



STATEMENT

by Prof. Dr. Kosta Slavov Kostov, MD
external member of a scientific jury

of the THESIS of
Vesela Georgieva Burkert
on "Study of the importance of communication skills in the dental practice"
for awarding an educational and scientific degree
"DOCTOR"

Field of university education: 7. "Health and Sports"
Professional field: 7.1. "Medicine"
Scientific specialty "Social medicine and organization of healthcare and pharmacy"

Details of the procedure

By Order of the Rector of Medical University - Plovdiv № 1373 / 24.08.2020 I was appointed a member of the Scientific Jury, and at the first meeting I was assigned to prepare an opinion in connection with the defense of a dissertation on "Study of the importance of communication skills in the dental practice" by Vesela Georgieva Burkert.

Biographical data and career development

Vesela Georgieva Burkert graduated from the English Language High School in Plovdiv with honors in 2001. She graduated from the University of Cologne, Germany in 2009 with a degree in Dental Medicine. Acquired a specialty in Periodontology in 2012. Her professional activity began in 2010, as a dentist in an individual dental practice in Bonn, Germany, where she still works. During her studies, Dr. Burkert volunteered and worked as a nurse in cardiac surgery and the intensive care unit at the University Hospital in Bonn, and later in the emergency room at the University Hospital in Cologne, Germany. This is a proof of her diligence and striving for self-improvement.

Characteristics, volume and structure of the thesis

The thesis presented for my opinion fully meets the modern requirements for in - depth research within a dissertation. The thesis contains 240 pages and is structured in six main chapters, including 24 tables, 46 figures and 6 appendices. The bibliographic list includes 267 literary sources, of which 22 in Cyrillic, 245 in Latin. The dissertation was discussed and directed for defense by the Department Council of the Department of Social Medicine and Public Health at the Faculty of Public Health of Medical University - Plovdiv.

Literature review

After an extensive literature review, the doctoral student shows a thorough and comprehensive knowledge of the nature and overall development of the problem of communication skills, both nationally and internationally. The review of the literary sources is in-depth, and the conclusions convincingly justify the choice of the topic. The doctoral student thoroughly examines the problem of communication, patterns of behavior and its importance for the dental practice.

Relevance of the dissertation

This thesis addresses an extremely current and significant issue. For several years now, the relationship between a dentist and a patient has been intensively studied in dentistry, as well as what makes patients follow a treatment and be loyal to their therapist. At the heart of these studies is the role of communication and conversation-building methods in dental treatment.

The doctoral student clearly formulates the role of communication skills in dental practice. In order to motivate the patient to take care of their oral health, communication skills on the part of the dentist are needed and this proves the relevance of the thesis and the need for specific training in this direction.

Evaluation of the goal, tasks and methodological approach

The aim of the thesis is to study the importance of communication for the good dental practice. The main hypothesis that the author raises is that communication is important for the good dental practice.

The main goal and the tasks are specifically formulated and accurately reflect the research work performed by the doctoral student. To achieve the goal the doctoral student sets five tasks.

The object of the study are: 508 people, divided into three groups - 132 dentists; a total of 274 dental students and 102 patients.

The following methods were used:

- Sociological methods:

- Questionnaire for research of the opinion of dentists;
- Questionnaire for researching the opinion of dental students;
- Communication Skills Attitude Scale - for dental students;
- Questionnaire for assessing the opinion of patients.

- Statistical methods:

- Alternative analysis;
- Non-parametric analysis;
- Descriptive statistics for quantitatively measurable quantities;
- Graphic analysis.

Results and discussion

The dissertation presents results, logically shaped and structured. The obtained results are presented tabularly and graphically, and part of the collected, analyzed and processed array of scientific information is presented in 6 appendices.

The results and analyzes largely confirm the hypothesis that the doctor's communication skills are of great importance for the good dental practice.

The formulated conclusions, recommendations, proposals and contributions of the dissertation are made on the basis of own data from the scientific research.

Ten conclusions have been drawn from the research and the available literature. The results of the study confirm the thesis that the acquisition of communication skills is a very important for a successful relationship between doctor and patient. This is the opinion of the Bulgarian doctors, students and patients who participated in the study. Communication training during the university study should be expanded and

deepened, so that dentists are ready to work with different groups of patients - e.g. "difficult patients".

Based on the results obtained and the conclusions made, the doctoral student determines the following recommendations and suggestions:

1. It is recommended that the curriculum in communication skills in medical universities should be expanded and diversified.
2. Communication skills should be included in the continuing postgraduate training.
3. Bulgarian universities should use more interactive methods in teaching the discipline "Communication Skills".


I fully accept the contributions made by the doctoral student. They are of scientific-theoretical, scientifically-applied and practically-applied nature and prove the importance of the thesis. As the most significant contribution, we should mention the developed manual for communication skills, which will help dentists to build trusting relationships with their patients.

Conclusion

My overall assessment of the dissertation is positive. The presented scientific work of Vesela Burkert is a significant dissertation with deep thematic justification and meets all the requirements of the Law for the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ZRASRB) and the Regulations for its application in Medical University - Plovdiv.

In connection with all the above, I give with confidence my positive assessment of the presented dissertation (with the relevant abstract), the results achieved in the study and the demonstrated scientific contributions. That is why I propose to the members of the esteemed Scientific Jury to award the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the Scientific specialty "Social Medicine and Organization of Healthcare and Pharmacy" to Vesela Georgieva Burkert.

08.09.2020 Prepared the statement:



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/ Prof. Dr. K. Kostov, MD /