

REVIEW

from

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Concerning: Competition for academic position "Professor" – declared in SG issue 62/06.08.2019 in the scientific specialty "Social Medicine and Organisation of Health Care and Pharmacy (expertise of working capacity)", professional field 7.1. Medicine, in the field of the higher education 7. Healthcare and sport, for the needs of the Department "Hygiene and Epidemiology", in the Faculty of Public Health at the Medical University "Prof. Dr. P. Stoyanov" – Varna.

1. Information for the procedure

According to Order P-109-313/07.10.2019 of the Rector of MU-Varna and Protocol No 1/21.10.2019 from a meeting of the scientific jury I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury and to prepare a review concerning the competition for the AP "Professor" in the scientific specialty "Social Medicine and Organisation of Health Care and Pharmacy (expertise of working capacity)".

The competition was announced in SG issue 62/06.08.2019. It is in accordance with Academic Staff Development Act in Republic of Bulgaria from 2018 and the Rules of the Medical University - Varna. On the basis of the abovementioned legal documents, all the procedural requirements for the announcement of the competition, the deadline for submission of documents and the choice of a scientific jury are met.

The only candidate is Assoc. Prof. Paraskeva Mancheva Draganova, MD, PhD, DSc.

2. Brief information about the candidate's career development and qualifications

Paraskeva Mancheva Draganova was born in 1964 in Dobrich. She graduated medicine at Medical University-Varna in 1989. In the period 1994 - 2001 she acquired three specialties: Internal Medicine, Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine and General Medicine. In 2013, she successfully defended her dissertation for doctoral degree with the title "Legal awareness for the legalization of euthanasia and quality of life of polymorbid patients with permanent disability". In 2014, she held the academic position of Associate Professor at Medical College of MU-Varna, and at the end of the same year she received her master's degree in law and acquired legal capacity at the Ministry of Justice (August 2015). Since 2018, Assoc. Prof. Mancheva is a Doctor of Science after successfully defending her thesis "Medical and Social Problems of Disability in the System of Medical Expertise".

Dr. Mancheva's work experience began in 1989 as a resident in the internal ward of the Regional Hospital in Kavarna. From 1999 to 2014, she held the academic positions of assistant, senior assistant and chief (administrative) assistant at MU-Varna.

Dr. Mancheva has undergone a number of additional qualifications and specializations: abdominal ultrasound (1993), echocardiography (1993), positive psychotherapy (1999), family

planning (2000), depression and anxiety (2008), Ayurveda (2018), traditional Chinese Medicine and Acupuncture (2018), Cancer Rehabilitation (2019).

Since 2017, Assoc. Prof. Mancheva has been managing the University Center for Eastern Medicine at MU-Varna. Assoc. Prof. Mancheva participated in 5 research projects in the period 2006 - 2010. She is fluent in Russian and English.

3. General compliance of the candidate with the requirements of Rules for the development of academic staff of MU-Varna

	Conditions according to Rules for the development of academic staff	Information about the candidate
1.	To have acquired PhD in the relevant scientific specialty	Yes – 2013
2.	Requirements for term and academic workload of at least 100 hours on average per year for 4 years	Yes Uniform workload of an average of 329.75 hours per year
3.	To have published monograph	Yes
4.	To have submitted original research papers - publications, at least 25, excluding the ones submitted for the academic position of Associate Professor	Yes – 31
5.	To be the scientific supervisor of at least three PhD students, of which at least two to have successfully defended their dissertations and at least one to be within the same scientific specialty	Yes – three have successfully defended and one is ongoing
6.	To have a recognized specialty within the healthcare system	Yes

4. Characteristics of the monograph/habilitation work

The candidate presents the habilitation work "Disability with TEMC - Problems and Solutions." with ISBN 978-954-449-968-6 / 978-619-221-142-4. It was published on paper in a circulation of 230 (with 200 pieces required). The habilitation work examines in depth one important and often neglected medical and social problem in our country - disability. Unlike the traditional methodological approach to temporary and permanent work incapacity in our socio-medical literature, Assoc. Prof. Mancheva offers conceptual definitions, interrelations between national and European legislation and presents the perspective of people with disabilities in order to convey the main message for disability rehabilitation and the options for optimization of the system of medical expertise. The contributing character of the monograph is undoubted against the background of a lack of systematic literature focusing at the same time on the public health and socio-legal aspects of disability and can be used in undergraduate and postgraduate training in the fields of medicine, social work and law, as well as if it is of interest to those working in the field of medical expertise. The paper was reviewed by Prof. Dr. Stoyanka Popova, a public health specialist and by Assoc. Prof. Stanislav Koev, PhD in law, with both reviews included in the publication. The bibliography includes 280 sources (with 160 required). There are no promotional materials in the monograph.

