

TO THE CHAIRMAN
OF THE SCIENTIFIC JURY
APPOINTED BY ORDER NO. RD – 257/15.09.2022
OF THE RECTOR OF UNIVERSITY "PROF. AS. ZLATAROV"
BURGAS

REVIEW

by Assoc. Prof. Aleksandar Valkov Valkov, MD, PhD
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Subject: Competition for attaining the academic position of "Associate Professor", higher education field 7. Healthcare and Sports, professional field 7.1. Medicine, scientific specialty of Otorhinolaryngology, for the needs of Faculty of public health and healthcare, University "Professor Asen Zlatarov" - Burgas, promulgated in State Gazette, issue 45 of 17.06.2022.

The only candidate admitted to the announced competition is Dr. Atanas Nachev Vlaykov, PhD. All the documents under the competition procedure meet the legal requirements of the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the related normative documents.

Brief biographical data:

Dr. Atanas Nachev Vlaykov, PhD, was born in 1986. He graduated from high school in High School of Veterinary Medicine - Stara Zagora in 2006. He graduated "Medicine" at Faculty of Medicine, Trakia University, Stara Zagora in 2016. At the same year he became a clinical resident at the Department of Otorhinolaryngology in University Hospital "St. Kirkovitch" – St. Zagora, and in the same time he is a PhD student at the Department of "Otorhinolaryngology and dermatology" in Faculty of Medicine - Stara Zagora. After a competition, he held the positions of Assistant in 2016. In 2019, follows a successful defense of a dissertation on the topic "Effect of local and systemic immune response on nasal congestion and quality of life in

patients with allergic rhinosinusitis". Since 2020 until now he is a Chief Assistant at the Department of "Otorhinolaryngology and ophthalmology" at the Faculty of Medicine, Trakia University, Stara Zagora. He has a specialty in Otorhinolaryngology since 2016.

The candidate has passed many additional qualification courses for training in Bulgaria and abroad, mainly in the field of conservative and operative treatment of diseases of the nose and paranasal cavities. His desire to develop as a researcher and teacher is confirmed by his participation in a number of international educational exchanges under the Erasmus program at leading European universities and university hospitals in Croatia, Finland and Poland.

Dr. Atanas Vlaykov is a member of the following Bulgarian and international scientific organisations:

- Bulgarian Rhinologic Society
- Association of otorhinolaryngologists in south-eastern Bulgaria
- Bulgarian Medical Association
- European Rhinologic Society
- European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology

The candidate's scientometric indicators

To participate in this competition, Dr. Atanas Vlaykov presented **2 publications and reports** (after awarding the educational and scientific degree of Doctor), published in scientific journals, referenced and indexed in international scientific information databases (Scopus and Web of Science), **13 publications and reports** published in unreferenced, scientifically peer-reviewed journals or edited collective volumes, and a **habilitation thesis in the form of a monograph**, entitled: "Allergic Rhinitis and Quality of Life", 2022, Publisher: Markus Bookstore, Stara Zagora, 124 pages, ISBN: 978-619-91543-5-9.

The presented publications and the attached references show **13 citations**. In 11 of them, the candidate is the first author, in 2 is the second author, in 2 is the third or co-author with larger scientific teams. 12 of the articles are published in English, the remaining 3 - in Bulgarian. The presented report for participation in international and national scientific forums includes 24 where Dr. Vlaykov took an active part with abstracts and scientific presentations.

Dr. Vlaykov meets and exceeds the minimum national requirements for scientific and teaching activity for the acquisition of the required scores by groups of indicators for attaining the academic position of Associate Professor, observing the rules for their calculation:

Group	Content	Academic position of Associate Professor (scores)	Dr. Atans Vlaykov's score
A	Indicator 1	50 scores	50 scores
B	Indicator 2	-	-
C	Indicators 3 or 4	100 scores	100 scores
D	Sum of indicators from 5 to 9	220 scores	232 scores
E	Sum of indicators from 10 to 12	60 scores	65 scores
F	Sum of indicators from 13 to the end	20 scores	100 scores
Total scores		450 scores	547 scores

Analysis of the candidate's scientific achievements

I accept the presented self-assessment of the scientific contributions as sufficiently detailed, well-structured and reliable. The topics of the scientific papers and participations in scientific forums, presented by Dr. Atanas Vlaykov, clearly outline some main areas.

