

## STATEMENT

on a competition for the academic position of Associate Professor in General Medicine for the needs of the Department of General Medicine at the Faculty of Medicine at Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" Varna

**Subject:** *Announced competition for the academic position of Associate Professor in the field of higher education 7. Healthcare and sports, professional direction 7.1 Medicine, and scientific specialty General Medicine for the needs of the Faculty of Medicine, Department of General Medicine at Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" Varna, published in the State Gazette, issue 45 of May 28, 2024.*

**Candidate: Chief Assistant Dr. Svetlana Hristova Hristova, Ph.D.**

**Review prepared by: Prof. Dr. Boryana Borisova Varbanova, Ph.D.**

Member of the Scientific Jury by Order No. R-100-464 of 01.07.2024 of the Rector of MU-Varna, appointed to prepare an opinion by Protocol No. 1 from a meeting of the Scientific Jury.

### **Biographical Data and Professional Development:**

Dr. Svetlana Hristova graduated in Medicine in 1998. Since 2005, after a competition, she has been appointed as an assistant at the Department of General Medicine at MU Varna, where her academic career developed. In 2008, she was promoted to Senior Assistant, and in 2011 to Chief Assistant. She holds specialties in Internal Medicine (2007), Rheumatology (2011), and General Medicine (2018). In 2019, she defended her dissertation "Predictors and Prognostic Indices for the Clinical Course and Treatment Effect in Patients with Rheumatoid Arthritis" and obtained the academic degree of Doctor. Her teaching activities include training students and residents in General Medicine. She actively participates in congresses and conferences both in Bulgaria and abroad. She is proficient in Russian and English.

The documents submitted by the candidate comply with the requirements of the procedure outlined in the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at MU Varna.

### **Scientific Research Activity:**

#### **Scientometric Indicators:**

Dr. Svetlana Hristova participates in the competition with one dissertation, one monograph, and 25 full-text publications in Bulgarian journals, of which 6 are in scientific journals refereed and indexed in internationally recognized databases and 19 in non-refereed journals with scientific peer review.

### Scientific Works - Proof of Fulfillment of Minimum Requirements for the Academic Position of "Associate Professor"

	Single Author	First Author	Second Author	Third and Subsequent Author
<b>Monograph</b>		<b>1</b>		
<b>Full-text publications in refereed and indexed scientific journals</b>			<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Full-text publications in non-refereed journals with scientific peer review</b>		<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>11</b>

The publications are in both Bulgarian and English, in journals such as General Medicine, Rheumatology, Medinfo, Health Management, Health Policy and Management, Scripta Scientifica Medica, Pediatrics and Infectious Diseases, Medical Shop, Practical Medicine, and others.

According to the academic reference, Dr. Hristova meets the mandatory scientometric indicators (G5-9) with 210.56 points. She is the first author in 4 articles, second author in 5, and third or subsequent author in 15.

Dr. Hristova presents 4 full-text publications beyond the minimum requirements for the position of Associate Professor, 3 of which are related to her dissertation and published in refereed and indexed journals, and one full-text publication in a peer-reviewed journal.

Dr. Hristova presents 21 participations with reports and posters at Bulgarian and international congresses.

According to the provided academic reference from MU "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" Varna, Dr. Hristova has 6 citations, 2 of which are in refereed and indexed scientific journals and 4 in non-refereed journals with scientific peer review, totaling 50 points.

An impact factor report has not been submitted.

The presented evidence is consistent with the requirements and is carefully and systematically organized.

#### **Scientific Directions and Contributions:**

Dr. Hristova's research spans various areas of medicine, reflecting her broad clinical preparation in three medical specialties. The monograph on personalized medicine is particularly noteworthy. The monograph "Personalized Medicine in the Doctor's Practice" provides a comprehensive overview of the achievements of contemporary medicine in this field to date and outlines future therapeutic perspectives. The development of knowledge in this innovative area will revolutionize current standards in the treatment of patients, namely treatment based on guidelines

for the “average” patient. The future approach focuses on individualizing and refining the approach to the individual based on their genetic identity, clinical, and biological characteristics. As an author, Dr. Hristova competently traces the development of the idea of personalized medicine to date, the current possibilities for precision medicine in rheumatology, and future trends. This scientific work demonstrates Dr. Hristova’s erudition, expertise, and scientific maturity.

