

## STATEMENT

by

**Assoc. Prof. Stanislava Nikolaeva Harizanova, MD, PhD**  
Head of the Department of Hygiene  
Medical University of Plovdiv

on a dissertation for awarding a scientific degree *Doctor of Science*.

Professional field: **7.1 Medicine**,  
Scientific specialty: *General Practice*

Author: **Assoc. Prof. Radost Spiridonova Asenova, MD, PhD**  
Department: *Urology and General Practice*, Faculty of Medicine, Medical University  
of Plovdiv

Topic: *From Burnout to Job Satisfaction in General Practice. General Practice / Family  
Medicine as a Career Choice*.

### 1. General presentation of the procedure and the candidate

The presented set of electronic materials is pursuant to art. 80 (1) of the Rules and Regulations for Academic Development at Medical University of Plovdiv and the requirements for Scientometric indicators from the same Rules and includes the following documents:

- Application to the Rector of Medical University of Plovdiv for admission to an official defence of a dissertation for obtaining a scientific degree *Doctor of Science* in scientific specialty *General Practice*.
- Protocol from a Department meeting for preliminary discussion of the dissertation and the decisions taken for starting the procedure and the members of the Scientific Board with attached statements from specialists on the topic.
- CV in a European format.
- A certified copy of the diploma for scientific degree *Doctor of Philosophy* (PhD)
- Dissertation for SD *Doctor of Science* and a summary of the dissertation in Bulgarian and English.
- A list of original scientific contributions.
- A list of the articles and scientific papers related to the topic of the dissertation referenced and indexed in world-renowned data bases with scientific information (Scopus and/or Web of Science).
- A list of the citations on the topic of the dissertation, referenced, and indexed in world-renowned data bases with scientific information (Scopus and/or Web of Science).
- Copies of the publications and articles on the topic of the dissertation.

- Declaration for originality and authenticity of the attached documents.
- Declaration that the evidence does not replicate the one presented in the *PhD thesis* and materials for acquisition of the academic title *Associate Professor*.
- Information card of the Register of Academic Staff and Dissertations (NACID) for a defended dissertation in Bulgarian and English.

Assoc. Prof. Radost Asenova is a recognised specialist in General Practice with more than 20 years length of service in the field of scientific and clinical interest. She started her professional career as a doctoral student at the Department of General Practice after taking the posts of assistant professor, senior assistant professor, chief assistant professor and associate professor. She has two medical specialties and a second Master's degree in Healthcare Management. In 2009 she acquired the academic degree *Doctor of Philosophy* (PhD). Since 2012 she has had an academic degree *Associate Professor* and since April 2020 Assoc. Prof. Radost Asenova has been Head of the Department of *Urology and General Practice* at the Faculty of Medicine, Medical University of Plovdiv. Assoc. Prof. Asenova stands out with rich research activity. She is the president of Bulgarian General Practice Society for Research and Education (BGPSRE) and one of the establishers of the society. She is a national representative of the European General Practice Research Network (EGPRN) and World Organisation of Family Doctors (WONCA Europe). Her participation in editorial boards of leading journals in the field of General Practice, indexed in Scopus and/or Web of Science is a prerequisite for the high assessment of her professionalism and striving for scientific research. Assoc. Prof. Asenova was a scientific supervisor of three doctoral candidates who successfully defended their PhD theses in General Practice. All this gives me the grounds to accept that her career profile reveals consistency and the desire to develop incessantly which is directly related to professional competence.

## **2. Relevance of the dissertation**

Regarding the choice of the topic of the dissertation and its relevance, I am convinced that the topic of the thesis corresponds with the most relevant studies in primary medical practice and concerns the global problem for shortage of specialists in General Practice. An important aspect is the necessity and significance of the timely career guidance with the aim of preventing burnout syndrome which is widespread in medical practice. In this aspect the relevance is indisputable since up to this moment there is no data on the dynamics of the burnout syndrome and the level of GP satisfaction during the affirmation of the specialty.

