

## Statement

*by associate professor Nevyana Georgieva Feschieva, dm*

according to a competitive procedure for filling the academic position "associate professor" by field of higher education 7. Health care and sports, professional direction 7.4. Public health, scientific specialty Health care management for the needs of the "Health Care" Department, Veliko Tarnovo Branch, MU-Varna, announced in SG, no. 07/23/01/2024

By order No. R-109-114 dated 22.03.2024 of the Rector of the Medical University "Prof. Paraskev Stoyanov" - Varna and according to report with entry No. 033-95/06.03.2024 by Assoc. Vesela Ivancheva, MD Director of Veliko Tarnovo Branch and based on protocol No. 210/14.08.2023 and decision according to protocol No. 2/18.03.2024 of the Academic Council, I was elected as a member of the Scientific Jury according to the specified procedure. By protocol No. 1/01.04.2024 of the first absent meeting of the Scientific Jury, I am appointed to prepare an opinion.

The only candidate in the competition procedure is Chief Assistant. Zhana Georgieva Pavlovska, d.o.z. from the "Health Care" Department, Veliko Tarnovo Branch, MU - Varna. She meets the additional condition of the competition that the candidates possess the professional qualification "Midwife".

### **1. Brief biographical data and career development of the candidate.**

She was born on 10.12.1961 in the town of Kaspichan, Shumen region. **Education.** In 1983, she graduated from secondary medical education, specialty "midwife" at the Institute for Health Personnel "Dr. Nencho Nikolaev"-Varna. He obtained his secondary education in 1995 at PMI "Dr. Varban Genchev" - Veliko Tarnovo. After studying (1997-2000) at VMI-Pleven, he obtained a Bachelor's degree in Health Care; in 2007, there he also received a master's degree, majoring in "Health Care Management". In 2018-2020, he is a doctoral student of independent training at the "Health Care" department of MU-Varna in the "Health Care Management" doctoral program. After successfully defending a dissertation on the topic "Continuing education of midwives - innovative educational approaches", she was awarded the ONS "doctor." In 2023, he completed his specialization in "Public Health." **Additional qualifications.** Chief assistant Zhana Pavlovska shows a constant desire for professional improvement, proof of which is the 54 postgraduate courses she completed. Among them, some of the period of her academic career deserve to be noted, as they are related to her research work:

"Pedagogical competence I level" 20 March - 14 May 2017; "Examination of the newborn" 12-18.02. 2018, Certificate from the University of Central Lancashire, England; "Postpartum Patronage Midwifery Care"-2020; "Professional cremation and personnel management in the conditions of the corona crisis" two modules 2021; "Newborn children of mothers with COVID-19 infection" 2022; "Protective effect of breast milk on infectious diseases of the

excretory system" 2023; "Modern possibilities of maternal-fetal medicine" 2022; "History of Medicine" 2022 and 2023.

**Professional career path.** Immediately after graduating, she started working as a midwife at the Branch Polyclinic, Resen village, Veliko Tarnovo Region (1983-1987). From 1987 to 2015, her professional development was connected with MOBAL "Dr. St. Cherkeзов" - Veliko Tarnovo - neonatology, gynecology departments, senior midwife of Obstetrics and Gynecology Department. Her academic development began in 2015 as an assistant, and from 2020 - chief assistant in the Department of Health Care, Veliko Tarnovo Branch.

**Participation in scientific and educational projects.** She participated in four projects:

"Continued support for deinstitutionalization for children and youth" under the operational program "Development of human resources" 2014 - 2020; "Student practices - phase 2" under the Operational program "Science and education for intelligent growth-" in the 2020/21 and 2021/22 school years; "Social inclusion" for those working in maternity wards and working directly with babies and young children with disabilities, Ministry of Health, 2014; Mentor and trainer of newly admitted midwives and paramedics under the project "Closer to work" under the operational program "Development of human resources" 2013-2014.

