

STATEMENT

by

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**Appointed as an external member of the Scientific Jury based on order No. 109-383/19.09.2025 of the Rector Prof. Dimitar Ivanov Raykov, MD, PhD, DSc of the
Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov", Varna, Bulgaria**

***Subject:** official public defense of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Yanko Georgiev Yankov, MD for the acquisition of the scientific degree "Doctor of Science" in the scientific specialty "Surgery", field of higher education "7. Health and Sports", professional direction "7.1. Medicine".*

1. Brief biographical data and career development of Assoc. Prof. Yanko Georgiev Yankov, MD, PhD

Assoc. Prof. Yanko Georgiev Yankov, MD, PhD, was born in 1989 in the city of Shumen, Bulgaria. In 2014 he graduated with a master's degree in medicine, and in 2016—a master's degree in health management at the Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov," Varna, Bulgaria. Since 2015, he has been working in the Clinic of Maxillofacial Surgery at the University Hospital "St. Marina," Varna, Bulgaria, and since 2020, after acquiring a specialty in maxillofacial surgery, as a specialist in the same clinic. From 2019 to 2024, he has successively worked as a part-time, full-time, and chief assistant in the Departments of Oral Surgery at the Faculty of Dental Medicine and the Department of General and Operative Surgery at the Faculty of Medicine at the Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov," Varna, Bulgaria. From 2021 to 2022, he was an independent doctoral student specializing in "Surgery" at the Department of General and Operative Surgery, Faculty of Medicine, Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov," Varna, Bulgaria. In 2022, he successfully defended his dissertation titled "Procalcitonin and delta neutrophil index levels in the surgery of head and neck inflammatory diseases" and earned the educational and scientific degree of "Doctor of Philosophy" (PhD). Since 2024, after winning a competition, he has been an associate professor of maxillofacial surgery at the Department of General and Operative Surgery of the Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov," Varna, Bulgaria. Since 2025, he has been the head of the Clinic of Maxillofacial Surgery at the University Hospital "St. Marina," Varna, Bulgaria.

2. Relevance of the topic and the purpose of the dissertation

The topic of the dissertation is "Lymph nodes in maxillofacial surgery—normal and most common diseases." It has a volume of 222 pages and, for better comprehension and

analysis, is illustrated with 93 tables, 41 figures, and 9 images. The literary sources that were used as evidence are 428, and all are in English. An abstract of 76 pages is also presented.

The goals set in the scientific work are five in number and they are as follows:

- to carry out a modern and detailed cytological, histological, anatomical-topographical, and anatomical-oncological description of the regional lymph nodes in the head and neck area, with an emphasis on their importance in maxillofacial surgery;
- to analyze diseases of the lymph nodes in the maxillofacial region in patients hospitalized in the Clinic of Maxillofacial Surgery, with distribution by gender, age, and clinical diagnosis;
- to classify diseases of the lymph nodes into main diagnostic groups and to study their frequency and characteristics in clinical practice;
- to study the etiological bacterial spectrum in patients with abscesses and phlegmons originating from lymph nodes of the head and neck;
- to study antibiotic resistance in patients with infectious diseases of the lymph nodes, with analysis of the relationship between gender, age, and type of the isolated microorganism.

Given the enormous number of patients with diseases of the lymph nodes of the head and neck and the constant dynamics in the development of their diagnostic methods and treatment approaches, I find both the topic of the dissertation work and the tasks set in it to be relevant and significant.

3. Tasks, materials and methods of the dissertation work

Assoc. Prof. Yanko Georgiev Yankov, MD, PhD, sets and consistently performs fourteen important and well-structured tasks.

