

ACADEMIC STATEMENT

by Prof. Hristina Tancheva Milcheva, PhD

Faculty of Medicine, Thracian University, Stara Zagora, Bulgaria

FHPSE, Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov", Sofia Burgas

Member of the Scientific Jury appointed by Order No 259/15.09.2022.

of the Rector of the University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" - Burgas

Subject: procedure for occupation of the academic position of Associate Professor in the scientific specialty "Social Medicine and Organization of Health Care and Pharmacy", professional field 7.4 "Public Health", (Occupational Therapy) field of higher education 7. Health and Sport (competition announced in the State Gazette, issue 45. 17.06. 2022)

One candidate participated in the competition: Chief Assistant Sonya Kostadinova Nencheva, PhD.

According to the abovementioned Order, I have been appointed to prepare an Written Statement based on an analysis of the documentation submitted by the applicant, in accordance with the requirements and criteria of the Academic Staff Development Law in the Republic of Bulgaria, Asen Zlatarov University - Sofia and the requirements of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of the University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" - Burgas.

Biographical data about the candidate: Sonya Kostadinova Nencheva has a basic education degree "Rehabilitation Therapist", a Bachelor's degree in "Health Care Management" and two Master's degrees in "Health Management" and "Occupational Therapy in the Community". In 2014, she obtained the degree of **Doctor of Education and Science** in the professional field 7.1 Medicine. Her professional career is developing in an upward direction - Honorary Assistant (2016), Assistant Professor, Senior Assistant (2019) at the Department of Physiotherapy, Rehabilitation and Resortology, Faculty of Physiotherapy, Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov University, Burgas, Bulgaria. Assistant Professor. The current competition is a real continuation of her academic career. The candidate has conducted seven additional trainings (qualification courses) with diverse focus. She speaks English and Russian at B1 level.

Evaluation of the candidate's research activity:

1. Quantitative presentation. Sonya Kostadinova Nencheva, PhD participated in the competition with a total of 19 titles and scientific presentations. 4 of them are related to her dissertation and 1 monograph. Of the 14 scientific publications presented, the majority are publications in Bulgarian scientific journals - 10, 4 of them are publications in proceedings of scientific conferences, and journals abroad. In 7 of the scientific publications the candidate is an independent author, in 7 of them she is a co-author. All publications are peer-reviewed and indexed. There are 14 citations in the scientific press of which 3 in monographs, 6 in a textbook, 1 in a practical manual and in peer-reviewed publications.

Quantitatively, the candidate fully meets the national requirements in the indicators (A to F), and in some of the indicators exceeds them, as well as the requirements specified in the Regulations for the Development of Academic Staff of the University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov", Burgas. Out of the required 450 points in all indicators, the candidate scored a total of 570 points.

2. Areas of scientific research activity and contributions of scientific works:

The thematic areas and contributions of the scientific works mentioned by the candidate can be summarized in 5 main areas:

1. **Public health - health promotion, prevention of diseases and their complications, prevention of socially significant diseases, health awareness and education of patients and their relatives as part of the occupational therapy process** (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14).
2. **Integrated medico-social care and ethical aspects of healthcare for people with chronic diseases** (1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14).
3. **Quality of life and health care** (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14).
4. **Quality of medical education and training of health care professionals** (1, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14).
5. **Health Management and Health Care Management** (1, 4, 5, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14).

The scientific research activity of Chief Assistant Sonya Kostadinova Nencheva, PhD is in the subject area of the competition. In all the mentioned areas, the candidate addresses key issues related to public health, *occupational therapy approaches* in solving health problems of people with chronic and oncological diseases.

In the presented scientific work are considered and analyzed current issues in the field of public health, integrated medical and social care, quality of life and health care of people with chronic diseases, prevention of socially significant diseases, medical ethics, medical education, health management, etc.

The ethical aspects of palliative care are highlighted with particular emphasis and they are the major theme of the monograph. An attempt is made to outline the framework of ethical

problems and to give recommendations for overcoming them. for the realization of effective palliative care. A *innovative, comprehensive theoretical-practical model of health care training* for the application of a medico-social approach to socially significant diseases is developed, in response to the needs and expectations of patients for improving their health and quality of life.

Another important issue that the candidate is researching is the problem of *oral health and nutrition in the elderly*. Emphasis is placed on the need for a multidisciplinary approach to treating and maintaining optimal oral health and quality of life in these patients. An important focus of the candidate's research is on *occupational therapy approaches* to diseases of connective tissues and musculoskeletal system, self-care and the risk of complications for patients. The importance of *occupational therapy and art therapy* in terms of maintaining mental health in cancer patients is also emphasized, which is a guarantee for their quality of life. The importance of *occupational therapy* is pointed out in terms of environmental modification to ensure patient safety and prevent falls and their following limitations, social isolation and quality of life. The candidate discusses the *role of occupational therapy* in overcoming inequalities and ensuring a dignified and independent life for people with diabetes mellitus with their active participation.

She has been involved in a total of 4 projects - 3 university projects, one of which he was the project leader, and one international project.

The contributions of the scientific works of prof. Sonia Kostadinova Nencheva, PhD are of theoretical-cognitive, methodological and practical-applied character in the mentioned directions. The presented scientific work is the basis for a convincingly **positive evaluation** of the candidate's scientific and research activity.

Evaluation of the candidate's teaching activity:

The candidate Chief Assistant Sonya Kostadinova Nencheva, PhD has pedagogical experience (5 years) certified by the attached References for teaching workload for the period from 2016 until now, realized at the University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov - Burgas. She teaches students in the professional field of "Public Health", Bachelor's degree specialty "Medical Rehabilitation and Ergotherapy" and Master's degree "Balneo-SPA and Wellness Management", as well as students in the professional field of "Health Care", Bachelor's degree "Professional Bachelor", specialties "Rehabilitator" and "Assistant Pharmacist" at the Medical College. She conducts lectures, exercises and seminars in 8 main academic

disciplines, as well as the clinical practice and pre-diploma internship of students of the specialty "Medical Rehabilitation and Occupational Therapy".

She is involved in the development and teaching of 2 curricula for the courses and she is a member of the Quality Committee and the Curriculum Documentation Committee. She has been the Secretary of the Department of Physiotherapy, Rehabilitation and Resortology, University of Prof. Dr. A. Zlatarov" - Burgas, for the period 2016 - 2018.

The submitted Workload Report shows that the applicant's workload exceeds the statutory workload by academic year.

On the basis of the documentation presented. I give my **positive assessment** of her teaching and learning activities.

Conclusion:

On the basis of the abovementioned contributions in the scientific research and teaching activity of the Chief Assistant Sonia Kostadinova Nencheva, Ph.D. I give a **positive evaluation and my positive vote "Yes"** and I propose to the distinguished members of the Scientific Jury to elect **Chief Assistant Sonya Kostadinova Nencheva, PhD to the academic position of "Associate Professor"** in the scientific specialty "Social Medicine and Organization of Health Care and Pharmacy", professional field 7.4 "Public Health" (Ergotherapy), field of higher education 7. Health and Sport for the Faculty of Public Health and Health Care at the University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" - Burgas (competition announced in the State Gazette, issue 45/ 17.06. 2022).

03.11. 2022

Stara Zagora

Prof. Hristina Milcheva, PhD