerations above, the Board voted unanimously to empower the executive committee to evaluate and recommend a new management partner.

A five-month process (September 2016 – January 2017) occurred to identify and vet new management company options. The vetting included a formal Board presentation; a Board delegate full-day visit to the prospective new headquarters; thorough financial comparisons; and legal review of contract terms by AAST's attorney.

In January, the AAST Board voted unanimously to transition AAST's headquarters and staff management to SmithBucklin as the Association's new management firm.

**3. Who is SmithBucklin? Why is it a good partner for AAST?**

SmithBucklin has 65 years of experience in serving independent non-profit associations, including approximately thirty other healthcare-related societies and associations. The Board conducted reference checks during the proposal process and was impressed with SmithBucklin's depth and breadth of resources, proven practices and respected thought leadership. And, importantly, the Board feels SmithBucklin's culture aligns closely to AAST's values of service to others and continuous improvement.

**4. In what ways will this change in management companies help promote AAST's growth?**

The AAST Board feels that the change in management partners will help the Association build on our foundation of member value, membership growth, and further recognition in the healthcare community. SmithBucklin's depth of knowledge

and skills in all areas of association management – including member administration, convention management, marketing and branding, education and certification administration – will position the Association to meet its strategic growth goals in the months and years ahead.

**5. When it assumes management of AAST on a daily basis will SmithBucklin have a seat on the Board of Directors?**

No. SmithBucklin is managing the day-to-day operations of AAST but will not have a seat on the Board of Directors. The change in management companies does not impact AAST's independence, Bylaws, etc.

**6. How will the Board of Directors ensure a seamless transition from AASM to SmithBucklin?**

To ensure adequate time, the transition will take place over five months – with our new headquarters staff and offices fully functional by July 1, 2017. A dedicated transition team from SmithBucklin is working with AASM and an AAST Transition Task Force to ensure seamless transition.

**7. Whom will I call with questions regarding my member benefits?**

At this time, please continue to contact the current AAST office. We anticipate our “doors open” date at our new SmithBucklin offices to be July 1, 2017, and we will provide you with new contact information before that date.

**8. What is the cost/benefit of engaging SmithBucklin as our management company?**

By partnering with SmithBucklin, we are able to take advantage of greater economies of scale that will allow more of our dollars to be spent on developing and delivering greater value. The AAST Board and other volunteers will be able to focus their energies and expertise on strategy, objectives and member value. Paired with the operational expertise that SmithBucklin offers, we will be positioned for organizational growth and have greater ability to further our strategic agenda.

**9. Is there a formal agreement between SmithBucklin and AAST?**

Yes, there will be. The agreement is currently in the development phase. It will include provisions to protect both AAST and SmithBucklin, including strict financial accountability on both sides, detailed scope of services on which the budget is built, insurance coverage, and annual headquarters review.

**10. If I have more questions, whom do I call? How do I express my opinions?**

Please feel free to contact AAST through the President Laura Linley at [llinley@aatweb.org](mailto:llinley@aatweb.org).