The scientific works and research results of Dr. Hristova are thematically grouped into the following scientific directions:

### **1. Childhood Obesity as a Problem in General Medical Practice – Patient-Oriented Approach**

Research in this area focuses on health-promotion activities in general medical practice (GMP) to influence risk factors for obesity in both adolescents and adults, including patients with comorbidities like diabetes and hypertension. It is presented in five articles. Factors that increase the risk of obesity, such as demographic, socio-economic, environmental, and behavioral factors, are highlighted. A thorough analysis of methods for assessing the causes of childhood obesity is made, identifying the need for standardized assessment methods applicable in obesity research. Recommendations for conducting health-educational programs, emphasizing optimal age norms for physical activity and nutrition, targeted at parents, are developed and proposed. The key role of general practitioners (GPs) in preventing childhood obesity is emphasized.

### **2. Patients with Rheumatic Diseases in GMP – Diagnostic and Therapeutic Challenges**

This section presents four full-text articles. Rheumatic diseases are among the common problems faced by GPs, with both rheumatic and other etiological causes examined. A systematic literature review describes the primary diagnostic and prognostic methods for patients with rheumatic diseases. Modern concepts regarding the pathogenetic mechanisms of inflammation, joint lesions, and remodeling in osteoarthritis, as well as the therapeutic possibilities for targeted intervention, are highlighted. Factors associated with poor prognosis in joint damage and disability in patients with rheumatic diseases are identified. This allows for early aggressive treatment, including biological disease-modifying drugs. Studies on back pain, including lower back pain, contribute to creating a management algorithm and treatment recommendations aimed at achieving maximal physical, psychological, and behavioral recovery for these patients.

### **3. Health-Promotion Activities in GMP**

The main risk factors for male breast cancer and the possibility of prevention and early diagnosis through a screening program are studied. The necessity of preventive check-ups and health-promotion activities in socially significant diseases such as obesity and type 2 diabetes is emphasized. Adenotonsillar pathology is discussed in the context of various sleep disorders, both in children and adults, with different diagnostic and physiotherapeutic methods for intervention proposed. An approach to individuals with addictions is discussed, and an algorithm for working with patients with alcohol problems and their families is created. Recommendations for GPs regarding the dietary regimen for older adults, regular physical activity tailored to their age, and maintaining a healthy body weight are developed. The main guidelines and principles for

applying antimicrobial agents in GMP, based on their indications and contraindications, are analyzed.

#### **4. Communication Skills and Approach to People with Various Chronic Diseases, Ethnicities, Disabilities, and Palliative Care in GMP**

This section presents recommendations for GPs' actions when assessing the health and mental condition of patients referred to the Medical Expert Commission. The attitudes among Bulgarian doctors regarding working with terminally ill patients and developing algorithms for providing necessary assistance are summarized. Recommendations are proposed for improving the communication skills of GPs working in areas with multi-ethnic populations. Based on pre-study data, the main reasons for low health literacy in the Roma population and factors related to improving health prevention among ethnic groups are identified.

I acknowledge the candidate's contributions in the aforementioned areas, which I consider significant in Bulgarian medical science and contributing to the theoretical enrichment and practical improvement of clinical medicine and general medical practice.

#### **Teaching Activities:**

Dr. Svetlana Hristova has over 19 years of teaching experience at MU "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" Varna. She teaches General Medicine to medical students in Bulgarian and participates in the training of resident doctors in postgraduate education in General Medicine and Rheumatology.

Academic Year	Lectures		Exercises		Pre-graduate Internship	Total Hours for the Academic Year
	BEO	AEO	BEO	AEO		
2023/2024	0	0	230	0	0	230
2022/2023	0	0	212	0	0	212
2021/2022	0	0	134	0	0	134
2020/2021	0	0	164	0	0	164
2019/2020	0	0	117	0	0	117

#### **Clinical Activities:**

Dr. Svetlana Hristova develops her clinical work in the Rheumatology Clinic at University Hospital "Sveta Marina" Varna and has demonstrated high standards in her clinical practice.

#### **Conclusion:**

Dr. Svetlana Hristova is an experienced clinician, teacher, and a thorough researcher who has reached a high level in her professional development.

The presented materials for the competition meet the legal requirements and criteria of the

Academic Staff Development Act and the regulations of MU-Varna for the academic position of Associate Professor. This gives me solid grounds to recommend that the Scientific Jury vote positively for awarding the academic position of Associate Professor in General Medicine to Dr. Svetlana Hristova.

Date: 27.09.2024

Signature:



