

STATEMENT

By Assoc. prof. Natalya Usheva, MD, PhD

Head of Department of Social Medicine and Healthcare Organisation
Deputy Dean "Scientific affairs" Faculty of Public Health
Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov ", Varna

Regarding: Procedure for awarding the degree of Doctor of Science in the scientific specialty "Health care management" in the field of higher education "7. Health and Sport", professional field "7.4. Public health", on the topic "Professional association and development of the activity of the dental technicians in Bulgaria" by Assoc. Mihaela Atanasova Varneva PhD.

Procedure of the public defence announcement

The dissertation was discussed and recommended for public defence by the Department of social medicine and health care organization at Medical University - Varna at a meeting of the Departmental Council (Report No. 102-2736/08.10.2024). The Scientific Jury for the public defence of the dissertation was approved by the Order of the Rector of Medical University - Varna Prof. Dimitar Raykov, PhD with No. P-109-371/04.11.2024, and at the first meeting of the Scientific Jury on 12.11.2024 I was appointed as the Chairman of the Scientific Jury and to prepare the statement.

The candidate has submitted all the necessary documents for the procedure, complying with the requirements of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for its application and the Regulations for the Development of Academic Staff of Medical University - Varna.

Biographical data and career development

Mihaela Varneva was born in 1963 in Varna. In 1983 she graduated from the Institute for Health Personnel with Secondary Special Education "Dr. N. Nikolaev" - Varna in the specialty "dental technician". In 2010 he obtained the Master's degree in Sport Psychology at the NSA "Vasil Levski" with distinction, and in 2013 he obtained the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in Social Medicine and Organization of Health Care and Pharmacy, defending his dissertation on "Retrospection, analysis and social-psychological problems in the preparation and realization of "Professional Bachelor" graduates in the specialty "Dental technician" at the MU - Varna. The academic career of Assoc. Prof. Varneva started in Medical college -Varna in 1984 as a lecturer, then she moved to the position of lecturer in practice (1986), lecturer in a higher school (2006), and since 2015 she has been elected to the position of "Associate Professor", at the Training Sector "Dental Technician" of Medical College - Varna.

Mihaela Varneva started her working career in 1983 as a dental technician at Regional Dental Polyclinic - Varna (1983-1986).

The teaching subjects of Assoc. Varneva includes the disciplines "Orthodontics", "Maxillofacial Prosthetics", etc. specialty "Dental Technology" "Introduction to scientific methodology", etc. in several specialties of Medical college of Varna.

Assoc. Mihaela Varneva has over 100 scientific articles, 1 monograph, 1 chapter of a textbook, 4 textbooks and over 50 participations in scientific events with papers. Moreover, the innovative potential of Assoc. Varneva's innovative potential is demonstrated by 3 registered Utility models in the Patent Office of the Republic of Bulgaria.

She has participated as a researcher in a project under the Science Fund at MU Varna (2023-2025).

Assoc. Varneva has administrative and managerial experience through participation in College and Program Councils, holding the position of Administrative Assistant in the Board "Dental Technician", etc.

The candidate in this procedure is a member of international and national professional and scientific organizations; she is fluent in Russian.

Evaluation of the candidate's scientific research and applied activities

Those mentioned by Assoc. Prof. Varneva's data in the "Author's statement on compliance and fulfillment of the minimum national requirements for the degree of Doctor of Science", prepared in connection with the defence, meet or exceed (indicators from groups A and D) the minimum number of points with the total number of points obtained - 480.

All the documents required for participation in this procedure are attached as follows:

- Dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Education and Science;
- Dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Science;
- Full-text scientific publications.

The 12 publications on the topic of the dissertation, which are required for participation in the competition according to the Regulations for the Development of Academic Staff at MU - Varna, have been published and attached in full to the competition materials, and in all of them Assoc. Varneva is an independent author.

The submitted citations under Indicator E, reflecting the candidate's scientific activity, are evaluated at 100 points, which fully meets the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Science. Four of the citations are in scientific journals referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information, two - in peer-reviewed monographs and four - in non-indexed journals.

