

REVIEW

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FACULTY AT UNIVERSITY 'PROF. DR. ASSEN ZLATAROV' BURGAS"

Internal member of the academic jury appointed by Order RD-260/30.08.2024 of the Rector of University "Prof. Dr. Assen Zlatarov" Burgas

Subject: Competition for the Academic Position of "Associate Professor" in the scientific specialty "General Medicine," field of higher education 7. Healthcare and Sports, professional field 7.1. Medicine, for the needs of University "Prof. Dr. Assen Zlatarov"

This review is prepared in accordance with the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, its Regulations, the Regulations for the acquisition of scientific degrees and holding academic positions at University "Prof. Dr. Assen Zlatarov" Burgas, and Order RD-260/30.08.2024 by the Rector for appointing the Scientific Jury and following the first meeting.

General Overview of the Procedure

The set of materials presented by the candidate, Dr. Nevena Georgieva Ivanova, PhD, both in printed and electronic formats, is in compliance with the requirements, and I have not identified any omissions in the submitted primary documentation. The requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and related regulations at University "Prof. Dr. Assen Zlatarov" Burgas have been met.

Biographical Data and Candidate Profile

Dr. Nevena Ivanova was born in Plovdiv. She completed her primary education in Tripoli, Libya, and graduated from an English Language High School. Dr. Ivanova earned her medical degree from the Medical University of Plovdiv in 1998 with excellent academic performance. She successively acquired three clinical specialties: Internal Medicine (2004), Cardiology (2006), and General Medicine (2018). In 2015, she defended her dissertation and earned her PhD.

Dr. Ivanova has been a member of the academic staff at the Medical University of Plovdiv, progressing through all levels of her career: Assistant (2000), Senior Assistant (2004), and Chief Assistant (2007 and 2016).

She began her career at the First Municipal Hospital in Plovdiv as a cardiology department physician in 1998. In 2004, she began her cardiology specialization at the Cardiology Clinic of the University Hospital "St. George" in Plovdiv until 2006. Since 2011, she has been a practicing cardiologist at DCC "Karidad" and the chief consultant at MHAT "St. Caridad" in Plovdiv. As of 2024, she serves as a General Medicine practitioner in the accredited practice "Dr. Ivan Nastev 2015 - Outpatient Medical Practice" EOOD in Plovdiv.

Dr. Ivanova is proficient in English, holding a Cambridge C1 certificate. She has **participated in over 100 national and international congresses**, conferences, and scientific meetings, with **more than 60 scientific presentations** in countries such as India, Italy, France, Slovenia, Turkey, Ireland, North Macedonia, Belgium, Israel, Portugal, Greece, the Netherlands, Denmark, and others.

Awards and Recognitions

Dr. Ivanova has received numerous awards and accolades for her scientific achievements:

- Certificate of achievement with a high score from Harvard Medical School - Genetics, 2024.
- Recognition from Harvard Medical School for the significance of a scientific discovery, 2024.
- Recognition from Sigma Xi, one of the oldest and most prestigious scientific societies in the world, for scientific achievements and contribution to knowledge advancement, 2024.
- Recognition from journals indexed in global databases for high author rating and contribution to science, 2024.
- Certificate for Best Scientific Research and Presentation at the Fourth World Congress on Tobacco or Health - Delhi, India, 2005.
- Certificate from the Ministry of Health for "Contribution to Health Policy and Modernization of the Healthcare System in Bulgaria" for the "White Book on Value-Based Healthcare," 2014.
- Certificates and a plaque from National Congresses and Conferences on General Medicine, 2014, 2016.

Membership and Professional Involvement

Dr. Ivanova has been the National Representative of Bulgaria to the European Academy of Teachers in General Practice/Family Medicine (EURACT) from 2010-2012 and a delegate to the World Assembly "Tobacco or Health" (WATCH) from 2004-2008. She is a member of several professional organizations, including the European General Practice Research Network (EGPRN), the Bulgarian Society of Cardiology (DKB), the National Association of General Practitioners in Bulgaria (NSOPLB), the Union of Scientists in Bulgaria (SUB), the Bulgarian Medical Association (BLS), and Sigma Xi - The Scientific Research Honor Society, to which she received a personal invitation due to her significant contributions to research.

Continuing Education and Training

Dr. Ivanova has completed **over 100 qualification courses** (both theoretical and practical) in areas such as academic writing, Cochrane systematic reviews, quality of general medical care, conducting scientific research, and courses accredited by the European Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (EACCME). She has engaged in continuous training in Bulgaria and abroad, including participation in conferences, symposiums, scientific meetings, and courses related to general medicine, cardiology, interventional cardiology (myocardial revascularization, bifurcation, and complex coronary interventions), non-invasive imaging diagnostics, emergency echocardiography, exercise testing, ECG Holter monitoring, blood pressure monitoring, and management training in general practice (Ministry of Health and The British Council). Additionally, she has completed training at the University of Leicester, School of Medicine, Clinical Division of General Practice and Primary Health Care, UK, and holds Cambridge certificates (FCE, CAE) and credentials from Harvard Medical School (Genetics)

In conclusion, Dr. Nevena Ivanova is an established educator in general medicine and an experienced clinician with significant professional experience, recognized both nationally and internationally. The submitted documents, certificates, and references illustrate her continuous pursuit of professional development and higher qualifications. This provides a solid basis for **a highly positive evaluation of the candidate**.