**Foreign languages and membership of organizations.** She speaks written and spoken Russian, and English - at level B 2. She is a member of the Bulgarian Association of Health Care Professionals (BAPZG) and since 2003 she is the chairman of the Regional College in Veliko Tarnovo. Her work is highly appreciated. She is the winner of the prestigious award, the statuette of Leseskepra for 2014 - first place at the national level in the category "Health care manager". In the Regional Coordination Council, she is the coordinator for: National program for primary prevention of cervical cancer 2012-2016; 2021-2024; National program for the prevention and control of HIV and sexually transmitted infections in the Republic of Bulgaria 2021-2025; National program for the prevention and control of viral hepatitis 2021-2030.

**Summary:** Ch. assistant professor Zhana Pavlovska, , in her 40 years of work experience, has devoted herself entirely to the midwifery profession, both as a practical and as an educational and research field. She has proven her desire for professional improvement, and during her academic career she develops active research and project activities, enriches her professional experience with modern knowledge and practices.

## **2. Evaluation of the candidate's research activity**

**2.1. Comparison with the scientometric requirements for holding the JSC "Associate Professor" according to ZRASRB and PRAS of MU-Varna from 2021.**

Chief Assistant Zhana Pavlovska appears in the announced competition procedure with the following scientific production, carrying the relevant points:

- Dissertation work for ONS "doctor" (indicator A 1) - 1 number - **50 points**;
- Habilitation thesis - monograph, 216 pages (indicator B 2) - 1 issue - **100 points**;
- Publications in scientific publications, referenced or indexed in world-famous databases, WOS or Scopus (indicator D7) – 2 articles – **120 points**;

- Publications and reports in non-refereed journals with scientific review and/or published in peer-reviewed collective volumes in full text (indicator D8 -9) 5 articles and an independent chapter of a collective monography -**87.5 points**

Citations - 7 numbers - **50 points**

***The comparison of the number of points achieved by the candidate, 407.5, with the minimum number of points required by ZRASRB for holding the position of Associate Professor shows that she fully fulfills the specified requirements and even exceeds them.***

Apart from the publications to meet the minimum requirements for AD "associate professor", the candidate has submitted another **16 articles worth 315 points**, as well as **citations worth 20 points**. A high degree of independence (42%) is established in the candidate's scientific production. She is an independent and leading author in 73% of the publications presented, which is a sign of maturity and experience.

## **2.2. Qualitative characteristics of the candidate's research output**

The presented scientific production of the chief assistant Zhana Pavlovska is in the subject area of the competition. The main thematic directions of her scientific works are:

- I. Continuing education (PE) of midwives in Bulgaria - comparative characteristics, regulation, organization, problems, innovative educational approaches for assessment;
- II. History of the midwifery profession and midwifery education in Bulgaria, professional realization of the midwife;
- III. Stress in the education of students of the specialties "Midwife" and "Nurse";
- IV. Healthy nutrition during pregnancy and lactation;
- V. Health care for the elderly;
- VI. Varia

The first two directions include the largest number and the most representative publications. Among them is the monographic habilitation work.

***Evaluation of the habilitation work*** "The midwifery profession in Bulgaria - historical development, training and implementation." The monograph, based on a rich bibliography of 208 sources, is structured in three chapters. The first chapter "Historical development of the profession of midwifery in Bulgaria" is the largest in terms of volume, it covers the problems of the profession during antiquity in the Bulgarian lands, the Middle Ages, the Ottoman rule and the Renaissance and from 1878 to the present day. The little-known and/or interesting facts about midwifery practices from the distant past are informative in nature, but the author's major research contribution relates mostly to the midwifery profession in the period after the restoration of the Bulgarian state in 1878. Special mention should be made of her meticulous work in searching for and presenting the first certified midwives who worked immediately after the Liberation - the biographies are available, incl.

the professional route and activities of 21 midwives. For the first time, the significant activity of some of them in the field of the printed word has been revealed. Their publications, which present midwives in this period as bearers of new ideas in the field of both public life and health and social spheres, are analyzed. Equality between the sexes, improving the situation of working women, combating discrimination against women, social justice in the provision of medical care, rational proposals for the organization of maternity care, dealing with unhygienic customs and prejudices, raising the health and cultural level of women - these are all problems on which the author presents evidence of the activity of midwives in the stormy post-liberation years. In the picture thus described by her, the contribution of Bulgarian midwives to the modernization of society becomes clear for the first time. For the first time, midwives - major donors to maternity homes, midwifery education and other noble causes - were sought out and presented. The testimonies of the midwives who worked during the time of intensive growth and development of the network of midwifery care and profiled medical facilities after the Second World War are impressive. The first-person accounts of the participants in this construction process, most often young midwives dealing with enormous difficulties, touch, amaze and lend authenticity to the author's conclusions. In addition to purely professional achievements, the monograph also mentions a number of examples of humane and professional dedication, which respect and can be a source of strength and inspiration for modern young professionals.

