



STATEMENT

from

Assoc. Prof. Ivo Inkov Kehayov

**Head of the Department of Neurosurgery, Faculty of Medicine, Medical University- Plovdiv
Neurosurgeon at the Clinic of Neurosurgery, UMHAT "St. George", Plovdiv**

Regarding: A PhD thesis for the awarding of scientific and education degree "Doctor"

Professional field: 7.1. Medicine

Doctoral program: "Plastic and aesthetic surgery"

Author: D-r Kostadin Gigov

Department: Propedeutics of surgical diseases, Section of Plastic-Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgery

Topic: EVALUATION OF TWO PALATOPLASTY TECHNIQUES IN PATIENTS WITH CLEFT PALATE

Scientific supervisor: Prof. Jury Anastassov, MD, DSc

1. Biographical data and procedural requirements

In 2007 Dr. Kostadin Gigov completed his master degree in medicine at the Medical University of Plovdiv. From 21.04.2021, he is a PhD student at the Department of Propedeutics of Surgical Diseases of Faculty of medicine at the Medical University of Plovdiv, Section of Plastic-Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgery and Thermal Trauma. In 2013, he acquired his specialty in "Plastic-reconstructive and aesthetic surgery". From 2009 until now, he has been working as a surgeon at the Department of Plastic-Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgery for Children at the UMBAL "St. George", Plovdiv.

The PhD thesis contains all main sections according to the requirements: Literature review; Aim and tasks; Material and methods; Results, discussion and conclusions; Summary; Bibliography and references cited.

Publication activity and participation in scientific forums is sufficient according to the requirements of the Regulations of MU-Plovdiv. The candidate has presented seven publications. In three of them he is the leading author and in four he is a co-author, he has also studied in a number of scientific conferences with delivered reports on the topic.

In general, the structure of the dissertation and the independent participation of the candidate in its preparation correspond to the procedural requirements. My personal impressions from mutual surgical interventions are that Dr. Gigov is an accomplished and highly qualified surgeon in his specialty, striving for and achieving extreme precision and perfectionism when applying the necessary operative techniques.

2. Scientific importance of the topic

The thesis is dedicated to congenital clefts of the lip and palate, which represent a significant social and personal problem. After a critical and thorough analysis of the literature, the candidate has clearly formulated the unresolved problems in this area.

Dr. Gigov aimed to present a generalized picture of the early and late results of operative corrections of the palate in two surgical methods - closed Anastassov uranoplasty and Veau-Wardill-Kilner modification, in patients with congenital clefts of the lip and palate or isolated cleft palate. To fulfill this purpose, he selected 3 main tasks aimed at analyzing the early postoperative period, speech and dental-maxillary development post surgery.

3. Familiarity with the problem

The presented dissertation is written in correct Bulgarian language, the review, supported by appropriate references, is extremely profound and justifies the choice of topic, material, methods and expected results. The number of patients covered is even more than sufficient in number. The logic of the conclusions drawn, correspond to the aim and tasks and based on a thorough statistical analysis, prove the excellent knowledge of the problem by the candidate.

4. Research methodology

The surgical, speech-language, orthodontic and statistical methods presented in the dissertation support the selected aim and the achievement of the tasks. The study was conducted on a large clinical contingent, including 382 patients aged between 4 and 15 years. Of the total number of patients, 204 were operated on by the modified Veau-Wardill-Kilner technique and 178 by the Anastassov technique. The researched material is completely sufficient for obtaining reliable and statistically substantiated conclusions. Adequate statistical methods were used to process the obtained data.

5. Characterization and evaluation of the PhD thesis and contributions

The thesis has a total volume of 208 pages, of which 36 pages are a literature review, and the rest are dedicated to examining the aim, tasks, methods, results, discussion and conclusions at the end of each of the tasks, summary, contributions and literature sources. 33 tables and 110 figures are used.

The literature review is profound, emphasizing different aspects of the main topic, namely incidence and prevalence, etiology and genetics, normal and pathological embryology and palate anatomy, classification, history of surgical treatment of cleft lip and palate, management of treatment of facial anomalies in Bulgaria and in other countries, speech-language disorders and dental-maxillary deformities in CLP. In summary, the aspects of the congenital cleft problem covered in

the literature review fully address the ideas and tasks and logically justify the motivation for developing the dissertation topic.

The formulated aim is precise and clear, corresponding to the title of the topic and the subsequent tasks. The tasks are three, concise and clear and in line with the set aim.

Material and methods: a single-center, retrospective, comparative study was conducted in two groups of patients with unilateral, bilateral cleft lip and palate, and isolated cleft palate, operated on by two surgical methods of uranoplasty – closed Anastasov uranoplasty and Veau-Wardill-Kilner modification.

The study included 382 patients, divided into two groups according to the operative technique. 204 were operated according to the modified Veau-Wardill-Kilner technique and 178 according to the Anastasov technique. This large number of operated and examined contingent in this uncommon pathology deserves my personal admiration.

Strict patient selection, adequate statistical processing and precise study design ensure the reliability of the obtained results.

The obtained results are described in detail on 96 pages and properly divided, critically analyzed, presented in appropriate tables and graphs.

The discussion follows the same sequence as the order of results. Logically derived conclusions correspond to each task. They are accurate and are related to the main and most important aspects of the study. In addition, the dissertation also contains a summary based on the results and discussion.

From the presented thesis and related publications, it can be summarized that the aim and tasks of the thesis have been achieved, the results have been adequately processed and analyzed, the conclusions have been logically derived in relation to the set tasks. 372 sources are cited in the bibliography, of which 25 are by Bulgarian authors.

6. Publications and personal contributions

The presented publications and participation in scientific forums are directly related to the topic of the dissertation, and in most of them Dr. Gigov is the first author. Their number exceeds the minimum requirements of the procedure.

The researches and observations of the patients and the conclusions and contributions are the personal work of the author. 7 original contributions and 7 confirmatory contributions are indicated.

7. Recommendations

In the future, I would like to recommend Dr. Gigov to publish his results in indexed and specialized international journals with impact factor.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, based on the above observations, I believe that the presented PhD thesis of Dr. Kostadin Gigov on the topic: "**Evaluation of two palatoplasty techniques in patients with cleft palate**" meets all the criteria for awarding the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the specialty of "Plastic-Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgery". The dissertation contains scientific and applied results that represent an original contribution to this field of science in Bulgaria and meet all the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Rules for the Development of the Academic Staff of the MU – Plovdiv. The dissertation unequivocally proves that the candidate has in-depth theoretical knowledge and

professional skills in the scientific specialty of Plastic-Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgery, demonstrating qualities and skills for independent research development.

Finally, without hesitation I give my positive assessment regarding the presented dissertation and vote "YES" for the awarding of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" to Dr. Kostadin Gigov.

Statement prepared by:

Заличено на основание
Чл.5 §1, б."В" Регламент (ЕС)2016/679

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ivo Kehayov MD, PhD

18.08.2023