Scientific Research Activities and Evaluation of Publications

In the current competition, Dr. Nevena Ivanova participates with:

- A dissertation on the topic "Professional-Behavioral and Motivational Profile of General Practitioners"
- A habilitation work – monograph "Arterial Hypertension – A Current Perspective. Part 1"
- Three monographs that are not presented as the main habilitation work
- One published book based on a defended dissertation for obtaining the educational and scientific degree "Doctor"
- 73 publications and reports in periodic scientific journals. 33 in journals indexed in globally recognized scientific information databases (Scopus, Web of Science) – 23 full-text, of which 10 have an Impact Factor (total 14.919) and 13 in Scopus; 10 are individual publications, of which 5 have an Impact Factor and 5 are in Scopus; 10 reports in journals with an Impact Factor (total 11.511), first author in 3. Total Impact Factor of articles and reports: 26.43. H-index: 3. 40 publications in peer-reviewed journals or in edited collective volumes. • A published chapter in two collective monographs

- 52 publications in scientific collections from national and international congresses, conferences, and other scientific events

Dr. Ivanova has over 100 participations in international and national congresses, conferences, and scientific meetings, with over 60 scientific presentations.

In summary, Dr. Ivanova presents a **significant volume of publications covering general medicine** as well as various other scientific fields, demonstrating the breadth of her thinking. It is noteworthy that **Dr. Ivanova has numerous articles as a sole author in prestigious journals with an Impact Factor and Q1 quartile**, with publication 21 being a global discovery in the field of genetics, recognized by Harvard University (Harvard Medical School), where Dr. Ivanova studied and completed her training with a high achievement certificate.

Table 1. Minimum required points for the academic position "Associate Professor" in Area 7. "Healthcare and Sports," professional field 7.4. "Public Health" according to the Regulations on Academic Staff Development in the Republic of Bulgaria (PAPSRB). Minimum required points for the academic position "Associate Professor" in Area 7. "Healthcare and Sports," professional field 7.4. "Public Health" according to the internal rules of "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" University, Burgas.

Group of indicators	Associate professor according to ZRASRB and PAPS RB	Associate professor to and according to the internal rules of "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" University, Burgas.	Chief assistant Nevena Ivanova
A	50	50	50
B	-	-	-
C	100	100	100
D	200	220	1828,2
E	50	60	1500
F Sum of indicators from 13 to the end		20	574,86
Total	400	450	4053,06

The total number of points repeatedly (9 times) exceeds the requirements both by the National Scientific Research and Academic Staff Development Act (ZRASRB) and those outlined in the Regulations for the Conditions and Procedures for Acquiring Scientific Degrees and Holding Academic Positions at "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" University – Burgas. Based on all the above, I have grounds to give a **very high evaluation** of the candidate's scientific research activities.

Citation of Works

An official report has been presented, showing that the works have 88 citations in Bulgarian sources, of which 15 are in publications indexed in Scopus or Web of Science, 53 in foreign sources, with 28 in Scopus (Elsevier) and 25 in Web of Science (Clarivate).

Participation in Projects

Dr. Nevena Ivanova has participated **in two successfully implemented projects at Plovdiv Medical University:** "COVID-19 HUB - Information, Innovations, and Implementation of Integrative Scientific Developments" and "OMNIA."

Published University Textbook

Dr. Ivanova is the author and co-author of 8 textbooks in general medicine and cardiology. She participated in the first general medicine textbook used for teaching at Plovdiv Medical University, *Introduction to General Medicine and General Medical Practice*.

Published Teaching Aids

Dr. Nevena Ivanova is the author and co-author of **12 university aids for students and residents in general medicine. Eight are independent and have been published in both Bulgarian and English.**

In summary, Dr. Ivanova demonstrates accumulated experience in preparing materials used in the training of students and residents in general medicine. The evidence presented in the competition provides a basis for a **very high evaluation of the candidate's teaching activities.**

Additionally, it is worth noting that Dr. Ivanova is recognized as a professional by international publishers. **She has written reviews for global leaders in publishing authoritative and highly ranked international scientific journals with impact factors (Springer Nature Netherlands, Springer New York), which she has not included in the total point count.**

Directions of Scientific Research Activity and Contributions from Scientific Works

Dr. Nevena Ivanova's research activity is within the scope of the announced competition. The contributions of the scientific works in the presented **report** are in 10 thematic areas: 1. General Medicine; 2. Cardiology; 3. Internal Medicine; 4. Epidemiology and Infectious Diseases; 5. Oncology; 6. Vascular Medicine; 7. Palliative Care; 8. Public Health; 9. Medical Education; 10. Genetics. Dr. Ivanova has outlined the key scientific and applied contributions from her works in these areas.