The author thoroughly researches the professional organizations in which midwives are members or were created in the 20s and 30s of the 20th century. The balance they strike between protecting their own interests and taking a stand on the burning issues of their time, especially public health, is very well shown. The second chapter is dedicated to the history and analysis of midwifery education in Bulgaria at all stages of its winding path to reach higher baccalaureate nowadays. In the third chapter "Professional development and realization of midwives in Bulgaria", Zhana Pavlovska not only analyzes regulatory documents on the continuous training of midwives, but presents results of her own research, which refreshes the text and provides information for reflection and discussion. These, together with the ideas being launched in the growing field of postgraduate study, are an important glimpse into the future. In the age of intensive introduction of new scientific achievements into practice, continuous training becomes imperative. The author's efforts to discover new facts, to be as precise as possible in her references deserve admiration. She demonstrates skills in working with archival materials, an absolutely necessary condition for successful medical-historical research. The rich illustrative material placed in the book further expands the readers' perception of the text. The scholarly style of the monograph is aptly combined in places with an engaging narrative, which adds to its appeal. The presented monograph has the character of the first encyclopedic work on the profession "midwife" in our country with its own original theoretical and cognitive contributions. It represents a serious contribution in the search for a connection

between the roots of the profession with its modern and future development; provides new knowledge about its development in Bulgaria; sculpts the images of the first certified midwives - professionals, socially engaged with a mission that defines them a place among the revival-minded active layers of Bulgarian society, which took on the difficult task of its modernization at the dawn of the 20th century.

I agree with the candidate's formulated contributions to her research work. Along with the theoretical-historical ones, practical-applied ones stand out among them, especially in the field of continuing education of midwives. The following were developed: PO algorithm, PO model and toolkit (midwife professional development assessment card and professional portfolio), a proposal for unified PO accreditation) and others that can be relatively quickly implemented in practice. The dissemination of the results of the candidate's research work was carried out through publications in appropriate journals through participation in scientific forums. 35 participations were recorded, of which international-7, with international participation-8 and national-20.

## **2. Evaluation of the candidate's educational and teaching activities**

The beginning of Zh. Pavlovska's teaching work was in the period 2002-2005 as a part-time teacher at Medical College-Veliko Tarnovo, but her academic career actually began in 2015. From the attached reference from MU-Varna, it is clear that she participated in the learning process with lectures, exercises, teaching practice and pre-diploma internship. Over the past 5 years, she has had a study load of 714, 832, 636, 777 and 576 hours, which constantly exceed the statutory annual load of 360 hours. She is a course supervisor and often of theses; Until now, there are 78 registered graduates under her leadership.

### ***Personal impressions***

I know Chief Assistant. Zhana Pavlovska from her participation in courses and forums on the history of medicine, as a precise and interesting researcher of the recent past of Bulgarian healthcare.

### ***Conclusion***

The analysis of the overall research and teaching activity of ch. Assistant Professor Zhana Pavlovska, Ph.D. shows that she, a professional with extensive practical experience, is an accomplished teacher and researcher with significant contributions of a theoretical-cognitive and practical-applied nature. It meets the criteria of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the PRASS of the University of Varna for holding the academic position of "docent". The new academic position will provide an opportunity to deploy her knowledge and skills for the success of the Department of Health Care Veliko Tarnovo. All this is a reason for my positive assessment and with conviction to **recommend the members of the Scientific Jury to vote ch. assistant prof. Zhana Pavlovska d.o.z. to take the academic position of "associate professor" in the field of higher education 7. Health care and sports, professional direction 7.4. Public health, in**

**the specialty "Management of health care", for the needs of the "Health Care" Department, Veliko Tarnovo Branch.**

***04.05.2024.***

Member of the Scientific Jury:

Associate prof. N. Feschieva, dm