The dissertation is relevant both in scientific and practical respect.

## **3. Knowledge of the problem**

Assoc. Prof. Asenova shows a very good knowledge in the studied problems on the basis of the rich literature reference, the performed analytic assessment of the available information on the topic of the dissertation. The thorough analysis of the obtained results and their skilful interpretation are another proof of the good knowledge of the problem by Assoc. Prof. Asenova. The identified applicable contributions are an additional argument in this respect.

#### **4. Method of research**

The research design is adequate for the intended aim and realized methodically, correctly, and thoroughly. Assoc. Prof. Asenova combined various qualitative and quantitative methods and techniques for obtaining and analysis of data. The used methods allow for resolution of the intended aim and tasks. The analyses for assessment of the problems posed are selected appropriately and described in detail.

#### **5. Characteristics and evaluation of the dissertation and its contributions**

The structure of the dissertation meets all requirements for a thorough and complete scientific research. The intended aim and tasks are clearly formulated and allow the identification of conclusions which are important for the practice. The positive aspects of General Practice are analysed with a high level of precision. The correlations between level of satisfaction, burnout, socio-demographic, professional factors, style and manner of life of GPs are described in detail. The challenges in General Practice, related to attending multimorbidity patients and the essential role of application of person-centered care are analysed thoroughly.

The obtained results are presented in detail, critically analysed, and compared to results from other studies in Bulgaria and abroad. The identified conclusions in the dissertation are logically summarized from the justified conclusions of the separate chapters in the *Results* section.

The offered specific recommendations and suggestions are definitely practically oriented and would contribute to enhancing job satisfaction and burnout prevention.

Indisputable contributions of the dissertation are the validated questionnaire for shared decision-making in Bulgarian, the validated international definition for multimorbidity in Bulgarian, as well as the prepared interventional model for burnout prevention. The use of the results from the research related to establishing the Bulgarian General Practice Society for Research and Education is an important prerequisite for affirming the specialty General Practice and gives perspectives for future development.

Other merits of the dissertation which are worth mentioning are its good layout, the concise, scientific, and consistent style in which it is written.

#### **6. Assessment of the candidate's publications and personal contributions**

A total of 13 publications related to the dissertation are presented. 12 of them are published in journals with Scopus and/or Web of Science reference, including 5 articles with IF. Assoc. Prof. Asenova is the first author in 7 of the articles. The presented article in an international journal on the occasion of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the international organisation of GPs- WONCA is clear evidence for the high scientific value of the study.

Assoc. Prof. Asenova presented 17 citations of two of the articles related to the dissertation. Proof of the high scientific value of her work is the h-index 6 in Web of Science of Assoc. Prof. Asenova.

I have no critical remarks on the conducted research and the presented materials.



## 7. Summary of the dissertation:

The presented summary of the dissertation is prepared according to the requirements and reflects the main results objectively.

## CONCLUSION

The dissertation contains original scientific contributions which meet all requirements from the Law on Development of the Academic Staff of Republic of Bulgaria (LDASRB), Rules and Regulations for application of LDASRB and the Rules and Regulations of Medical University of Plovdiv. The presented materials and dissertation results fully comply with the specific requirements approved in the Rules and Regulations of Medical University of Plovdiv for application of LDASRB. The dissertation of Assoc. Prof. Asenova stands out with a high level of professionalism regarding the conducted research. I believe that significant scientific research on current problems in General practice has been done.

Due to the above-mentioned, I give my **positive assessment** on the conducted research, presented by the dissertation, summary of a dissertation and achieved results and contributions and **suggest to the members of the Honourable Scientific Committee that Assoc. Prof. Radost Spiridonova Asenova be awarded the scientific degree *Doctor of Science*** in the scientific specialty *General Practice*, professional field 7.1 Medicine from the field of higher education 7. Healthcare and Sport.

03.09.2021r.  
Plovdiv

  
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