

To  
The Chairman Of The Scientific Jury,  
determined by Order № P - 1337 / 24.08.2020  
of the Rector of the Medical University - Plovdiv

On your Protocol №1 / from 27. 08. 2020.

Attached I present: Statement

on the thesis with the topic: "Study of the importance of communication skills in the dental practice" by Vesela Georgieva Burkert, doctoral student in independent study at the Department of Social Medicine and Public Health of Faculty of Public Health, Medical University - Plovdiv for the award of educational and scientific degree "DOCTOR" in the doctoral program "Social Medicine and Organization of Healthcare and Pharmacy".

Prepared the statement: Prof. Dr. Ivan Atanasov Filipov, MD, MSc  
Scientific specialty / s: 1. General dentistry 2. Therapeutic dentistry 3. Cariesology and endodontics  
Institution: Medical University - Plovdiv, Faculty of Dental Medicine, Operative Dentistry and Endodontics

Address and contacts:  
Postal address: 4000 Plovdiv, 12 Tsarevo Str., 2nd floor, apt. 2  
E-mail: filipov@abv.bg  
Phones: +359 888 763004

In recent decades, huge changes have taken place in the field of medicine, and dentistry in particular, as a result of the development of technology and the basic sciences. Various complex but also expensive methods of research and treatment have been introduced, which have increased the quality of treatment and life of patients. At the same time, the dissemination of information through different streams reaches potential patients very quickly. Unfortunately, socio-economic, demographic, geographical, political and other factors lead to stratification and formation of different groups of patients, and not everyone can perceive this information correctly and objectively. As a result, there can be differences and misunderstandings between the doctor and patient regarding the methods and prognoses of the proposed treatment. It is necessary to find an approach to each patient so that he can be sure that he is given the maximum possible care for his recovery. In this aspect, I find that the thesis proposed by Vesela Georgieva Burkert on the topic: "Study of the importance of communication skills in the dental practice" is particularly relevant.



## PRESENTATION OF THE DOCTORAL STUDENT

Vesela Georgieva Burkert was born in 1982 in Plovdiv. She graduated from ENGLISH LANGUAGE SCHOOL "Plovdiv" in 2001. From October 2002 to December 2009 she was a student of dental medicine at the University of Cologne, Germany, graduating with great success. Following approbation as a dentist, she acquired a specialty in Periodontology in 2012 by Prof. Kleinfelder. She acquired a certificate for 3D diagnostics of the oral cavity.

During her studies, she worked as a nurse in the Department of Cardiac Surgery and Intensive Care at the University Hospital, Bonn, Germany. She also worked in an emergency dental office at the University Hospital, Cologne, Germany.

After graduation she worked as a dentist in various dental practices.

In addition to her native Bulgarian, Vesela Burkert is fluent in German, English and Russian.

The thesis for the acquisition of educational and scientific degree "Doctor", despite the fact that the title in which it will be defended is not indicated on the title page, contains all the attributes accepted in our country for such study and is developed on 240 pages.

## INTRODUCTION

The introduction is as short as it should be, but it convincingly introduces us to the problem under consideration - one of the factors of success in treatment is the achievement of communication between patients and doctors.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review is sufficient in volume. It discusses the main problems in great detail. The various forms of communication between patients and physicians are discussed, as well as the opinion of students and dentists, as well as patients about the importance of proper communication to achieve a positive effect of the treatment. Models for conducting a conversation in dental practice are presented.

The subsequent conclusion summarizes the unsolved problems in our country in terms of communication between patients and physicians and is a prerequisite to justify the purpose and objectives of this dissertation.

## PURPOSE AND TASKS

The aim of the dissertation is very briefly and clearly presented and corresponds to the title of the work.

The five tasks requiring solutions are formulated and graded logically so that in the end guidelines for proper communication of dentists with their patients can be derived.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The used mainly sociological and statistical methods of research, given the nature of the dissertation, are very well presented, which could not be otherwise, given the scientific supervisors of the dissertation.



## RESULTS

The results of each completed task are presented in clearly understandable tables and graphs. Each element of the research is supported by statistical arguments, which gives the results scientific endurance.

## DISCUSSION

This chapter of the dissertation is very well developed. Own results have been discussed and compared with many similar studies. The reasons for the differences are discussed, which allows one to easily move on to the next part....

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the conducted research and their results, the author of the thesis makes ten conclusions. They concern both the type of dentists practicing in our country and the way of practicing. An especially important conclusion is that the Bulgarian dentists observe the generally accepted moral and ethical norms of behavior, which shows that the high standards of treatment and communication in this society are accepted.

The conclusions also emphasize the need to expand the ways of learning beginning with the student years in terms of communication with patients through different approaches.

These conclusions fully support the recommendations made regarding the development of communication skills in dental students and practitioners of dental medicine.

## CONTRIBUTIONS

Four contributions of the developed dissertation are indicated, which are marked as scientifically-applied. I would like to emphasize that they also have an original character, especially with regard to the fact that for the first time in our country such a large-scale study of attitudes to communication in the dental practice is conducted among dental students. The other original contribution is the creation of a model for conducting a conversation in the dental practice, containing the basic concepts in communication and the individual steps of the conversation.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

The literature contains 267 sources, of which 22 in Cyrillic and 245 in Latin. Although it is not arranged according to the requirements adopted in our country, there is no denying the fact that most sources are from the last few years, which confirms the relevance of the studied problem.

## ABSTRACT

The abstract is well structured. As a volume also meets the accepted requirements, so I have no comments.

## PUBLICATIONS AND PARTICIPATIONS IN RELATION TO THE DISSERTATION WORK

Vesela Burkert presents five full-text publications, four of which are in referenced international papers, as well as one poster, of which there is already one citation. I

believe that this scientific work is completely sufficient to confirm the importance of the dissertation.

#### CONCLUSION

The dissertation on the topic: "Study of the importance of communication skills in the dental practice" by Vesela Georgieva Burkert, doctoral student in independent training at the Department of Social Medicine and Public Health of Faculty of Public Health, Medical University - Plovdiv is a contribution to the scientific research carried out in the institution in which it develops it by shedding light on previously unresearched issues in terms of communication between patients and physicians and especially through the proposed models for its implementation.

I think that quite objectively Vesela Georgieva Burkert can be awarded the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the doctoral program "Social Medicine and Organization of Healthcare and Pharmacy" for which I will confidently vote at the final meeting of the Scientific Jury.

Plovdiv  
09. 09. 2020 Prof. Dr. Ivan Filipov MD, MSc

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'I. Filipov', written in a cursive style.