

OPINION

Regarding the competition for occupying the academic position "Associate Professor" in the scientific specialty "Nephrology," professional field 7.1 "Medicine," in the higher education area 7 "Healthcare and Sports," for the needs of the Second Department of Internal Medicine ("Nephrology, Dialysis and Toxicology"), Faculty of Medicine, Medical University - Varna, Clinic of Nephrology, University Hospital "St. Marina," as announced in the State Gazette, issue №15, dated 24.02.2025.

Candidate: Dr. **Snezhana Atanasova Atanasova**, MD, Chief Assistant at Medical University - Varna, administrative physician in charge at the dialysis sector of the Clinic of Nephrology, University Hospital "St. Marina."

Prepared by: Prof. Dr. **Rayna Teodosieva Robeva**, MD, Head of the Clinic of Nephrology, Military Medical Academy (MMA), Sofia, member of the Scientific Jury appointed by Order № P-109-198/16.04.25 of the Rector of Medical University Varna.

Dr. Snezhana Atanasova Atanasova was born in 1988 in Varna. She graduated from Medical University - Varna in 2013. Between 2013 and 2019, she worked as a resident physician at the Clinic of Nephrology, University Hospital "St. Marina." She obtained her specialization in Nephrology in 2020 and has since been a nephrologist at the same clinic, currently serving as the administrative physician responsible for dialysis activities. Between 2018 and 2023, she was an Assistant at the Second Department of Internal Medicine at MU-Varna, and since 2023, she defended her dissertation on "Assessment and dynamic monitoring of hyperphosphatemia as a predictor for mineral and bone disorders in dialysis patients."

Dr. Atanasova is a member of the Bulgarian Society of Nephrology, Bulgarian Medical Association, and the European Kidney Association. She possesses a good level of English proficiency.

Scientific Activity: Dr. Atanasova holds a PhD in the specialty of the announced competition (50 points for Indicator A). Instead of a habilitation thesis, she presents 10 scientific publications indexed in international databases (257 points for Indicator B4). Additionally, she has 12 more publications in journals indexed in international databases and peer-reviewed journals (256 points for Indicator G7/r) and 2 articles in peer-reviewed journals (25 points for Indicator G8), totaling 281 points for Indicator G. Her publications have been cited in 4 articles published in indexed international journals (60 points for Indicator D10).

Dr. Atanasova's scientific contributions are in various areas:

In the area of "Patient-staff relationships in Hemodialysis Centers," she established that psychosocial adaptation to chronic kidney disease leads to mental maturity, and effective communication between patients and medical staff results in improved comprehensive patient care and therapeutic outcomes.

In the area of "Innovative biomarkers in CKD and mineral-bone disorders in CKD patients undergoing hemodialysis," she demonstrated that dynamic monitoring of serum concentrations of

PTH, BAP, osteocalcin, and vitamin D allows timely updates to individualized diagnostic and therapeutic approaches. She introduced for the first time in Bulgaria the testing of new biomarkers such as FGF-23, α -Klotho, and sclerostin in hemodialysis patients and studied Galectin-3, from its role as a biomarker to its potential as a therapeutic agent.

In the area of "The role of physical exercises in patients undergoing hemodialysis treatment," she evaluated the effects of intradialytic aerobic exercises on chronic dialysis patients, including their perceptions and emotional status.

In the area of "Psychological problems in patients adapting to extracorporeal treatment," she highlighted the frequent occurrences of anxiety, fear, insomnia, suspicion, despair, and depression among CKD patients. She emphasized that therapeutic success depends not only on medical intervention but also significantly on psychotherapy's impact on emotional well-being.

In the area of "Renal anemia in CKD-Hemodialysis: modern aspects and therapeutic behavior," Dr. Atanasova provided evidence-based recommendations and participated in the first Bulgarian study evaluating the efficacy and safety of the slow-acting intravenous iron preparation Monofer in hemodialysis patients. The study demonstrated rapid therapeutic responses, higher efficacy, no adverse reactions, and long-lasting hemoglobin improvements at reduced erythropoietin doses.

Participation in Scientific Forums: Dr. Atanasova has participated in over 30 international and national scientific forums with 17 reports and 12 posters, including annual national nephrology congresses, the "Nephrology Academy," European ERA-EDTA Congress, BANTAO Balkan Congress, Master classes for CKD prevention (Poland, Spain, North Macedonia), interdisciplinary national meetings, round tables, and local medical events.

She has been involved in clinical studies of scientific and clinical importance:

- Anemia Studies in CKD: Erythropoiesis via novel PHI Daprodustat – Non-Dialysis (ASCEND-ND) – GlaxoSmithKline
- DIALIZE-Outcomes – AstraZeneca
- Bax Duo-Pacific – AstraZeneca

Teaching Activity: Dr. Atanasova has been teaching since 2015. She conducts practical classes for 5th-year medical students in both Bulgarian and English, prepares lectures and presentations for interns and residents, and since 2022, she has been delivering part of the nephrology lecture course. She participates in examination committees at MU-Varna, with an annual teaching workload of 100 hours in recent years.

Clinical and Diagnostic Activity: Dr. Atanasova obtained her specialty in nephrology in 2019. As an experienced clinician, particularly skilled in dialysis treatment, she possesses comprehensive knowledge and skills for high-level nephrological practice.

Conclusion: Dr. Snezhana Atanasova is an experienced clinician, lecturer, and researcher who fully meets the requirements of the Law for the Development of Academic Staff. Therefore, I strongly recommend that the respected jury appoint her as an Associate Professor of

Nephrology in the Second Department of Internal Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, Medical University - Varna, based at the Clinic of Nephrology, University Hospital "St. Marina," Varna.

25.06.2025

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

Prof. Rayna Robeva