The publications and materials presented for the competition cover a broad spectrum of topics related to general practice, with particular emphasis on reforms, quality, organization,

and management of primary care, medical education (training of students and residents in general medicine), cardiovascular diseases and their complications, contemporary issues related to the new disease COVID-19, and the role of the general practitioner. Their contributions are linked to a combination of original research, clinical case descriptions, the development of educational materials (university textbooks and aids), and articles on policy and primary healthcare management.

I sequentially list the following **directions and contributions of Dr. Ivanova's works:**

1. **Scientific Research on Primary Healthcare Reform and Access to Primary Care in Bulgaria**
 - Provides the basis for informed decision-making, resource optimization, and sustainable improvement of healthcare quality.
2. **Scientific Research on Cardiovascular Diseases, Risk Factors, and Their Management in Primary Care**
 - Provides critical information for early diagnosis, prevention, and effective treatment of cardiovascular diseases, leading to better health outcomes and reduced morbidity and mortality from these conditions.
3. **Scientific Research on COVID-19 Complications and Their Management in Primary Care**
 - Assists healthcare professionals, including general practitioners, in delivering high-quality care and managing patients during the pandemic and in primary care settings.
4. **Scientific Research on Professional Stress and Burnout Among General Practitioners**
 - Provides valuable information and guidelines for early diagnosis, prevention, and effective management of stress and burnout, leading to better quality healthcare services and improved health outcomes for patients. These studies contribute to the development of policies and programs aimed at supporting healthcare professionals and improving the overall healthcare system.
5. **Scientific Research on Screening and Prevention in Primary Care**
 - Provides valuable information and guidelines for early diagnosis, prevention, and effective management of diseases, leading to better health outcomes and reduced morbidity and mortality.

6. Scientific Research on Healthcare Quality and Evidence-Based Practice in Primary Care

- Provides information and guidelines for the implementation of evidence in clinical practice, improving care quality, and enhancing the efficiency of healthcare services. These studies support healthcare professionals and administrators in developing and implementing strategies for optimizing healthcare services, leading to better health outcomes and patient satisfaction.

7. Scientific Research on Specific Patient Groups such as the Elderly and Adolescents in Primary Care

- Provides essential information and guidelines for adapting healthcare to the specific needs and challenges faced by these patient groups. The research supports the development of personalized therapeutic and preventive approaches, leading to better health outcomes and improved quality of life for the elderly and adolescents.

8. Clinical Cases of Rare or Complex Medical Conditions

- Enriches medical literature, improves clinical practice, and facilitates the development of new therapeutic approaches, ultimately leading to better health outcomes for patients.

9. Development of Educational Materials in General Medicine in Bulgarian and English

- The published materials provide structured and systematized knowledge that facilitates the understanding of complex medical concepts and skills for Bulgarian and international students and residents in the context of general medical practice.

The numerous publications in the field of general medicine have provided data on the current state of organization, management, activities, quality, resources, and challenges in primary care, which could inform future policies in this part of the healthcare system.

A globally significant contribution is the publication of the only case of a new genetic mutation leading to an extremely rare genetic disease complicated by multiple vascular aneurysms.

Monographic Work

In the competition for the academic position of Associate Professor, Dr. Ivanova participated with a monograph titled "**Arterial Hypertension - A Current Perspective, Part 1**" from 2019. In 2020, she published "**Arterial Hypertension - A Current Perspective, Part 2**,"

which is included as an additional volume. The presented monograph meets the legal requirements regarding the volume of material presented, the inclusion of a research section, and two reviewers. The work is a systematically organized, accessible text for a wide range of specialists—cardiologists, general practitioners, residents, and medical students. It examines modern definitions of arterial hypertension, diagnosis, and treatment in the context of current medical advancements. The format is based on twenty-five years of clinical and teaching experience. Its purpose is to clearly present, in a summarized and synthesized form, current guidelines for the management of arterial hypertension, making them easily applicable in everyday clinical practice. It presents data and evaluates available scientific evidence to assist healthcare professionals in their work, as well as to facilitate the selection of the best strategies.

CONCLUSION

After analyzing the submitted documents and materials related to the announced competition, I give an **entirely positive evaluation to the candidate Nevena Georgieva Ivanova, MD, PhD, for the academic position of Associate Professor at "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" University, Burgas.**

Dr. Nevena Georgieva Ivanova is a proven educator and professional. Her scientific production is significant and has been recognized for its achievements by prestigious universities and publishers abroad. **She far exceeds the requirements for the academic position of Associate Professor, as outlined in the Law and in the Regulations for the Conditions and Procedures for Acquiring Scientific Degrees and Holding Academic Positions at "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" University, Burgas.**

I give my positive vote of **"YES"** for her candidacy.

I strongly recommend that the esteemed scientific jury votes **positively for Nevena Georgieva Ivanova MD, PhD**, to assume the academic position of **Associate Professor** in the scientific field of **"General Medicine,"** professional area 7.1. **Medicine**, higher education area 7. **Health and Sports** at "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" University, Burgas (competition announced in the State Gazette - No. 55/28.06.2024).

04.11.2024

Prepared by the reviewer:

Burgas

Prof. Vladimir Gonchev, MD, PhD