



STATEMENT

from

Prof. Dr. Ivan Zhechev Traikov, MD

Specialist in Plastic-reconstructive and aesthetic surgery

in his capacity as member of a scientific jury

based on the Order of the Rector of MU-Plovdiv № R-2038/14.07.2023

about a dissertation on a topic

„EVALUATION OF TWO PALATOPLASTY TECHNIQUES IN PATIENTS WITH CLEFT PALATE“

for the awarding of scientific and education degree “Doctor of Philosophy”

with author D-r Kostadin Gigov,

Scientific supervisor: Prof. Jury Anastassov, MD, DSc

Field of higher education: 7. Healthcare and sport

Professional field: 7.1. Medicine

Doctoral program “Plastic and aesthetic surgery”, Code of the specialty 03.01.43

Department: „Propedeutics of surgical diseases“

Biographical data and procedural requirements

In 2007 Dr. Kostadin Gigov completed his master degree in medicine at the Medical University of Plodiv. 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 2014, he acquired his specialty in "Plastic-reconstructive and aesthetic surgery". From 2009 until now, he has been working as a resident at the Department of Plastic-Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgery for Children at the UMBAL "St. George", Plovdiv. In 2013, he acquired an additional qualification at the University Hospital in Lille, France under Prof.Pellerin, where he acquired considerable experience and knowledge in the field of congenital clefts of the lip and palate. This makes him one of the few specialists in Bulgaria who have experience in the treatment and therapeutic approach for congenital facial anomalies. In addition, he works in large tumor resections and reconstructions in the orbital and facial area. Dr. Gigov had a specialization in Malmö, Sweden and in Ljubljana, Slovenia in order to exchange experience in the treatment of congenital facial anomalies.

Dr. Gigov has submitted a dissertation containing main sections according to the requirements: Literature review; Aim and objectives; Material and methods; Results, discussion and conclusions; Summary; Bibliography. The publications cited are also presented.

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

Actuality of the topic

Congenital clefts of the lip and palate represent a significant social problem. The Department of Plastic-Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgery for Children at the UMHAT"St.George" is established as the only specialized center in Bulgaria for the treatment of congenital facial anomalies. In 2013 an electronic medical record of facial anomalies was created, through which more than 1,200 patients are currently registered and monitored. Their treatment requires a multidisciplinary approach and a team of specialists. This allows Dr. Gigov a deep insight into the problem, as he has operated on a large number of these patients.

The aim of his observation is a comparative evaluation of two operative techniques, one of which is a proprietary modification and less traumatic for patients. Aspects such as preoperative severity and immediate postoperative outcomes are analyzed by means of a scoring system in accordance with international protocols for the assessment and treatment of CLP. The results of facial growth and speech development, which are very important factors in the overall treatment, are monitored. The assessment system for maxillofacial growth and speech is based on the internationally recognized standards of documentation in these specialties. This analysis is carried out with the help of a multidisciplinary team including a surgeon, an orthodontist and a speech-language therapist.

The contributions of this dissertation work are related to providing information about palatal repair outcomes in our country, which is useful for a real assessment of treatment needs, the necessary conditions and the means to optimize the results. It is essential that for the first time, with the help of the Electronic Medical Record for Facial Anomalies, we have data on the birth rate of

children with congenital cleft lip and palate in our country. Therefore, this study can also be used to compare results with other European centers for the treatment of CLP. Through the analysis of the information, it is estimated in which part of the patients a less traumatic technique can be applied to achieve the best possible results, taking into account the preoperative severity, the impact on maxillofacial growth and speech development.

In conclusion, the topic of the dissertation work is current and of significant importance in a national and international aspect.

Research methodology

The surgical, speech therapy, orthodontic and statistical methods presented in the dissertation are relevant to the aim and objectives of the candidate.

The clinical material consisted of 382 patients, aged 4 to 15 years, comparing early and late results of two surgical techniques. All patients were treated in the Department of Plastic-Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgery for children during the last 15 years, which is a serious population, implying statistical reliability of the results, without a certain selection and subjective preference for one or the other technique.

Characterization and evaluation of the dissertation work and contributions

The dissertation has a total volume of 208 pages, of which 36 pages are a literature review, and the rest are devoted to examining the aim, objectives, methods, results, discussion and conclusions at the end of the implementation of each of the set objectives, contributions and literary sources.

The literature review is purposefully built, contains a sufficient volume of informational material. The aspects of the congenital cleft problem covered fully address the ideas and tasks and logically justify the motivation for developing the dissertation topic.

The aim is clearly and accurately formulated, corresponds to the title of the topic and the subsequent objectives. The objectives that follow from it (3 in total) are also specific and precise.

Material and methods used: the design of the study and its separate parts, the methods used and the statistical processing of the results are described in detail. 382 patients were included, divided into two groups according to the surgical technique. 204 were operated according to the modified Veau-Wardill-Kilner technique and 178 according to the Anastassov technique.

Strict patient selection and precise study design ensure the reliability of the obtained results.

The results are presented in such a way that they follow the set objectives. They are described in detail and critically analyzed. They are presented in 33 tables and 110 figures. Each section of results is followed by a discussion and drawing of specific conclusions. The structuring of the dissertation work is logically sustained in view of the different objectives of the research. The dissertation ends with a conclusion based on the results, the discussion, the findings made and logically derived from them.

From the presented dissertation work, it can be summarized that the aim and objectives have been achieved, the results have been processed and analyzed, the conclusions have been logically drawn.

372 sources are cited in the bibliography, of which 25 are by Bulgarian authors.

Assessment of the publications and personal contributions

The publications related to the dissertation work are seven, in three of which Dr. Gigov is the leading author. The publications and participation in scientific forums are related to the topic of the dissertation. Their number exceeds the minimum requirements of the procedure.

The researches and evaluations of the patients and the resulting conclusions and contributions are the personal work of the author.

Critical remarks and recommendations

I have no comments on the presented materials.

CONCLUSION

The scientific work of Dr. Kostadin Gigov entitled "Evaluation of two palatoplasty techniques in patients with cleft palate" submitted to me for a statement meets the criteria and 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 for a dissertation complete in content and volume. The scientific work fully meets the scientometric criteria for awarding the educational and scientific degree "Doctor of Philosophy".

I give a positive assessment of the scientific work and propose to the respected Scientific Jury to award Dr. Kostadin Gigov the scientific and educational degree "Doctor of Philosophy" in the specialty of "Plastic-Reconstructive and Aesthetic Surgery".

Statement prepared by:



10.08.2023

Prof. Dr. Ivan Zhechev Traikov, MD

A handwritten signature in blue ink, corresponding to the name Prof. Dr. Ivan Zhechev Traikov, MD.