

# STATEMENT

**by Prof. Dr. Mladen Vladimirov Grigorov, PhD, DSci**

(External member of the Scientific Jury, approved by Order № P-109-175/23. 04. 2021 of the Rector of MU-Varna)

**Subject:** Competition for the occupation of the academic position “Associate Professor” in the field of higher education 7. Health and Sports, in the professional field 7.1. Medicine and scientific specialty "Cardiology" for the needs of the First Department of Internal Diseases, Faculty of Medicine at the Medical University-Varna and for the Second Clinic of Cardiology at the University Hospital "St. Marina”- Varna.

By Order № P-109-175/23. 04. 2021 of the Rector of MU-Varna prof. Dr. Valentin Ignatov, PhD, I have been appointed as a member of the Scientific Jury and I have been appointed to prepare an opinion on the procedure for filling the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the scientific specialty "Cardiology" at MU-Varna, announced in State Gazette No. 17/26. 02. 2021.

One candidate took part in the announced competition – Sen. Assist. Prof. Dr. Antoniya Rumenova Kisheva, PhD.

## **I. Brief details of the applicant**

Dr. Antonia Kisheva was born on 10.08.1974. She graduated from the First Language School in the town of Varna in 1993. She graduated as a doctor from MU-Varna in 1999. In December 2017 she defended her dissertation as a PhD student in the Department of Internal Medicine at the Faculty of Medicine of MU-Varna and obtained the degree of Doctor of Medicine in the scientific specialty of Cardiology with the topic "Role of fibrosis and blocking of mineralocorticoid receptors in atrial fibrillation". Since 2007, she has a recognized specialty in General Medicine, and in 2014 she took a specialty in Cardiology. She is qualified in echocardiography - fundamental and expert level, since 2014 and 2017 respectively.

Dr. Antonia Kisheva's work experience started with working as a family doctor in her own practice (2002). Since April 2008. works at the 1st Clinic of Cardiology of the St. Marina. " Her academic development as a university lecturer began in March 2014 with winning a competition for assistant professor at the Department of Internal Medicine of the Faculty of Medicine of MU-Varna.

## **II. Research activity**

For the current competition Dr. Antonia Kisheva has submitted 18 scientific papers, including one monograph, 14 articles, 3 reports and one project. Publications are in the field of internal medicine,

cardiology, neurology. There are 40 papers presented, of which 32 have printed abstracts. The contributions are in 6 scientific areas: atrial fibrillation, cardiac fibrosis, neurology, ultrasound diagnosis, heart failure and atherosclerosis. The overall impact factor is about 10. 0. Of particular importance is the protocol for collaboration between neurologists and cardiologists in stroke patients, and the established link between Galectin-3 and cardiac fibrosis. According to the summary of her scientific works, Dr. Kisheva is an independent author in 4 publications, first author in 10, second author in 2 and third and subsequent author in 3 of the scientific works. The scientific work of Dr. A. Kisheva is accessible to the medical and pharmaceutical scientific community, as well as to the wider medical audience in Bulgaria and abroad.

Among the most important contributions of the scientific works of Dr. Antonia Kisheva, PhD I would point out:

#### Direction atrial fibrillation

- For the first time in Bulgaria, the role of fibrosis in the development and maintenance of AF was investigated by biomarker testing.
- For the first time in Bulgaria and one of the first worldwide studies of Galectin-3 in AF.
- For the first time in Bulgaria and one of the first studies in the world, the use of spironolactone in people with AF was prospectively investigated.
- One of the first studies demonstrating the role of gout as an independent risk factor for AF was conducted.
- For the first time in Bulgaria and one of the first studies in the world on the relationship between AF, coronary artery calcium scoring and Galectin-3.
- The influence of age, female sex and arterial hypertension (AH) on the progression of AF has been confirmed.
- Higher baseline Galectin-3 values have been confirmed in patients with AF in comparison with healthy subjects.