In one of the directions, the candidate researches the problems of regulatory immunological mechanisms in allergic diseases of the upper respiratory tract. He performs a thorough analysis of the influence of cytokine molecules (IL-4, 5 and 13) and IgE on the degree of reaction of the nasal mucosa to allergen exposure. For this purpose, he studied the concentration of the above-mentioned molecules in nasal secretions and in blood serum of patients with the two main forms of allergic rhinosinusitis - PAR and IAR and compared the obtained results with a control group of healthy participants. After establishing the concentration of the regulatory molecules, Dr. Vlaykov compares the obtained results with the instrumentally determined nasal congestion, using an acoustic rhinometer. He also analyzes factors

from the patients' lifestyle affected by nasal allergic pathology and the influence they have on the obstruction of the nasal cavity and swelling of the nasal conchae, as well as their relationship to the concentration of interleukin molecules. The studies are characterized by creativity, innovation and leave their positive contribution to the Bulgarian rhinological science.

The second main direction in the scientific activity of Dr. Atanas Vlaykov is his efforts in determining the degree of deterioration of the quality of life of patients with allergic rhinosinusitis, the symptoms having a dominant relation to this, as well as the main factors of their lifestyle, responsible for the stronger clinical expression. Analyzing the quality of life of patients with various types of diseases is extremely relevant in modern medicine, which justifies the author's efforts. The need to introduce clear and accurate criteria for assessing the degree of deterioration of the quality of life of patients with different pathologies is a sore problem that the author has been working on and his contribution would be an impetus for achievement of the desired results. On the other hand, allergic diseases, and allergic rhinosinusitis in particular, show a permanent trend in increasing their frequency among the European population. This fact additionally supports the need for active work on the topic and analyzing the problems of atopic diseases. In his works, Dr. Vlaykov shows considerable awareness and competence in analyzing the factors and conditions leading to temporary and permanent worsening of symptoms and, as a consequence, the quality of life of the patients.

The rare clinical cases published by Dr. Atanas Vlaykov contribute to enriching the experience of both specialists - otorhinolaryngologists and general practitioners and achieving optimal immediate and long-term treatment results.

I also accept as a contribution Dr. Vlaykov's participation in the working group of the Bulgarian Rhinological Society, where he took an active part in the translation and editing of the current recommendations (guideline) of the European consensus on rhinosinusitis and nasal polyposis.

The candidate is working on a joint research project with the Department of Clinical pathology, Chemistry and biochemistry, General and vascular surgery at the Faculty of Medicine - Stara Zagora in the following scientific projects:

- №4/2010 "Dendritic cells and colorectal carcinoma".
- №34/2014 "Influence of physiotherapy on local immunity, clinical course and

quality of life in patients with allergic rhinosinusitis".

- №11/2014 "Influence of local immunity on the intranasal vascular bed, clinical course and quality of life in patients with allergic rhinosinusitis".
- №2/2021 Scientific conference with international participation "35 years of academic education in otorhinolaryngology in Stara Zagora".

Teaching activity:

For the period 2015 - 2021, Dr. Vlaykov taught medical students in Medicine, Midwife, Nurses, Physician assistant, Social workers, Special pedagogy in the disciplines of Otorhinolaryngology, as his activity included practical exercises and seminars in Bulgarian and English, participation in semester exams with students and from 2021 and leading lectures.

In the period 2015-2021, he directed amount of 1885 equivalent hours with teaching students which represents an impressive course load and evidence of rich teaching experience.

Diagnostic-therapeutic and surgical activity:

I have known Dr. Vlaykov since the beginning of his professional development. I believe that he is the successor of the best traditions in the Bulgarian Otorhinolaryngology school and his focused interests in conservative and surgical treatment of ENT diseases that make him a good specialist in the chosen professional field.

Conclusion:

Dr. Atanas Nachev Vlaykov, PhD is an erudite physician and a specialist in the field of Otorhinolaryngology. His professional activity and scientific interests are focused in the area of chronic and allergic diseases of the nasal and paranasal cavities. In this regard, I would like to recommend to Dr. Vlaykov to realize in the future greater publication activity in the field of his scientific interests and to make every effort to train more students, residents and young physicians.

Dr. Atanas Nachev Vlaykov fully meets both the scientometric criteria for the academic position of Associate Professor as per the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, and the quality indicators as set in the

Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of University "Professor Asen Zlatarov" - Burgas.

Due to all the above, I confidently give my positive vote and recommend to the esteemed members of the Scientific Jury to vote for the academic position of Associate Professor in the scientific specialty of Otorhinolaryngology to Dr. Atanas Nachev Vlaykov, PhD, for the needs of Faculty of public health and healthcare, University "Professor Asen Zlatarov" – Burgas.

22.10.2022

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Respectfully:

/Assoc. Prof. Aleksandar Valkov,

