

## **OPINION**

From Assoc. Dr. Milena Krasimirova Bozhkova, MD, PhD

Department of Microbiology and Virology

MU-Varna

**Subject:** Participation in the academic position "Associate Professor" in the field of higher education: 4. Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Informatics, professional field 4.3. Biological Sciences, specialty "Virology" for the needs of the Department of Microbiology and Virology at the Faculty of Medicine, MU-Varna, Laboratory of Virology at the University Hospital "St. Marina" Varna,

### **Statutory grounds for the opinion**

Based on Order No109-235/21.03.2023. of the Rector of MU-Varna I was elected as a member of the scientific jury in a competition for the academic position "Associate Professor", announced in the State Gazette No. 102 of 23.12.2022. I am informed that the only candidate in the competition is Dr. Zhivka Stoykova Demireva – Kalcheva, MD, Chief Assistant Professor at the Department of Microbiology and Virology at MU-Varna

### **Professional and creative biography**

Dr. Zhivka Stoykova was born on 24.11.1977 in Varna. In 2002 she was graduated with a Master's degree in Medicine from the Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" - Varna. She started her professional development as a medical doctor at the Center for Emergency Medical Care in Dobrich and Varna, and subsequently worked as a part-time assistant-professor at the Department of Hygiene and Disaster Medicine at MU-Varna. She held the position of "Senior Expert" at the Regional Inspectorate of Public Health – Varna. After a successful competition, from 2007 until now she has been working successively as "Assistant Professor" and "Senior Assistant Professor" at the Department of Microbiology and Virology of MU-Varna. Since 2009 she has been working as a medical doctor in the Laboratory of Virology of the University Hospital "St. Marina" Varna. Dr. Stoykova has a medical specialty "Virology" since 2013, and in 2018 she acquired the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" with the dissertation topic: "Seroepidemiological and molecular genetic studies of cytomegalovirus infection in risk groups."

### **Regulatory documentation for participation in the competition**

Dr. Stoykova has presented all documents legally required for participation in the competition: CV, diploma for educational and scientific degree "Doctor", diploma for acquired specialty, list and copies of publications and scientific works, list and evidence of participation in

scientific forums in Bulgaria and abroad, list of citations of scientific publications, certified by the library of MU-Varna, as well as author's reference for contributions of published scientific works.

#### **Research output of the candidate**

Dr. Stoykova presents an author's reference for scientific works, distributed as follows: dissertation - one issue on "Seroepidemiological and molecular genetic studies of cytomegalovirus infection in-risk groups", full-text scientific publications a total of 37 issues, in 12 of which Dr. Stoykova is the leading first author. The participations in scientific forums in Bulgaria and abroad of candidate staff are a total of 28 in the period 2009 – 2022, and the participation in research projects - 4, in one of them Dr. Stoykova is in the role of project manager.

**Compliance with the requirements for awarding an academic position "Associate Professor" to the applicant according to the minimum national requirements set out in the ZRASRB and PRZRRB and according to the mandatory requirements at the Medical University – Varna.**

For her participation in this competition Dr. Stoykova presents:

- Dissertation on the acquisition of educational and scientific degree "Doctor" on "Seroepidemiological and molecular genetic studies of cytomegalovirus infection in risk groups." (criterion A – 50 pts.)
- Scientific publications in editions, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases (Web of Science / Scopus) - a total of 10 by criterion B - 150 pts.
- Scientific publications in editions, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases (Web of Science / Scopus) - a total of 14 by criterion G7 - 195 pts.
- Published chapter of a book on criterion G8 – 15t.
  - In total, 210 points are presented under the criteria group G with 200 required.
- Citations in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases (Web of Science / Scopus) according to criterion D – 25 citations, equivalent to 50 points.
- Full-text scientific publication in a publication, refereed and indexed in Web of Science beyond the minimum science-metric requirements for the post of Associate Professor - 1, equivalent to 10 pts.

The scientific works of Dr. Stoykova are summarized in the following main directions:

- Studies of herpes virus infections in immunocompromised patients
- Serological screening for the prevalence of CMV and EBV in the general population and in different risk groups of it
- Laboratory diagnostic capabilities in some herpes virus infections in support of clinical practice and interpretation
- Chronic viral hepatitis
- The COVID-19 pandemic

The in-depth study of the presented problems, the analytical presentation of a large volume of informative data resulting from the candidate's own developments, the introduction of modern molecular genetic methods for research in routine diagnostic algorithms in clinical virology are among the main contributions in these areas. For each of them, Dr. Stoykova presents clearly substantiated evidence, reflected in her publication activity.

### **Teaching and learning activities**

Dr. Stoykova is a longtime lecturer at the Department of Microbiology and Virology at MU-Varna, consecutively held the positions of "Assistant" and "Chief Assistant" and actively participated in the educational and teaching activities in conducting practical classes and lectures (in Bulgarian and English) of students in medicine, dental medicine and pharmacy with general auditorium employment, significantly exceeding the regulatory requirements of MU-Varna.

### **Personal impressions**

I know Dr. Stoykova as an accomplished physician and leading specialist in the field of clinical virology. During her entire professional development, she has undeniably demonstrated a high level of competence and expertise in this dynamic medical specialty.

### **Conclusion**

The professional qualification, scientific research and teaching activities of Dr. Zhivka Stoykova Demireva-Kalcheva fully meet the requirements of the Regulations on the conditions and procedure for the acquisition of scientific degrees and for the academic position of Associate Professor at the Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov"-Varna. Her publications submitted for the competition fully comply with the quantitative criteria for this position. I declare that I will vote positively for the election of Dr. Stoykova to the academic title of Associate Professor in the scientific specialty of Virology and I invite the members of the scientific jury to do the same.

14 April 2023

Varna

Sincerely:

  
Assoc. Prof. Milena Bozhkova, MD, PhD