#### Direction Cardiac fibrosis

- For the first time in Bulgaria the role of Galectin-3 in cardiovascular diseases was investigated.
- One of the first studies in the world linking Galectin-3 as a marker of fibrosis to CHA2DS2Vasc score.
- For the first time worldwide, an association between Galectin-3 levels as a marker of fibrosis and gout has been established.
- A positive association was found between AH and Galectin-3.
- The relationship between age, kidney function and Galectin-3 levels has been confirmed.

#### Direction Ultrasound diagnostics

- Transcranial Doppler with contrast is used for the first time in Bulgaria in a cardiology clinic for the diagnosis of right-left shunt

#### Direction Heart failure

- One of the few studies in Bulgaria on the role of iron deficiency in heart failure

#### Direction of Atherosclerosis

- One of the few studies in Bulgaria investigating the role of atherosclerosis in AF

Dr. Kisheva's participation in the project "Randomized clinical trial to evaluate the efficacy and safety of adding to the therapy of aldosterone antagonist for reduction of atrial fibrillation attacks with restored sinus rhythm" at the Medical Science Fund, Medical University-Varna has enabled the development of much of the research in the areas of atrial fibrillation and cardiac fibrosis, most of which are innovative nationally and globally. I highly appreciate the originally developed monographic work "Stroke – the cardiologist's point of view", where the main risk factors, the pathophysiological interactions between the cardiovascular and nervous system are discussed and systematized, an algorithm for diagnosis, prevention and treatment with an emphasis on cardiac involvement is presented. I am confident that this will be a very valuable teaching and practice tool for physicians, fellows and students with an interest in cardiology.

**Quotability.** A total of 8 citations are presented: 6 of them are found in Bulgarian sources and 2 in foreign databases.

### **III. Evaluation of teaching and learning activities**

Dr. Antonia Kisheva, PhD has more than 7 years of teaching experience. According to the reference issued by the "Teaching" Department of MU-Varna for the previous 5 academic years her average teaching load is 187 hours. Since 2016, Dr. Kisheva has been training students under the project "Student Practices", as part of the priority axis "Education and Lifelong Learning" of the Operational Programme "Science and Education for Intelligent Growth". In 2016, she also began teaching courses to cardiology students at the FED.

She conducts individual training in Echocardiography, the fundamental level of Cardiology specialists.

**Personal impressions.** I know Dr. Antoniya Kisheva, PhD from our joint work on several research and training projects, and I can say that I am impressed by her organization, precision and commitment to the learning process and extra-curricular work with the students.

### **CONCLUSION**

Sen. Assist. Prof. Dr. Antonia Rumenova Kisheva, PhD presented herself in the announced competition with a significant number of real original publications, 1 monographic work and 8 citations. The scientific works of Dr. Kisheva contain significant scientific-theoretical and applied contributions. The

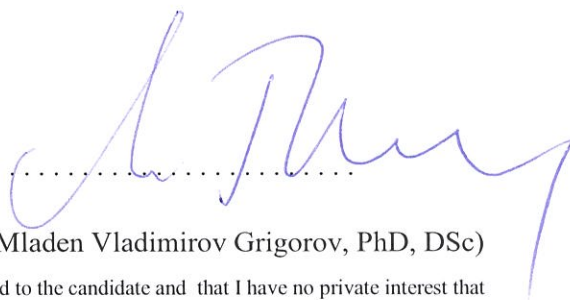
candidate has extensive teaching experience and a teaching load averaging 200 hours over the past two years. With all these data, Dr. Antoniya Kisheva, PhD fully meets and exceeds the uniform minimum requirements for the academic position "Associate Professor", according to the Law on Academic Research, the Regulations for its implementation and the PRAS at MU-Varna.

**All of the above gives me reason to vote positively and with full conviction to propose to the Honorable Scientific Jury to elect ANTONIYA RUMENOVA KISHEVA, PhD to the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the scientific specialty "Cardiology" for the needs of the Second Clinic of Cardiology - non-invasive at the University Hospital "St. Marina" EAD - Varna.**

Sofia

25 June 2021

Member of the Scientific Jury:.....



(Prof. Dr. Mladen Vladimirov Grigorov, PhD, DSc)

(By signing here, I also declare that I am not related to the candidate and that I have no private interest that may influence the impartial and objective performance of my opinion in the present competition for the position of "Associate Professor")