5. Quantity scientific indicators and scientific contributions

Minimum required points by groups of indicators for the academic position of "Professor" according to the Academic Staff Development Act in Republic of Bulgaria from 2018 and rules for its implementation

Group of indicators	Content	Professor Academic Staff Development Act in Republic of Bulgaria (2018) and rules for its implementation (number of points)	Paraskeva Mancheva
A	Indicator 1: Dissertation for doctoral degree	50	50
Б	Indicator 2: Dissertation for the award of scientific degree "Doctor of Science"	-	100
B	Indicator 3 or 4: Habilitation work, i.e. monograph, presented in connection with the habilitation procedure	100	100
Г	Total of indicators from 5 to 9: Publications	200	490
Д	Total of indicators from 20 to 12: Citations	100	245
E	Total of indicators from 13 to the end	100	370

As can be seen from the comparison, the candidate exceeds the national criteria for the academic position of "Professor".

Scientific works and scientific contributions.

The review of Paraskeva Mancheva's scientific production shows: concentration of her scientific potential; careful selection of appropriate publication platforms so that her works reach the targeted audience and have a chance to make their practical contributions; her striving to maintain high quality and methodological synchronization in contrast to some of the vicious practices of chaotic accumulation of quantitative scientific indicators in our country.

In addition to the given evidence for fulfillment of the minimum requirements for the position, the candidate submitted 30 publications, respectively: 16 publications related to the dissertations for "doctor" and "doctor of science" and 14 articles in scientific journals. These publications date from the period after 2004 and confirm the conclusion about Paraskeva Mancheva's focused scientific interests in polymorbid chronically ill patients throughout the range of clarifying concepts, patient problems, integrated multidisciplinary approach in care, quality of life and opportunities for social inclusion to the system of medical expertise and the training of medical professionals to work in this context.

The contribution of Assoc. Prof. Mancheva's in the 43 publications, presented to the jury's attention is distributed as follows:

1. Single author - 12 publications - 28%
2. First author - 9 publications - 21%
3. Second author - 15 publications - 35%
4. Third and subsequent author - 7 publications - 16%

I fully accept the candidate's distribution of the scientific publications into five thematic fields:

1. Medico-social and legal problems of people with disabilities in the system of medical expertise, health and social systems.
2. Investigation of the legal awareness of euthanasia of patients with disabilities from the system of medical expertise.
3. Organization of the system of medical expertise of working capacity.
4. Improvement of the student training (rehabilitation, kinesitherapy and ergotherapy) with the aim of complex rehabilitation of the chronically ill and restoration of his/hers working capacity.
5. Opportunities for the introduction of Eastern medicine as adjunctive therapy for patients with chronic disabling conditions.

In **the first thematic field**, the patient's path from GP to TEMC is traced, in the way it is normatively determined. The difficulties have been formulated and possibilities for optimization of the procedure have been proposed, as well as the role of the expert decision has been determined through the prism of the rights of people with disabilities (*applied science contribution*) (Б/2_1, Г/8_8, Г/9_1, ИА/1, ИБ/1, ИБ/4, ИБ/5, ИБ/9, ИГ/3). The candidate has systematically approached and investigated the opinion of patients with disabilities about the functioning of the medical expertise system. It is disturbing to conclude that there is no positive change in the status and quality of life of the witnessed, as well as the underestimated role of rehabilitation and the absence of the labor-legal function of the TEMC. The candidate does not overlook the public health impact of National Insurance Institute's expenses on the Disability Function and the danger of stereotyping and stigmatization (if they are not there yet) towards the disabled as a "non-valuable social group" too which a significant public resource is ineffectively directed (*theoretical and methodological as well as applied science contribution*) (Г/8_1, Г/8_5, ИА/2, ИБ/3, ИБ/8). In this context, it is logical to examine the reasons for the inadequate social integration of people with disabilities, what is the subject of publications Г/8_2, Г/8_10, ИБ/2, ИБ/7 and ИБ/11. The results of the focus groups studies give Assoc. Prof. Mancheva grounds to recommend to the National Assembly legislative amendments towards the unification of medical and social assessment of disability; referral to TEMC of employed people only; setting up a specialized Children's Expert Medical Committee; the retired population (by age and length of service) to undergo only social assessment (*applied science contribution*).

