

STATEMENT OF OPINION

by Prof. Maria Anastasova Semerdjieva, MD, Ph.D.
Dean of the Faculty of Public Health, Medical University - Plovdiv

Member of the Scientific Jury for the procedure for acquiring the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the field of higher education 7. Healthcare and Sports, professional field 7.5. Healthcare, for the needs of "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" University – Burgas, announced in the State Gazette, issue 91 / 21.10.2024.

The sole candidate in the competition is Petya Stefanova Stefanova, Senior Lecturer at the Department of "Healthcare" Faculty of Public Health and Healthcare "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" University – Burgas.

The submitted documents related to the competition are complete and in accordance with the requirements of the Regulations on the Structure and Activities of "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" University – Burgas, allowing for the evaluation of the candidate participating in the competition.

I. Analysis of the Candidate's Career Profile

Petya Stefanova Stefanova graduated in "Nursing" in 1983 from PMI "Konstantin Vezenkov" – Burgas. In 2003, she obtained a Bachelor's degree in "Business Administration," and in 2012, a Master's degree in "Healthcare Management" from "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" University – Burgas. In 2024, she defended her PhD dissertation on "Competencies of the Nurse for Integrated Health-Social Care Provided at Home for Elderly People with Functional Dependence and Chronic Diseases" at Trakia University – Stara Zagora.

From 1983 to 2015, she worked as a nurse in various healthcare structures. During this period, she held managerial positions as Senior and Chief Nurse. Since 2013, she has been a part-time lecturer at the Department of "Healthcare," Faculty of Public Health at "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" University – Burgas, and two years later, she became a member of the academic staff of the department.

She has proficiency in English at level B1 and Russian at level B2.

The qualification and career development of P. Stefanova fully correspond to the field of the announced competition.

II. General Description of the Submitted Materials for the Competition

The materials submitted by P. Stefanova provide comprehensive information necessary for both quantitative and qualitative assessment of her overall academic development. The documentation is detailed and systematically organized in the form of reports, lists, and supporting evidence.

1. Evaluation of the Candidate's Scientific Activity in the Context of Overall Academic Development

The candidate's scientific output includes 19 scholarly works: 16 publications in non-indexed journals with peer review and edited collective volumes; One monograph and Two teaching aids.

In 68% of the scientific works, the candidate is either the sole or the first author, indicating that she plays a leading role in the research.

Her main research areas can be grouped as follows:

1. Quality of Life and Healthcare:

- Quality of life and prevention in socially significant diseases such as oncology and diabetes
- The role of healthcare services and non-governmental organizations in preserving the quality of life of oncology patients
- The application of telemedicine to optimize home-based health and social care for individuals with functional dependencies and chronic illnesses.

2. Prevention and Public Health:

- Positive health behavior among students as a condition for obesity prevention
- General practitioners' (GPs) assessment of childhood obesity
- Public attitudes and awareness regarding the prevention and early detection of oncological diseases.

3. Engagement of Healthcare Services in Crisis Situations:

- Interaction between medical professionals and parents of children with disabilities
- The need for first aid training in remote areas with limited access to emergency medical services
- Adaptation of healthcare services during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. Evaluation of the Monographic Work Submitted for the Position of "Associate Professor"

The main monographic work, "Multidisciplinary Approach in Home Palliative Care" was published in 2024 and consists of 145 pages. Both the volume and the subject fully meet the minimum requirements for the academic position of Associate Professor and align with the scope of the competition.

The monograph provides a comprehensive analysis of the state of palliative care in Bulgaria, identifying key gaps in the system. Based on the research findings, a model for a multidisciplinary team for home-based palliative care has been developed, which could contribute to improved patient care.

The key recommendations include: Establishing standardized palliative care services; Enhancing funding and structuring of services; Implementing standards to improve accessibility and service quality; Strengthening the role of nurses in managing palliative care services.

3. Citation Impact of the Candidate's Publications in National and International Literature

A list and supporting evidence have been provided for a total of 12 citations by Bulgarian authors: 2 citations in a monograph; 10 citations in non-indexed journals and peer-reviewed collective volumes.

4. Scientific Activity

P. Stefanova has served as an academic mentor for Bulgarian students under the "Student Internships" project and for international students under the

"Erasmus+" program. She has actively participated in 8 research projects funded by the Scientific Research Fund of "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" University and has also volunteered in national projects organized by the Municipality of Burgas - 6 intra-university projects, 1 national project, 1 international project.

III. Comprehensive Qualitative Assessment of Teaching and Methodological Activities, Including Academic Supervision of Students, PhD Candidates, and Trainees

The report on the average teaching workload of Senior Lecturer Petya Stefanova over the past five years is 790 hours, indicating an exceptionally high workload that exceeds the standard for non-habilitated faculty members. The candidate delivers lectures, conducts practical exercises, supervises internships, and administers exams. She has actively worked with students, interns, and graduates, leading to the realization of joint publications. Additionally, she has participated in the training of postgraduate students in continuing education programs (SDO) and paramedics within the Vocational Training Center (VTC).

Stefanova is a co-author of two teaching aids, being the lead author of one of them.

IV. Critical Remarks and Recommendations

It is recommended that the candidate publish in journals that are indexed and referenced in globally recognized databases.

V. General Evaluation of the Candidate's Compliance with the Minimum National Requirements According to the Academic Staff Development Act (ZRASRB)

The data indicate that P. Stefanova meets the mandatory conditions as per the Academic Staff Development Act of the Republic of Bulgaria (Table 1).

Table 1: Comparative Analysis of P. Stefanova's Achievements Against the Minimum Required Points for "Associate Professor" by Indicator Groups

Group of Indicators	Content	Minimum Criteria for Associate Professor	P. Stefanova
A	Indicator 1	50	50 т.
Б	Indicator 2	-	-
В	Indicators 3 and 4	100	100 т.
Г	Sum of indicators 5 to 9	220	272,5 т.
Д	Sum of indicators 10 to 12	60	75 т.
Е	Sum of indicators 13 to the end	20	80 т.
Total		450	577,5

VI. Conclusion

Based on the above, I give my positive assessment and consider that Senior Lecturer Petya Stefanova meets the requirements of the Academic Staff Development Act of the Republic of Bulgaria (ZRASRB).

I recommend to the esteemed members of the Scientific Jury to award her the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the field of higher education 7. Healthcare and Sports, professional field 7.5. Healthcare.

Date: 17.02.2025
City: Plovdiv

Signature:
/Prof. M. Semerdjieva, MD. PhD/