

TO  
THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SCIENTIFIC JURY  
DETERMINED BY ORDER No P-109-232 / 02.06.2021  
OF THE RECTOR OF MU - VARNA

**ACADEMIC OPINION**

**By Prof. Dr. Vasil Hristov Karakostov, Ph.D.,**  
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Head of Department of Neurosurgery - MF, MU - Sofia  
**Member of the Scientific Jury, determined by order No P-109-232 / 02.06.2021 of the**  
**Rector of Medical University - Varna**

**Regarding:** Conducting a competition for academic position "*Associate Professor*" in scientific specialty " Neurological diseases", professional direction 7.1. Medicine, in the field of higher education 7. Health and Sport, published in the State Gazette, issue 27/02.04.2021 year, with a candidate – chief assistant **Dr. Detelina Stoilova Zhelyazkova, Ph.D.**

**Biographical data:** Dr. Detelina Stoilova Zhelyazkova has completed a higher education in medicine at the Medical University of Sofia in 1997. In 1998 she began a specialization in Neurology at the University Hospital "Alexandrovska" and in 2002 she acquired a specialty in Neurology Diseases. In 2013, after a successful dissertation defense at the Thracian University - Stara Zagora, she was awarded with the educational and scientific degree "Doctor". In the period from 06.2001 to 10.2002 she worked as a resident doctor in the Neuroophthalmological Office of the Neurological Clinic at Alexandrovska University Hospital. Since 11.2002 she has been appointed as an assistant; subsequently from 11.2004 – senior assistant and since 03.2008 – chief assistant at the Neurological Clinic of "Alexandrovska" University Hospital. Currently (since 06.2011) she is chief assistant in the Neurology Clinic at the UMHAT "St. Ivan Rilski", Sofia.

In this competition Dr. Detelina Stoilova participates with the following **scientific works**:

- *author's thesis of the dissertation* for the acquisition of Educational and Scientific degree "Doctor", devoted to the topic "Clinical-immunological correlations in patients with multiple sclerosis /profile of cytokines, chemokines and adhesion molecules – response to immunomodulatory therapy with Interferon- $\beta$ /";
- *monograph* entitled "Immunopathogenesis and therapy of Multiple Sclerosis" (published 2019);
- *six publications* in the category "publications and reports published in scientific editions, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information" (in Neuro-ophthalmology, Clinical Neurology and Neurosurgery, British Journal of Dermatology, Cent. Eur. J. Med., J Neurol Sci) with *impact factor 5*;
- *twenty-two publications* in unreferenced journals with scientific review or published in edited collective volumes;
- Dr. Detelina Stoilova presents a list of *7 citations* in editions, indexed in world databases (Scopus and Web of Knowledge).

The **main scientific and applied contributions** of Dr. Detelina Stoilova, Ph.D. are in the following neurology areas:

- *Neuroimmunology* (publications No.1; 6, 21, 22): she completed the first complex clinical-immunological examination on a large number of patients with multiple sclerosis. She reported representative data on the secretion of a significant set of cytokines, chemokines and adhesion molecules (IL-4; IL-10; IL-12; TNF- $\alpha$ ; CCL2; CCL3; CCL5; CCL17; CXCL10; sICAM-1 and sVCAM-1). For the first time, she investigated the serum concentration of CCL17 in patients with multiple sclerosis subjected on Interferon- $\beta$  therapy. She conducted a comparative analysis of the levels of immunological markers in serum and liquid, assessing the presence of a correlation

between their concentration, the activity of multiple sclerosis and the therapeutic effect of the treatment. Also in a comparative aspect, she studied the levels of antiphospholipid antibodies ACL, B2GPI and AnV in patients with multiple sclerosis versus patients with systemic lupus erythematosus and healthy controls;

- *Multiple sclerosis* (publications No 7; 16; 23; 25-29): she studied the therapeutic effect of immunomodulatory treatment with Interferon- $\beta$  in relapsing-remitting multiple sclerosis with a comparative analysis of the clinical effectiveness of Interferon- $\beta$  1b versus Interferon- $\beta$  1a. She systematized and summarized the immunopathogenesis and immunotherapy of MS, and performed an original analysis of the relationship between them. She also made her own proposals for guidance in individualization of therapeutic algorithms for the medical treatment and for rehabilitation of patients with multiple sclerosis. The monograph "Immunopathogenesis and Therapy of Multiple Sclerosis" is the first comprehensive practical guide to the treatment of MS in Bulgaria;
- *Neuro-ophthalmology* (publications No. 3; 11, 12): she examines patients with a rare neuroophthalmological pathology of the pupil (Tonic pupil); as well as bilateral amaurosis, aroused as a result of a combination of cortical blindness and a bilateral ischemic optic neuropathy, related to generalized cerebral hypoxia;
- *Neuro-oncology* (publications No. 2; 4; 8; 15; 20; 24): she participated in the country's largest research, tracking and analysis of orbital tumors; also, in a study for estimation of the computer perimetry method in the early diagnosis of chiasmal and retrochiasmal brain neoplasms and in the study of an extremely rare cervical primary leptomenigeal malignant melanoma.

The above indicated scientific production of Dr. Detelina Stoilova, Ph.D. in quantitative and qualitative terms, covers the scientific indicators according to the requirements of the Rules for Development of academic staff of the Medical University - Varna.

**Teaching and professional activity** of Dr. Detelina Stoilova, Ph.D. meets the criteria for participation in the competition. Dr. Detelina Stoilova is a neurologist with 19 years of professional experience and is an established specialist in the field of multiple sclerosis. She has a general teaching experience as an assistant, a senior assistant and a chief assistant at "Alexandrovska" University Hospital, and then at "St. Ivan Rilski" University Hospital, Sofia, for over 18 years. For the last five years at University Hospital "St. Ivan Rilski" her workload is 650 hours. She participated in the creation of several Neurology Textbooks for medical students.

**In conclusion**, the review of the submitted materials and the analysis of the research and teaching activities show that Dr. Detelina Stoilova Zhelyazkova, Ph.D. meets the required mandatory criteria for acquiring the academic position "Associate Professor", according to the LDASRB, the Regulations for its implementation and the Regulations for the development of the Academic staff of the Medical University - Varna.

On this basis, I find it reasonable to give **my positive vote** for the choice of Dr. Detelina Stoilova Zhelyazkova, Ph.D. to take the academic position "Associate Professor" in the professional field "Medicine" in the scientific specialty "Neurological Diseases".

**28.07.2021**

**Prof. Dr. Vasil Karakostov, Ph.D.**