The **second thematic field** includes studies on euthanasia, which are unique by character and methodology. Not only that the candidate enriches the theoretical knowledge on the subject, its legal regulation, and main stands in the ethical debate (*theoretical and methodological contribution*) (Г/8_24, Г/8_25, Г/7_1, Г/8_13, Г/8_14, ИА/3, ИА/4, ИА/5), but she has also developed instruments of study of legal consciousness (*applied science contribution*). The latter allow her to provide empirical evidence for the thesis that the primary motive of patients to desire euthanasia is the poor quality of life; a motive that has long been exploited in the ethical literature on the subject. To study such a phenomenon in the context of a legal ban of end-of-life medical intervention is extremely

difficult, both in terms of methodology that would allow access to the target group in accordance with ethical principles for research and validation of the results. Contrary to the traditional argument in favor of euthanasia, Assoc. Prof. Mancheva finds that polymorbid patients with disabilities from TEMC do not approve the legalization of euthanasia in Bulgaria, what "gives green light" to the health and social systems to seek for new approaches to solve the problems of euthanasia before discussing legislative amendments on it (*de lege ferenda practical contribution*) (A/1_1, Г/8_15, Г/8_16), which would strike new and unknown moral responsibilities on medical professionals.

The applicant's multidisciplinary qualification including clinical experience in internal medicine, physical and rehabilitation medicine, general medicine, expert work at TEMC and training in law enables her to pursue innovative scientific research on the organization of the system of medical expertise of working capacity in **the third thematic field**. The current status of the system is analyzed, its disadvantages and the potential for practical solutions (*theoretical and methodological as well as applied science contribution*) are outlined (Г/8_11, Г/8_12, Г/8_17, Г/8_18, Г/8_19, Г/8_20). A survey on the opinion of the stakeholders' experts served as a basis for formulation of the need for a unified medico-social assessment of disability, the separation of different groups of workers, retired people and children and a unified hierarchical control (*applied science contribution*) (Г/8_3, Г/8_4, Г/8_6, Г/8_9, ИБ/6, ИБ/10). Assoc. Prof. Mancheva doesn't limit herself to only identifying problems and outlining ideas for reforms, but also develops a concept of a model for a complex medico-social assessment of working capacity, adapted to the European experience, where she sets a new hierarchical structure of the system and a complex one-act medico-social expertise towards ensuring a timely and adequate social integration. The developed conceptual model can guarantee an increase in the number of people with disabilities who have received a complex rehabilitation, restored their working capacity or re-qualified in accordance to their preserved working capabilities (*theoretical and methodological as well as applied science contribution*) (B/3_1, Г/8_7, E/20_1).

The work in the system of medical expertise, as well as the care for people with chronic disabling diseases, are carried out by the medical professionals that we train. In this line of reasoning, an in-depth researcher cannot fail to examine the training and to look for possible mechanisms to improve it in the direction of a complex rehabilitation of the chronically ill person and the restoration of his/her working capacity. This is the focus of Assoc. Prof. Mancheva's works in **the fourth thematic field**. She studies the attitude, needs and satisfaction from the teaching process and the realization on the labor market among rehabilitation students; evaluates training methods; makes suggestions for expansion of the curriculum (*theoretical and methodological as well as applied science contribution*). The satisfaction of end-users - patients - with the work of rehabilitators and kinesiologists was also studied, what guarantees a holistic science-based approach to the improvement of the academic content (*applied science contribution*) (ИБ/1, ИБ/2, ИБ/3, ИГ/1, ИГ/2, ИГ/4, ИГ/5, ИГ/6, ИГ/7, ИГ/8).

In my view, the strongest innovation potential can be found in the candidate's works within **the fifth thematic field** - opportunities for the introduction of Eastern medicine as adjunctive therapy for patients with chronic disabling conditions. With the birth of the modern hospice movement in the 1960s, the concept of palliative/hospice care incorporated "unconventional medical practices", such as aromatherapy, reflexology and other less known techniques. There is accumulated evidence of patient satisfaction, but studies on benefits are scarce even in countries with strong traditions in hospice care. Under these circumstances of practical and scientific vacuity for the application of Eastern medicine in Bulgaria in general, the research of Assoc. Prof. Mancheva on the possibilities for cooperation between Eastern and Western medicine with a focus on the problems of chronically

ill disabled patients (*theoretical and methodological as well as applied science contribution*) (IIΓ/10, Γ/8_21, Γ/8_22, Γ/8_23, IIIΓ/9) is unique and I strongly recommend her to continue these studies in her further professional development.

Citations. The candidate has presented a reference from the library of Medical University “Prof. Dr. P. Stoyanov“ Varna including 3 citations in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in the world databases; 2 citations in monographs and collective volumes under scientific review and 36 citations in non-referenced journals under scientific review. Auto-citations have been excluded. The citations bring a total of 245 points to Assoc. Prof. Mancheva, with minimum national requirements for this indicator - 100 points.

Scientific activity.

Participation in scientific projects. Paraskeva Mancheva is actively involved in scientific projects in broader fields than the above mentioned and analyzed thematic fields of scientific work, namely:

- Improvement of the sexual and reproductive health of young people in Bulgaria (joint project of the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Science and Education and United Nations Population Fund, 2016)
- National Program on HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control: Training in modern methods of prevention, consultation, diagnosis and treatment (2007);
- Prevention and control of HIV/AIDS (joint project with the Ministry of Health, National Center for Infectious and Parasitic Diseases and MU-Varna): Training of medical students, nurses, midwives and social workers on HIV / AIDS prevention and control (2008);
- Training of GPs in mental health: dealing with depression and anxiety in general medical practice (bilateral cooperation agreement between the governments of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Flanders Region, Belgium, 2008);
- Internship in palliative medicine for medical students (2009 and 2010).

The practical orientation of the projects towards current hot health problems and the engagement of Paraskeva Mancheva's public health expertise for the implementation of health promotion activities among the general population and the medical community are noteworthy.

Dissemination of the scientific results at scientific events in Bulgaria and abroad.

Paraskeva Mancheva reports 14 participations in scientific events accompanied by abstracts, 3 of which are scientific events abroad. These participations were not reported for the acquisition of the doctoral degree and the degree of Doctor of Science nor for the occupation of the academic position of Associated Professor. In addition to the thematic fields of the scientific publications, Assoc. Prof. Mancheva also presents scientific reports in the field of general medicine and forensic psychiatric expertise.

As a result of the complex evaluation of the quantity scientific indicators and scientific contributions, I believe that theoretical and methodological contributions can be clearly differentiated in each thematic field. In each of the fields there is a potential for future professional development of the candidate. Assoc. Prof. Mancheva demonstrates excellent methodological skills both in terms of the use of traditional quantitative methods of study and in terms of the application of the qualitative methods. The scientific approach is complete with a close-up of the cycle beginning with the conceptual clarification, systematic review of available research, own studies with originally

developed instruments, and development of new models to address the identified problems in the functioning of the health and social systems and the training of medical professionals.

6. Educational activity

As of September 11, 2019, Paraskeva Mancheva has 20 years 2 months and 7 days of teaching experience. Since 2015, she has accomplished respectively 339, 321, 342 and 317 academic hours per year.

Assoc. Prof. Mancheva's workload includes lectures and seminars in: general medicine, labor and insurance law, medical expertise of working capacity, medico-social aspects of disabilities, Eastern medicine, kinesitherapy, therapeutic massage and reflex therapy. The candidate is also involved in teaching in English.

In support of the educational process in 2018, Paraskeva Mancheva published a textbook "Expertise of working capacity" with ISBN 978-619-241-006-3. The textbook is targeted towards students, trainees and practitioners, and fills a very important niche of shortage of appropriate literature for training in the field of expertise of working capacity. The textbook is organized in four modules that develop theoretically and practically the issues of the expertise of working capacity. In the first module a retrospection is made of the organizational and methodological foundations of the examination of work capacity in Bulgaria and a linkage is made to the current legislation of the expertise of working capacity. The second module examines the object and subjects of the expertise of working capacity. The procedure, preparation, results of the activity, as well as the structure, organization and control of the medical expertise are presented in the third module. The fourth module is dedicated to the expert's decision as a legal basis for the complex rehabilitation of people with disabilities, its problems and perspectives.

Assoc. Prof. Mancheva's teaching activity is also enriched with supervision of PhD students. She works with four PhD students. Three of them successfully defended their dissertations in the period between 2016 and 2019.

Conclusion

Based on the complete fulfillment of the criteria set out in the Academic Staff Development Act in Republic of Bulgaria (2018) and the Rules for its implementation and the Rules of the Medical University - Varna, the significant scientific contributions and long teaching experience, I suggest to the honourable members of the Scientific Jury to vote positively and to propose to the Rector of MU - Varna for **Assoc. Prof. Dr. Paraskeva Mancheva Draganova, MD, PhD, DSc** to occupy the academic position of "Professor" in the scientific specialty "Social Medicine and Organisation of Health Care and Pharmacy (expertise of working capacity)" for the needs of the Department "Hygiene and Epidemiology", in the Faculty of Public Health at the Medical University "Prof. Dr. P. Stoyanov" – Varna

29th of October 2019

Reviewer:



Prof. Dr. S. Aleksandrova-Yankulovska, MD, PhD, DSc