

To the Chairman of the Scientific Jury  
according to Order No R-109-  
257/06/06/25 of the Rector of MU-Varna

## **OPINION**

by Prof. Tanya Ivanova Deneva, MD, PhD

Head of the Clinical Laboratory Department, Faculty of Medicine,

Medical University of Plovdiv

Bul. "Vasil Aprilov" No. 15A, Plovdiv

e-mail: [tanya.deneva@mu-plovdiv.bg](mailto:tanya.deneva@mu-plovdiv.bg)

GSM +359899371546

Assoc. Prof. Daniela Ivanova Gerova, MD, PhD is the only candidate for participation in the competition announced in the State Gazette No. 30 of 08.04.2025 for the academic position of "professor" in the scientific specialty "Clinical Laboratory" at the Department of "Clinical Laboratory", Faculty of Medicine of MU - Varna and Laboratory of Clinical Immunology at the MDL of UMHAT "St. Marina" EAD - Varna.

The procedure for announcing and holding the competition is in accordance with the requirements of the law on the development of the academic staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the regulations for the implementation of the law on the development of the academic staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, as well as with the conditions for occupying the academic positions according to the regulations on the development of the academic staff of MU-Varna.

The presented set of materials on paper/electronic media is in accordance with the regulations for the development of the academic staff of the MU - Varna.

I declare the absence of conflict of interest in the preparation of the review.

I have not detected any plagiarism in my submitted papers for review.

## SCIENTIFIC AND PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION

Assoc. Prof. Daniela Ivanova Gerova, MD, PhD was born in 1961 in Varna. In 1980 she graduated from the 4th Language High School "Frédéric Joliot-Curie" with intensive study of French, Varna, and in 1986 she graduated from the Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" – Varna and started working as a district pediatrician in Shumen.

In her professional development, Assoc. Prof. Gerova has completed a specialization in biochemistry (1991-1994) and a one-year internship in the field of laboratory endocrinology at the Central Laboratory at the University Hospital "Brüggemann", Brussels in 2007.

From 1991 to 2010 she successively held the positions of "assistant", "senior assistant", "chief assistant" at the Department of Biochemistry, Molecular Medicine and Nutrigenomics, Medical University of Varna.

In 2009, she acquired a specialty in Clinical Laboratory and worked as a doctor at the Central Clinical Laboratory, University Hospital "St. Marina" EAD-Varna, and from 2016 - until now: doctor at the Laboratory of Clinical Immunology, University Hospital "St. Marina" EAD-Varna

In 2015, she defended his doctoral dissertation in the scientific specialty: "Clinical Laboratory, Medical University-Varna on the topic "Determination of vitamin D status and the importance of suboptimal levels of vitamin D for the course of some chronic diseases".

In 2021, she was habilitated as an associate professor in the scientific specialty "Clinical Laboratory" at the Department of General Medicine and Clinical Laboratory, Clinical Laboratory Management Board, Varna Medical University and from 2021 - until now: is an associate professor at the Department of Clinical Laboratory, Varna Medical University.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Daniela Gerova is a member of the Union of Scientists in Bulgaria (USB), Section of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, a member of the Bulgarian Society of Clinical Laboratory and the Bulgarian Society of Clinical Immunology.

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## **SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH ACTIVITY**

### **Publication activity**

Assoc. Prof. Daniela Gerova is presenting herself at the competition for the title of Professor with 1 dissertation for the award of the title of Doctor; habilitation thesis based on 10 scientific publications in journals that are referenced and indexed in a global database of scientific information, 21 publications and reports published in scientific journals, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information, 13 publications and reports published in non-refereed journals with scientific review or published in edited collective volumes, 1 published chapter of a collective monograph and 3 full-text publications in scientific journals and collections indexed in a global database beyond the minimum scientific requirements for holding the title of Professor.

In this competition, the candidate participates with a total of 46 scientific papers, of which 38 are real publications. full-text articles in foreign journals, Bulgarian journals and 8 reports presented at prestigious International Congresses with published abstracts in journals with IF.

Recognition of the quality of the published scientific works of Assoc. Prof. Gerova is the significant number of citations (49) incl. by foreign authors in authoritative international journals with impact factor. Evidence from the Web of Science, Scopus, Google Scholar databases and an academic reference from the Library of MU-Varna with the citations covering the minimum requirements for holding the academic position of "Professor" is attached.

A reference in the world scientific databases Google Scholar, ORCID, SCOPUS ID, Web of Science Researcher, Research Gate shows that for the last 5 years the candidate has 20 scientific publications with a total of 65.36; h-index 5 (Scopus and Web Science).

### **Participation in research projects**

In connection with the present competition, Assoc. Gerova presents evidence of participation as a leader of 1 national project and a member of the research team in 3 national projects at the Science Fund of the University of Varna.

