



REVIEW

From

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according to the paper entitled „Forensic analysis of violence against elderly people“, with author Kristina Atanasova Hadzhieva, MD, during procedure for achieving „**Doctoral Degree**“ in the field of 7. „**Healthcare and Sport**“, scientific direction „**Medicine**“, specialty „**Forensic medicine and Deontology**“

Dr. Kristina Atanasova Hadzhieva was born on 02.05.1990 in the city of Plovdiv. She completed her secondary education in 2009, with honors, at the High School with a humanitarian profile - Saint Cyril and Methodius High School, Plovdiv. She graduated from the Medical University - Plovdiv in 2015. From the middle of November 2016, she was enrolled by order of the rector of the Medical University - Plovdiv as an assistant in the Department of Forensic Medicine and Deontology of the Medical University of Plovdiv after winning from competition, being an assistant until now in the department of the same name, with a profile of English language teaching. In 2019, he successfully passed the state exam for the acquisition of a specialty in the health care system in the December session and obtained the specialty "Forensic Medicine and Deontology". He speaks English very well, as well as Russian. He is a member of the following scientific and professional societies: The Bulgarian Society of Forensic Medicine, the Bulgarian Medical Union, the Union of Scientists in Bulgaria.

His main scientific topic is related to violence against the elderly and its morphological and clinical manifestations, specifically in the routine forensic medical expert activity.

Contemporary research shows that elder abuse, which by its very nature represents a pervasive complex social and medical problem, is seriously prevalent throughout the world as a specific and particular type of violence that affects an age group, some of whose members are limited in their opportunities to protect their health and their physical and mental integrity themselves. This problem is faced by a wide range of medical specialties, and it does not escape the field of the forensic medicine guild. It is noteworthy that the topicality of the problem is significantly more represented in foreign scientific literature, more widely discussed in specialized international forums outside the borders of the Republic of Bulgaria, while in the Bulgarian forensic medical specialized literature there is a lack of sufficient scientific data and reports related to the issue. The data in the various scientific reports and works unanimously show that the timely diagnosis of elderly victims of violence still continues to represent a significant problem and gap for medical professionals facing this problem. In this regard, the development of universal algorithms for work in this context of the problem is important for the reduction of mortality and injuries in this age group and is the subject of development by scientists around the world working on the subject.

In the context of what has been said so far, the topic of the dissertation work has been chosen successfully, with a view to the correct understanding of the manifestation of violence among the Bulgarian population in this age group, of the main social and everyday aspects of this type of violence, as well as a detailed description of the morphological manifestations of physical violence when it affects the elderly.

The dissertation is written in 81 standard pages. It is organized by chapter and content as follows:

Introduction - 2 pages, literature review - 23 pages, aim and objectives - 1 page, material and methods - 2 pages, own results - 23 pages, discussion 12 pages, application in forensic medical practice - 4 pages, conclusion - 1 page, contributions - 2 pages. The bibliography includes 81 sources, of which 3 titles are in Cyrillic and 78 - in Latin. Relatively new literature is used in the bibliography.

The "Results" section is illustrated with 22 tables and 22 charts showing data on physical abuse of the elderly. The section "Application in forensic medical practice" is presented as two cases from forensic medical practice related to the topic. The "Materials and methods" section is illustrated with 4 figures showing the prepared samples of statistical questionnaires for persons over 65 years of age, suspected of being victims of physical violence. With few exceptions, the dissertation is written in literary Bulgarian language. The use of abbreviations is not large, so they do not annoy the reader with their frequency.

The introduction is well written. In the literature review, the main morphological manifestations of physical violence against the elderly are advocated, and the mechanisms of occurrence of various types of trauma, suspicious for violence, are explained in detail. A large number of statistical studies by Bulgarian and foreign authors on the issue of violence in this age group is also presented. As a brief reference at the end of the review, there is also data on the mortality of maltreated child syndrome as an invariable part of the problem. Thus, even a reader who is not a specialist in the field, at the end of the review, will have gained an idea of what he is about to get acquainted with.

From the literature review, the great awareness of the dissertationer on this problem is evident. It is well written, well-structured and very informative. The analysis of literature data was done competently and purposefully.

I have no comments regarding the "Aim and Tasks" chapter. The goal is clearly and precisely formulated, setting out the main target groups of the retrospective study - the elderly, victims of physical violence over a 5-year period of time, who passed through the forensic medicine unit in which the dissertation student works in his professional direction. Later it becomes clear that the tasks are adequately feasible.

The chapter "Materials and methods" is on 2 pages. 442 cases of physical violence were analyzed, using established, clearly defined exclusion criteria for screening the cases. The applied methods are adequate, respectively, for each given task. The complex application of these methods has allowed Dr. Kristina Hadzhieva to make a comparative assessment of the morphological

characteristics of the disabilities and the socio-life factors, compared with the data presented by the Bulgarian and foreign authors.

The own results of the conducted research are detailed in separate sections corresponding to the set tasks and are excellently illustrated with tables and diagrams showing the data on physical abuse of the elderly. Graphical presentation of the data is more demonstrative and makes it easier for the reader to follow the statistically significant differences or lack thereof.

The analysis of the presented own results shows that Dr. Kristina Hadzhieva uses a number of scientific techniques that give grounds for making a number of substantiated scientific conclusions and conclusions. They expand the volume of existing knowledge about the manifestation of the problem in forensic medical expert activity in the Republic of Bulgaria.

During the discussion of the results, the excellent awareness of the dissertation student and his ability to objectively analyze his own results are evident.

The findings in the conclusion on physical abuse are precisely and clearly stated. They are written concisely, not omitting essential facts. The contributions actually reflect Dr. Hadzhieva's results compared to literature data.

The book article is presented as required by law. There are no significant gaps in the way the publications are arranged, errors in the names of the authors, titles, journals and monographs.

The abstract is detailed, well illustrated and does not neglect any of the topics developed in the dissertation.

The scientific achievements of Dr. Kristina Atanasova Hadzhieva on the topic of the dissertation presented for consideration are reflected in 3 publications in Bulgarian and international journals.

CONCLUSION

My work proposed for review by Dr. Kristina Atanasova Hadzhieva, entitled "Forensic analysis of violence against the elderly", for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree "doctor", is a complex retrospective study of the socio-habitual and morphological manifestations of physical violence

against children in forensic medical practice, with a detailed and rich systematic analysis and comparison of the data is other Bulgarian and foreign authors who worked on the problem, with methodologically developed algorithms for working with such people who are suspicious of violence exercised over them.

This work is factually sound and makes an original contribution to clarifying the problem of elder abuse and offers contributions of a significant scientific-applied nature. It is well conceived, precisely methodically executed and successfully implemented. The obtained results are demonstratively presented, clearly and conscientiously discussed and summarized in the present work with the qualities of a dissertation. This gives me the reason to give my POSITIVE evaluation of the dissertation work of Dr. Kristina Atanasova Hadzhieva and to recommend to the honorable members of the academic department to award Dr. Kristina Atanasova Hadzhieva the educational and scientific degree "Doctor".

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

Signature:

/Assoc. Professor Alexandar Alexandrov, MD, PhD/

