

To

The chairman of Scientific Jury, declared by Order No. P-109-93 of
21.03.2024. Of the Rector of the Medical University "Prof. Dr

Paraskev Stoyanov "- Varna

S T A T E M E N T

by Professor Ivaylo Petrov Vazharov, MD, PhD

Head of the Multispecialty Hospital for Active Treatment-Varna at the Military
Medical Academy

Concerning: Competition for the occupation of the academic position "Professor", in the field of higher education 7. Health care and sports, professional direction 7.1. Medicine, specialty "Gastroenterology" - one, 0.5 half-time position for the needs of the Department of Anatomy and Cell Biology of the Faculty of Medicine at the Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov"-Varna and one full-time position for the needs of the "Gastroenterology" Clinic at the UMBAL "St. Marina" EAD-Varna, according to Order No. R-109-93/21.03.2024 of the Rector of the Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov"-Varna Prof. Dimitar Raykov, MD, PhD, DSc, which has been published in State Gazette No. 7/ 23.01.2024.

Pursuant to Order No. R-109-93/21.03.2024. of the Rector of the Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov"-Varna, I have been elected as an external member of the Scientific Jury under the procedure for occupying the academic position of "Professor" at the Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov"-Varna and I am assigned to prepare a statement on the competition. The only candidate is Associate Professor Antonia Yordanova Atanasova, MD, PhD, DSc, from Department of Anatomy and Cell Biology and Clinic of Gastroenterology at University Hospital »St. Marina».

The documents provided to me have been prepared based on the normative documents of Art. 4, Paragraph 1 and Paragraph 2, Art. 29, Paragraph 1 of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, Art. 6, Paragraph 1 and Art. 139, Paragraph 3 of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of the Medical University - Varna. There are no established procedural violations.

I declare that I have no conflict of interest within the meaning of Art. 4, Paragraph 5 of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria.

I. BRIEF BIOGRAPHICAL DATA AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Assoc. Prof. Antonia Yordanova Atanasova, MD, PhD, DSc, was born on 16.06.1961 in the city of Varna. She graduated from the Fourth Frédéric Joliot-Curie Language High School-Varna with excellent marks and a gold medal in 1980 and the Medical Academy, Higher Medical Institute-Varna with excellent marks in 1986. From 01.12.1986 to 17.06.1987 he worked as a doctor -resident in the internal department of District Hospital -Shumen. After successfully passing a competitive exam from 17.06.1987 - 28.03.1994. is an assistant at the Clinic of Gastroenterology University Hospital " St. Marina", MU Varna, from 28.03.1994 - 07.07.1997 he was a doctor, senior assistant in the Clinic of Gastroenterology, and from 07.07.1997 - 16.12.2015 he was a doctor, chief assistant in the Clinic of Gastroenterology. Since 17.12.2015 he is an associate professor in the Department of Anatomy and Cell Biology; associate professor at the Department of Internal Medicine, Clinic of Gastroenterology. Associate Professor Antonia Atanasova from 07/09/2013. was enrolled as a free doctoral student at Department of "Internal Diseases", scientific specialty Gastroenterology - with the topic "Clinical evaluation of patients with ulcerative colitis - modern approach" On 12.12.2014, she obtained the scientific and educational degree "doctor", in the scientific specialty: Gastroenterology ; topic "Clinical evaluation of patients with ulcerative colitis - modern approach", diploma with registration number 088/19.12.2014. On 23.07.2021, she obtained the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences" with the topic of the dissertation work "Serum expression of microribonucleic acids in patients with chronic inflammatory bowel diseases." Dissertation work for scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences", Medical University - Varna, diploma with registration number 454/23.12.2021. Assoc. Prof. Antonia Atanasova,MD,PhD,DSc has acquired the specialty of Internal Medicine (February 2, 1994) and Gastroenterology (June 1, 1996). There are qualification courses in abdominal ultrasound - 3 month course 1989, conventional ultrasound: Abdominal ultrasound and surface structures. Acquires diplomas for: Diagnostic and therapeutic FGS and FCS, Certificate of professional qualification and highly specialized activity, Diagnostic and therapeutic FGS and FCS. He has the pedagogical qualification of trainers from medical institutions. Obtains: Certificate of professional qualification and highly specialized activity Diagnostic upper and lower gastrointestinal endoscopy - first level; Certificate of professional qualification and highly specialized activity

Therapeutic upper and lower gastrointestinal endoscopy - second level; Diagnostic abdominal ultrasound - first level, Abdominal Doppler ultrasound in gastroenterology - second level; Interventional and endoscopic abdominal ultrasound in gastroenterology - third level.

II. RESEARCH ACTIVITY

Assoc. Dr. Antonia Yordanova Atanasova, MD, participated in the current competition with the following scientific works after habilitation as an associate professor:

- ✓ Habilitation thesis - with ten equal scientific publications, which are referenced and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information with a total number of bibliographic sources 341;
- ✓ Dissertation for awarding the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences" 1 pc
- ✓ Full-text articles published in Bulgarian and foreign scientific journals - 67 items including in journals with IF
- ✓ Abstracts of reports in periodicals and collections presented at national and international congresses, conferences, symposia and sessions at home and abroad 24 items
- ✓ Total participation in 71 scientific forums, 52 -at home and 19- abroad and 23 participations in schools, training courses and practices at home and abroad.

With an impact factor (IF) are 3 publications in full text, after the selection and with an IF-7.7 and a total impact factor of all publications **101.6** (after the selection and for associate professor). (The impact factor was calculated only for the system sources for it recognized by the rules of the Varna Medical University)

The works of Assoc. Prof. Antonia Yordanova Atanasova, MD, PhD,DSc, are highly appreciated by the scientific community at home and abroad. Scientific works and works are cited mainly abroad in 29 literary sources abroad (after the election and for associate professor) – 27 citations or reviews in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information or in monographs and collective volumes; 2 citations or reviews in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals. Assoc.Prof. Antonia Atanasova is the head of two national projects. One funded by the Science Fund – Medical University-Varna: "Metabolic syndrome in Inflammatory Bowel Diseases patients", which was successfully completed and certified in 01.23, and the other project No. 23002, which won funding from the Science Fund – Medical University -Varna: "Investigation of modern biomarkers in non-alcoholic fatty liver disease"/ SF-13/09.01.24, was launched at the beginning of 2024. She also

participated as a researcher in a national project "Etiology, clinical picture and diagnosis of non-alcoholic fatty liver disease in children and adolescents" 12.21.2020 - 12.21.2022. and is a participant in an international project: Interreg Danube Transnational Program CD SKILLS - 2019-2022 - Funded by the European Union. She is a participant in joint scientific works and developments of the scientific interdisciplinary group on "Gastro-entero-haptoprotection and therapy", which works at the Scientific Research Institute at the University of Varna. The work of the group is in one of the priority scientific directions of the Scientific Research Institute at the University of Varna "Nutrition and Quality of Life".

III. CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATIONS

The scientific research activity of Assoc.Prof. Antonia Yordanova Atanasova, MD., Ph.D. DSc., is largely based on her direct and clinical diagnostic and therapeutic work as a gastroenterologist, with extensive practical experience and established authority among the scientific community and patients with various chronic diseases. Her scientific works are devoted to various significant areas in gastroenterology, such as: Inflammatory Bowel Diseases; chronic liver diseases; obesity and metabolic syndrome and their relationship with chronic inflammation and a number of oncological diseases; preventable infectious diseases, clinical cases of rare diseases; quality of life among different groups of patients; microribonucleic acids in clinical practice as modern markers for diagnosis, follow-up and personalization of treatment in inflammatory bowel diseases; microribonucleic acids as a non-invasive marker to assess obesity, metabolic syndrome in IBD patients, and immunohistochemical assessment of cell death/necroptosis as a prognostic marker in both ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease in active stage and clinical remission. Scientific contributions are systematized in 10 main directions. The publications presented in the section equivalent to a habilitation thesis reveal the diversity of scientific fields in which Assoc. Prof. A. Atanasova, MD, PhD, DSc, works and publishes, defining the lasting interests and subsequent studies in the relevant domains: obesity and non-alcoholic fatty liver disease. A major area of marked scientific interest over the years is Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD): all aspects from disease detection to monitoring and prognosis of IBD are under investigation. The main contributions of this group of studies are: the introduction of a modern elegant innovative approach using microribonucleic acids (miRNAs) in diagnosis, monitoring and personalization of treatment in IBD, which was applied for the first time in Bulgaria. These publications have original theoretical, practical and practical-applied contributions. For the first

