

TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SCIENTIFIC JURY,
DETERMINED BY ORDER No. R-109-287/11.07.2025
OF THE RECTOR OF MU-VARNA

STATEMENT

by Professor Tsvetelina Valentinova Miteva, MD, PhD

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on the procedure for obtaining the scientific and educational degree "Doctor" in the doctoral program "General Medicine", professional field 7. Health and Sports, professional field 7.1. Medicine

Author: Daniela Krasimirova Kostadinova MD

Topic: Management of patients with alcohol dependence in general medical practice

Scientific supervisor: Associate Professor Zhenya Ruseva, MD, PhD, Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov"-Varna

1. General presentation of the procedure and the author

The dissertation submitted to me for review is intended for discussion by a scientific jury, determined by order No. R-109-287/11.07.2025 of the Rector of MU-Varna. I received all the necessary documents for the procedure.

Dr. Kostadinova graduated from the Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" in Varna as a Master of Medicine in 2015. She specialized in "General Medicine" at the Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" in Varna from 01.02.2016 to 28.02.2019, when she acquired a specialty in General Medicine in the healthcare system. A doctoral student is in part-time study at the Department of General Medicine, Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" in Varna in the period: 01.02.2023 to 31.03.2025. She works as a resident physician in the Emergency Department of the "St. Ivan Rilski" Hospital and in the Emergency Centers of Razgrad and Ispirih. He is currently the manager and general practitioner at General practice "Daniela Medica", Razgrad.

2. Relevance of the topic

The increase in the consumption of alcoholic beverages in almost all countries of the world has an adverse effect on the health and social life of a huge part of modern society. The importance of the alcohol problem in the form of risky alcohol consumption, alcohol dependence or chronic alcohol disease for general medical practice is very great. The general practitioner is a key unit in terms of carrying out screening programs for risk factors and socially significant diseases. This determines his main role in the early detection and diagnosis of alcohol dependence, as well as the risk factors for its development.

3. Understanding the problem

Dr. Kostadinova knows the presented problem well. 131 literary sources were analysed, of which 78 in English, and the remaining 53 - in Bulgarian. Part of the used literary sources (approximately 20%) are from the last five years. The studied literary material is presented analytically and in-depth, which shows skills for conducting a competent analysis of the literature used.

4. Research methodology

The main methods for collecting information are the questionnaire, laboratory and analyze of documents, which are often used in similar studies and correspond to the set goal. The survey covered 610 people over 18 years old, distributed in 7 age groups - 18-24 years, 25-34 years, 35-44 years, 45-54 years, 55-64 years, 65-74 years and over 75 years. A characterization of alcohol consumption, ultrasound diagnosis of the liver and the values of the liver indicators ASAT, ALAT and GGT of the individuals included in the clinical study were recorded. Part of the AUDIT test questions and additional, author's questions were used for the questionnaire survey.

5. Characteristics and evaluation of the dissertation work and contributions

The dissertation work contains 150 pages including bibliography and 3 appendices. It is illustrated with 39 tables and 40 figures. It is structured correctly, containing all generally accepted sections and parts. The literature review is of sufficient volume and well presented, the goal is to establish the frequency of risky alcohol consumption among the studied population, the physical and mental damage from alcohol dependence and the development of a model for monitoring and dispensary care of the identified risky and dependent individuals within the framework of general medical practice. The tasks of the study are clearly and specifically defined. The research methods, the study design, and the methods for determining participants are appropriately selected and described in detail.

The results of the studies show a significant frequency of alcohol consumption among the studied population. A high number of individuals with risky alcohol consumption, alcohol dependence and chronic alcohol disease, as well as mental and physical impairments in individuals with alcohol dependence have been identified. A statistically significant strong relationship between alcohol use and gender has been proven, as well as a weaker relationship between age and alcohol intake. The need for preventive examinations, as well as examinations in connection with some patient complaints, to look for manifestations of alcohol abuse and the presence of alcohol disease has been proven. A combined screening method for diagnosing alcohol dependence in general medical practice has been proposed. The relationship between the screening questionnaire, biochemical indicators and ultrasound diagnostics of the liver has been confirmed. The benefit of their parallel use in pre-hospital care for optimal sensitivity and specificity in the diagnosis of clinical abnormalities related to alcohol use has been proven. A convenient and easy-to-use algorithm for the detection and medical examination of alcohol-dependent individuals in General Medical Practice is proposed.

The contributions of the scientific work are in theoretical and practical aspects:

In the theoretical aspect, analytical information on risky alcohol consumption, alcohol dependence and chronic alcohol disease in the studied population has been collected. The role of risky alcohol consumption and alcohol dependence in the occurrence of psychosomatic damage and the development of socially significant diseases has been confirmed. The significant relationship between increased alcohol use, liver pathology and the parallel development of mental and physical damage has been confirmed, as well as the role of screening tests, GGT testing and ultrasound diagnostics in the detection and development of alcohol dependence.

From a practical point of view, an original complex methodology for screening for alcohol abuse and dependence has been developed. An original questionnaire and assessment scale for it have also been developed for the detection of patients with risky alcohol consumption, alcohol dependence and chronic alcohol disease.

Based on the statistically significant evidence from the study, a comprehensive model for the management of a patient with alcohol dependence in general medical practice has been developed.

6. Assessment of the publications and personal contribution

Dr. Krasimirova's publications present the main results of the research. She has presented three full-text publications, one of which in a journal with SJR, and has made two participations in scientific conferences related to the dissertation.

The abstract of the dissertation meets the regulatory requirements.

CONCLUSION

The dissertation of Dr. Daniela Krasimirova Kostadinova meets the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for the Implementation of this Law and the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of MU-Varna. It contains scientific and applied results that represent a contribution to science and shows that Dr. Kostadinova possesses the necessary theoretical knowledge and professional skills to independently conduct scientific research in the scientific specialty of General Medicine.

Given these circumstances, I believe that the presented dissertation meets all regulatory requirements and I support the awarding of the scientific and educational degree "Doctor" to Daniela Kostadinova, DM.

20.08. 2025

Reviewer:

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

Prof. Tsvetelina Valentinova, DM