He retrospectively examines and analyzes all patients with diseases of the lymph nodes in the head and neck area hospitalized within a ten-year period (from January 1, 2015, to December 31, 2024) at the Clinic of Maxillofacial Surgery at the University Hospital "St. Marina," Varna, Bulgaria. The study included a total of 563 patients suffering from the following diseases: actinomycosis, sarcoidosis, tuberculosis, felinosis, metastatic involvement of lymph nodes, lymphoproliferative diseases, chronic reactive lymphadenitis, abscessed lymph nodes and abscesses and phlegmons originating from them, as well as acute lymphadenitis. In the first eight groups of diseases, the therapeutic approach was surgical, while in patients with acute lymphadenitis of the head and neck, only conservative treatment was performed.

The methods he used in the analysis were carefully selected and were clinical, anatomical-topographic, histological, microbiological, epidemiological, and statistical evaluations of the data with graphical presentation of the results.

4. Results and discussion

In a volume of 114 pages, Assoc. Prof. Yanko Georgiev Yankov, MD, PhD consistently and in detail analyzes and compares the demographic characteristics of the studied patients and the dynamics of cases over the years of observation, the studied patients with diseases of the lymph nodes of the head and neck in relation to their number, the studied patients with surgical and conservative treatment and between the studied patients with lymphoproliferative diseases in the maxillofacial region, the etiological spectrum of acute purulent inflammations of the lymph nodes in the maxillofacial region and antibiotic resistance in acute purulent inflammations of the lymph nodes in the maxillofacial region.

5. Conclusions and contributions

After a thorough analysis, Assoc. Prof. Yanko Georgiev Yankov, MD, PhD, reached thirteen important and significant conclusions, and the contributions of his dissertation work are nine:

- A complete cytological, histological, and anatomical-topographic analysis of the regional lymph nodes in the head and neck region was performed, with an emphasis on their importance in maxillofacial surgery.

- A detailed analysis of the age and gender demographic distribution of patients with diseases of the lymph nodes in the maxillofacial region was performed.

- For the first time in Bulgaria, a large and detailed comparison between surgical and conservative treatment in patients with lymphadenopathy in the maxillofacial region was made, which reflects the significant predominance of surgical interventions;

- The etiological bacterial spectrum of acute purulent lymphadenitis of the head and neck and the abscesses and phlegmons arising from them was described;

- An assessment of the antibiotic resistance of the isolated strains in purulent lymphadenitis of the head and neck was made, which allows for a more precise choice of antibiotic treatment;

- Recommendations for clinical practice in the treatment of patients with metastatic involvement of the lymph nodes in the neck were prepared;

- High antibiotic sensitivity of intestinal bacteria and contrasting partial to high resistance of staphylococci to a number of antibacterial agents in purulent infections of the lymph nodes in the maxillofacial region have been proven, which may support the choice of their empirical antibacterial treatment;

- Gender-specific antibiotic sensitivity has been proven in acute purulent lymphadenitis of the head and neck, against which the antibiotic piperacillin is three times more effective in men than in women;

- Recommendations have been formed for optimizing antibiotic therapy in acute purulent lymphadenitis in the maxillofacial region, based on established patterns in sex -

specific resistance - men have higher sensitivity to most antibiotics, while women require more precise selection.

6. Characteristics and evaluation of the dissertation and the articles and citations provided for it

The documents that I received fully meet the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for the Implementation of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria, and the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of the Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov," Varna, Bulgaria, for the acquisition of the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences" in the scientific specialty "Surgery," field of higher education "7. Health and Sports," and professional direction "7.1. Medicine." The ten articles in support of the topic of the dissertation, in which Assoc. Prof. Yanko Georgiev Yankov, MD, PhD, is an author or co-author, are current. The citations that he provides during his participation in the defense are sufficient in terms of points for the acquisition of the scientific degree "Doctor of Sciences."

7. Conclusion

Based on everything written above, I give a **positive assessment** to **Assoc. Prof. Yanko Georgiev Yankov, MD, PhD** for awarding the **scientific degree "Doctor of Science"** in the **scientific specialty "Surgery"**, field of higher education "7. Health and Sports", professional direction "7.1. Medicine".

12.10.2025

Assoc. Prof. Vasil Gospodinov Sveshtarov, DMD, PhD

City of Sofia

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