time in Bulgaria, the application of a panel of miRNAs in adult patients with IBD is reflected in detail and comprehensively. A reliable, accurate and detailed description of the expression of individual miRNAs in IBD patients in remission was performed. The expression of miRNAs according to the characteristics of IBD patients and the treatment performed is comprehensively reflected. Threshold values were determined to discriminate the expression of miRNAs. A specific profile of CD and UC patients was drawn up based on the expression of miRNAs. Specific miRNAs for remission and activity, localization, course and treatment were identified. A connection was made between the modern achievements of molecular biology and clinical practice in search of effective, non-invasive and personalized forms of follow-up of a group of immune-mediated diseases - IBD. The contributions of the publications in the field of chronic liver diseases are practical. Modern concepts of the clinic, diagnosis and therapeutic behavior of various liver diseases are systematized: chronic viral hepatitis, metabolic diseases (Wilson's disease), metabolically induced fatty liver disease, Gilbert's syndrome, malignant liver tumors. Publications in the field of metabolic syndrome, obesity and overweight have a practical-applied contribution. Some potential mechanisms of the influence of obesity on the most common and socially significant gastroenterological diseases such as gastroesophageal reflux disease, Barrett's esophagus, adenocarcinoma of the esophagus, gastric carcinoma, functional gastric disorders, irritable bowel syndrome, diverticulosis, celiac disease, polyps of colon, Inflammatory Bowel Diseases, non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, a number of neoplasms, their complications and the relationship between their occurrence and chronic meta-inflammation. The section of publications on the topic of vitamin D has a marked practical-applied contribution. A correlation was established between serum expression of the investigated panel of miRNAs and vitamin D levels in patients with IBD. It is still unclear whether vitamin D deficiency is a cause or a consequence of IBD, but vitamin D deficiency has a high prevalence among IBD patients. An in-depth analysis of the expression of miRNAs according to vitamin D levels was performed. For the first time in Bulgaria, studies of vitamin D levels have been published, a correlation between the expression of certain miRNAs and vitamin D deficiency in patients with IBD has been proven. It is also worth noting the publications in the sections of preventable infectious diseases, therapy of gastroenterological diseases, which have theoretical and practical contributions, and some of them have been published abroad in journals, cited and reviewed and indexed in world-famous databases of scientific information and IF. The research on the new cell death marker RIPK3, which detects necroptosis in patients with Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis and can be used as a prognostic factor, is innovative and original in nature, and at the

same time has a theoretical and practical contribution. factor in the course of various therapeutic regimens. Theoretical-methodological and practical-applied contributions are publications in the field of HLA genotyping in patients with celiac disease and their relatives and genetic results in suspected Gilbert's disease. For the first time in Bulgaria, the results of genetic studies in these groups of patients are published. Various clinical cases from gastroenterological practice are presented. These diverse publications have mainly practical-applied contributions.

IV. EDUCATIONAL AND TEACHING ACTIVITY

The teaching activity of Assoc.Prof. Antonia Atanasova, MD, PhD, DSc, in the last four academic years is as follows: in the academic year 2019/2020. - 219 hours; in the academic year 2020/2021 - 167 hours, in 2021/2022 - 262 hours, and in 2022/2023 - 193 hours under the norm for an associate professor according to the regulations of Medical University-Varna 110 hours. She is the supervisor of a gastroenterology fellow. Assoc. Prof. Antonia Atanasova is a scientific supervisor of three doctoral students, one in the doctoral program "Gastroenterology" and two in the doctoral program "Internal Diseases". Two of the doctoral students: Elena Panayotova Panayotova, MD, PhD (Doctoral program "Internal Diseases") and Mirela Moneva-Petrova, MD, PhD (Doctoral program "Gastroenterology") have successfully defended their doctoral theses and obtained Educational and Scientific Degree "Doctor". He participated in the scientific jury for six doctoral candidates for awarding the educational and scientific degree "doctor", to one candidate for "associate professor" and in the selection of six for "principal assistant".

Associate Professor A. Atanasova is a participant in the examination committee for the acquisition of a specialty in gastroenterology, Sofia, ISUL, UMBAL "Tsaritsa Joanna" Sofia, examination committee for the State Exam in Internal Medicine, English language training and Bulgarian language training, Medical University-Varna, examination committee, Semester Exam in Internal Medicine, English language training and Bulgarian language training, Medical University-Varna.

V. MEMBERSHIPS IN SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

Assoc. Prof. Antonia Atanasova, MD, PhD, DSc, is a member of

1. Bulgarian Medical Union
2. Bulgarian National Society of Gastroenterology with gastrointestinal endoscopy and abdominal ultrasound

5. European Crohn's Colitis Organization

CONCLUSION

On the basis of the candidate's scientific works provided to me for review and analysis, I can confidently state that I vote positively for the election of Assoc. Prof. Antonia Yordanova Atanasova, MD, Ph.D., DSc, for the academic position of "Professor" in the scientific specialty "Gastroenterology" at the Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" Varna.

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

23.04. 2024

Varna

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