### **Scientific contributions**

Based on the submitted scientific works, including an abstract of a dissertation work, publications equivalent to a monographic/habilitation work in publications that are referenced and indexed in a global database of scientific information, full-text publications and summaries of participation in scientific forums, it is evidence that the candidate works and builds his academic and professional development, with the initial specific scientific interest being in the field of biochemistry and clinical laboratory, consistently expanding the scope of his scientific research and demonstrating scientific interests in the fields of endocrinology, rheumatology, cardiology and neurology. Eighty percent of the submitted publications contain original developments and results achieved in teamwork with researchers from various scientific units of the Medical University of Varna and convincingly speak of the personal participation of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Daniela Ivanova Gerova in terms of the emergence of the idea for certain scientific developments, their implementation and presentation of the results.

The full-text publications of Assoc. Prof. Gerova chronologically follow her development as a broad laboratory diagnostician and are indicative of a desire to adapt and validate methodologies for new and current markers in the diagnosis of cardiovascular, endocrine, neurodegenerative diseases and interests in almost all therapeutic medical specialties - cardiology, endocrinology, oncology, rheumatology, neurology.

The main contributions to the scientific and research work of Assoc. Prof. Gerova are related to:

- the significant role of vitamin D as an important modifiable factor in socially significant cardiovascular and neurodegenerative diseases.
- research into the relationships between circulating ucMGP, as a potent vitamin K-dependent inhibitor of vascular calcification, vitamin K status, assessment of coronary artery calcification, traditional risk factors for CVD, including uric acid as a new metabolic risk factor.
- elucidation of the importance of the transcription factor Nrf2, playing an integral role in endothelial protection and its relationship with MDA, ADMA, HO-1 and the transcription factor NF-kB as markers of oxidative stress and lipid

peroxidation in individuals with metabolic syndrome

- study of the diagnostic and prognostic value of adenosine deaminase (ADA) as an effective biomarker for assessing intestinal inflammation and as a potential indicator of disease activity

- proposed panel of new reliable bone biomarkers for better monitoring of bone disease in multiple myeloma, as well as assessment of the effectiveness of therapy.

- proposed algorithm for assessing vitamin B12 status by testing methylmalonic acid (MMA) in routine laboratory practice.

### **EDUCATIONAL AND TEACHING ACTIVITY**

Assoc. Prof. Gerova's teaching experience is 34 years, of which 9 years as an associate professor. Assoc. Prof. Gerova's teaching and learning activity is evenly distributed over the years and significant in volume.

During this period, she has led lectures and exercises in the specialty "biochemistry" for students of medicine and dentistry, a lecture course and exercises in the specialty "clinical laboratory" for students of medicine and pharmacy in Bulgarian and English, a lecture course for students of the specialty "medical laboratory assistant", as well as a lecture course with doctors specializing in clinical laboratory. From the submitted report for the last 4 academic years, Assoc. Prof. Gerova's teaching load is 126% of the standard for teaching load. She participates as a co-author in 1 published university textbook and 1 university manual.

As a supervisor of trainees for the period 2018-2021, two trainees have successfully completed their training under her leadership.

Assoc. Prof. Gerova participates in examination committees for semester and state examination committees for acquiring a specialty in clinical laboratory.

Assoc. Prof. Gerova is the supervisor of two successfully defended PhD thesis in the scientific specialty "clinical laboratory". As a result of the overall scientific activity of Assoc. Prof. Gerova, her active assistance for 2 successful defenses of students in doctoral programs in the scientific specialty "hematology" and in the direction of "biological sciences", which is in harmony with the broad scope of Assoc. Prof. Gerova's scientific research.

## **DIAGNOSTIC AND THERAPEUTIC ACTIVITY**

Assoc. Prof. Daniela Gerova has more than 20 years of work experience as a clinical laboratory physician at the University Hospital "St. Marina" EAD. In her professional career and daily workload, she is responsible for the diagnostic and therapeutic activities of the unit, ensuring high analytical quality and reliability of clinical laboratory tests through implemented modern technologies and principles of analysis.

## **COMPLIANCE WITH MANDATORY QUANTITATIVE CRITERIA AND SCIENTOMETRIC INDICATORS**

Assoc. Prof. Daniela Gerova, MD, PhD has submitted an academic reference for compliance and fulfilment of the mandatory quantitative criteria and scientific indicators according to the Regulation for occupying the academic position "Professor" at the MU – Varna.

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Points required</b>	<b>Number of points based on the evidence presented by the candidate</b>
A1	50	50
B4	100	148.48
G 5-9	200	450.38
D (10-12)	100	735
E	100	250

Based on the indicated activity of the candidate, the requirements of the law on the development of academic staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and its regulations for application in the MU-Varna for the appointment of academic position "Professor" are met.

## **CONCLUSION**

In the competition, Assoc. Prof. Daniela Gerova presents herself as an exceptional and well-established specialist with sufficient medical, research and teaching experience.

I believe that with her many years of research, teaching and clinical diagnostic activity, Assoc. Prof. Daniela Gerova, MD, PhD. meets (and exceeds) the mandatory and specific conditions and scientific criteria for occupying the academic position of "professor". This gives me reason to vote positively and to suggest to the members of the esteemed jury to support the election of Assoc. Prof. Daniela Gerova, MD, PhD for "Professor" of Clinical Laboratory".

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Plovdiv

/ Prof. Tanya Deneva, MD, PhD/