Structure of the dissertation thesis

The submitted dissertation thesis is prepared in accordance with the requirements for a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Science, including 239 pages, 19 tables, 28 figures and diagrams, 25 photographs and 9 appendices.

The 281 references are mostly in Cyrillic - 204 and 77 in Latin, described correctly and in detail in the bibliographic section. The dissertation is laid out in a logical sequence and structured in 4 chapters: Literature review (60 pp.); Methodology of own study (9 pp.); Results and discussion (176 pp.). The conclusions, recommendations and contributions are summarised and clearly set out in 5 pages at the end of the thesis.

Assoc. Prof. Mihaela Varneva presents a thorough and comprehensive work on the development of the professional associations and organizations of dental technicians for a period of over 100 years and a detailed vision and strategy for the development of the specialty in Bulgaria in the future.

The **Literature review** describes the emergence of professional organizations in health care - trade unions, confederations and revival of professional organizations and associations in health care, the development of the activities of dental technicians in Bulgaria; the legal regulation and functions of the professional organization of dental technicians in Bulgaria. It also describes the regulated mentoring as an established method of training in dental laboratories. Particular attention is paid by Assoc. Prof. Mihaela Varneva devotes to the international experience of the activities of dental technicians and their professional organizations.

The Chapter Two, "Methodology of the Self-Study," presents the purpose, objectives, hypotheses of the study, object and design of the study. The tasks include a comprehensive range of activities related to historical retrospection and periodization of the associations and professional organizations of dental technician practitioners, characterization of the working dental technicians and faculty of the specialty with the Dental Technician Certificate, exploration of the knowledge of dental technicians practitioners about the regulations and management of the BDA and their expectations about the postgraduate training, exploration of the opinion of the faculty of the medical colleges in Bulgaria about the BDA and their participation in the BDA.

Methodologically quite adequate documentary, survey and SWOT-analysis, statistical methods have been applied to perform the tasks. The documentary method is based on the regulations, public and private archives, which shows the skills of Assoc. Prof. Varneva to search for primary information and work thoroughly with historical and legislative sources of information. The questionnaire survey was conducted in the 25 regional colleges of the BDA, involving 378 respondents (360 practicing dental technicians and 18 lecturers from the medical colleges conducting training in the specialty of "Dental Technician" in the cities of Sofia, Plovdiv and Varna, achieving a significant 75% of the general population of those working in the specialty.

Analyzing the information gathered from all the studies, using his own professional experience Assoc. Prof. Mihaela Varneva has developed a systematic model with proposals for the development of the specialty "Dental Technician" in Bulgaria.

I accept the presented by Assoc. Michaela Varneva's contributions and the logical recommendations that she has very well formulated to the various institutions, organizations and specialists (BDA, medical universities and medical colleges, the legislative body and the practicing dental technicians themselves), to improve interaction, to create separate professional organizations of health care professionals and other challenges facing the guild of dental technicians in Bulgaria.

Abstract

The abstract is very well designed, presenting in a synthesized form in 76 pages the own research, results, discussion, conclusions and recommendations.

Conclusion

The dissertation of Assoc. Prof. Michaela Varneva, Ph. "Professional association and development of the activity of dental technicians in Bulgaria" is characterized by thoroughness, consistency, historical and systematic approach in the analysis and proposals for the development of the specialty on a national level.

The dissertation and the presented publications fully meet the requirements of the Law for the Development of the Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for its Application and the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of the Medical University - Varna for obtaining the degree of Doctor of Sciences.

On the basis of the actual topic, the practical and applied contributions of the dissertation work, I propose to the members of the Scientific Jury to award the degree of Doctor of Sciences to Assoc. Prof. Mihaela Varneva, Ph.D. in the scientific specialty "Public Health Management".

Заличено на основание чл. 5,
§1, б. „В“ от Регламент (ЕС)
2016/679

08.12.2024 г.
Varna

Chairman of the Scientific Jury:*QVN*.....

/ Assoc. prof. Natalya Usheva, MD, PhD /