

**To Prof. Dr. Rumen Konstantinov, MD, PhD  
Chairman of the Scientific Jury,  
appointed by order No. R-109-370/21.09.2022  
of the Rector of the Medical University - Varna  
for the announced competition for AP "Professor"  
SG no. 59/26.07.2022г.**

**STATEMENT  
of  
Prof. Dr. Temenuga Zhekova Stoeva, MD, PhD  
Medical University - Varna  
Department of "Microbiology and Virology"**

**On competition  
for occupying the academic position "Professor"  
in the field of higher education  
7. Health care and sports  
Professional field 7.1 Medicine  
scientific specialty "Epidemiology"  
for the needs of the "Hygiene and Epidemiology" Department  
Training Sector of Epidemiology  
to the Faculty of "Public Health" at the MU - Varna**

**announced in SG no. 59/26.07.2022**

**with candidate associate professor Dr. Tsonko Paunov Paunov, MD, PhD**

**CAREER DEVELOPMENT**

Assoc. professor Dr. Tsonko Paunov graduated in Medicine at the Medical University - Plovdiv in 1993. In the period 1993-1998 he works in the City Polyclinic of the town of Septemvri as a doctor in the "Emergency and Urgent Care" unit. In 1998 after a competition, he started working in the Department of Infectious Diseases, Epidemiology and Tropical Medicine of the University of Varna as an assistant, and since 2002 and 2004 was elected Senior and Chief Assistant respectively. In 2003 he acquired a specialty "Epidemiology of infectious diseases".

In 2012 he was elected associate professor of epidemiology at the department. In the period 2007-2010 he develops and successfully defends a dissertation for the acquisition of a PhD in the scientific specialty "Epidemiology". Since 2020 he is the head of the "Hygiene and Epidemiology" department at MU-Varna. Since 2003 Assoc. Prof. Paunov works as a hospital epidemiologist at St. Marina University hospital, Varna.

Since 2002 to date, the candidate has participated in variety of courses in the field of infectious diseases and epidemiology, modern methods of sterilization, disinfection and control of nosocomial infections and those associated with MDR microorganisms, as well as on the processes of disinfestation and deratization, trainings, that support his professional development and scientific research.

The candidate has participated in 7 research projects, one of which is European (2010-2012), one International (2017-2019), one under the Science Fund of MU-Varna (2018-2021) and one funded by The Third Health Program of the European Union. In the period 2014-2023 assoc.prof. Paunov participates as an academic mentor in two projects of the MES "Student Practices".

He is a member of prestigious scientific organizations in Bulgaria: Bulgarian Scientific Society for Epidemiology of Infectious and Non-Infectious Diseases, Bulgarian Association for Prevention and Control of Nosocomial Infections "BulNozo", Pest Control Association and Bulgarian Scientific Society for Public Health.

## **RESEARCH ACTIVITY**

### **Scientific production**

The submitted documentation of Assoc. prof. Dr. Tsonko Paunov is in accordance with the requirements for conducting a competition for AP "Professor". To participate in this competition, he submitted a total of 58 scientific papers, which are distributed as follows:

1. Monograph - habilitation thesis: "Modern aspects of the prevention and control of infectious diseases" - **1** item
2. Publications in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world databases with scientific information - **7** items
3. Full-text publications in non-refereed journals with ISSN with scientific review - **23** items
4. Participation in scientific forums after 2012 – **30** items

The research activity of assoc. prof. Paunov is presented in 8 main directions, all specifically related to current problems of the epidemiology of infectious diseases, immunoprophylaxis and modern medicine, with the emphasis on the epidemiology and control of hospital acquired infections and the problems of Disinfection, Disinsection and Deratization.

Significant contributions have been made in all directions, and I would like to highlight the most important of them:

- A long-term comparative study (2006 - 2020) of the organization of epidemiological surveillance of healthcare-associated infections (HAIs) in the conditions of a large University Hospital, the adequacy of HAI registration, trends in the etiological structure of nosocomial infections in the conditions of increased antibiotic pressure, and the mechanisms to limit these infections have been deduced, a change in the policy of resource management in order to improve the training of the staff and the interrelationships between the individual hospital structures in order to achieve adequate control of infections.
- The organization, management and control of the activities related to disinfection, disinsection and deratization for a 5-year period in the conditions of a large university hospital were studied. The need has been proven and the advantages of introducing a targeted program on DDD as an important element of the prevention and control of HAIs and the protection of hospital staff have been indicated.
- The basic and modern methods of disinfection and sterilization are presented in details, and the wrong practices related to the reprocessing of disposable devices and the maintenance of central and peripheral vascular devices are shown and discussed.
- An in-depth analysis of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the registration, profile of HAIs, as well as on the profile of their etiological spectrum was carried out.
- The level of immunization coverage in the Varna region was studied with an assessment of its importance for public health, and recommendations were made regarding the provision of resources and improvement of the organization.
- The organizational, methodical, and applied actions for the implementation of epidemiological surveillance of manageable infections in the Varna region were evaluated and measures were proposed to improve the work on epidemiological control.
- In-depth studies have been carried out on post-vaccination antituberculosis immunity in childhood in the Varna region, and specific recommendations have been made to improve this type of immunoprophylaxis.
- The epidemiological characteristics of HIV infection in the Varna Region for a long period (2004-2017) were studied and an analysis was made of the specificities of the epidemic process and the risk in the conditions of intensive international transport, with an emphasis on medical specialists and persons practicing maritime professions.

Assoc. prof. Dr. Tsonko Paunov is first or sole author in 4 of the publications, second author in 9, third - in 9 and subsequent author in 10 of them, i.e. its leading role and contribution are in 65%. The total IF of the scientific production is 1.184. The author's individual h index is 2 (Google Scholar).

Assoc. prof. Paunov's scientific works have been cited a total of 13 times: one citation in a scientific publication, referenced and indexed in world databases with scientific information; five citations in monographs and 7 - in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals.

### **EDUCATIONAL-TEACHING ACTIVITY**

Assoc. prof. Paunov is a respected university professor with over 20 years of teaching experience. Its total auditory occupancy for the last 5 academic years is 1287 hours, of which 1221 are hours in the English language program. He actively participates in the preparation of study programs, conducting exercises and lectures for students from 10 specialties, among them Medicine BLE and ELE (including intern-doctors), Dental Medicine BLE and ELE, Inspector of Public Health, Master of Public Health, Midwife, Nurse, Medical Laboratory Technician. He has successfully supervised 4 graduate students and is the supervisor of 4 PhD students, one of whom successfully defended his thesis.

### **CONCLUSION**

Assoc. prof. Dr. Tsonko Paunov is a highly qualified scientist, with excellent expertise in the field of epidemiology of infectious diseases, with many years of teaching experience, as well as extensive practical experience in the field of surveillance and control of infectious diseases and hospital epidemiology. I know him as a very responsible professional, dedicated to work and students, precise and very dialogical in his relationships with his colleagues.

The scientific metrics, the contributions of his scientific production and his teaching activities are fully in line with and exceed the minimum national requirements of the Law of Development of the Academic Staff and the minimum requirements of the MU-Varna for occupying the academic position "Professor". Based on all this, as a member of the Scientific Jury, I strongly support his candidacy and recommend to the Scientific Jury to elect Assoc. prof. Dr. Tsonko Paunov, MD, PhD, as a professor of the scientific specialty "Epidemiology" for the needs of the Department of "Hygiene and Epidemiology", Training Sector of Epidemiology " of Medical University - Varna.

28.11.2022

Signature:



/Prof. Dr. Temenuga Stoeva, MD, PhD/