

To the Chairman of the Scientific Jury
Determined by Order № P -109-109/29.01.2025
To the Rector of MU-Varna

Review
from prof. dr Nikola Jordanov Kolev MD PhD DSc
Head of Department of General and operative Surgery
Vice-Rector "Postgraduate Education"

Concerning: procedure for taking up academic position „Professor“ in specialty „Surgery“, professional field 7.1. Medicine, field of higher education 7. Healthcare and sport – one 0,5 full-time position for ES Abdominal Surgery Department of Surgery, Faculty „Medicine“ and 1 full-time position for Second Department of Surgery UMHAT Saint Marina - Varna

Information about the procedure:

At the first meeting of the Scientific Jury - protocol 1, I was asked to prepare a review.

The necessary materials on paper and electronic media were submitted for the contest in accordance with the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of MU-Varna by the sole candidate – Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vasil Markov Bozhkov, MD, PhD from the Department of Surgery, MU-Varna and the Second Clinic of Surgery at the University Hospital "St. Marina" - Varna.

The review is prepared in accordance with the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (LDASRB), the Regulations for its implementation and the Regulations of MU-Varna.

Candidate's professional data:

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vasil Markov Bozhkov was born on 13.07.1973.

1998 Graduates Medicine Diploma № 002097

1999/2004 Specialization in Surgery

2004 – Specialty in Surgery Diploma № 0747

2002 - Resident - surgeon in Second Department of Surgery UMHAT Saint Marina - Varna

2007/2011 Assistant in Department of Surgery – MU - Varna

2011/2013 Chief assistant in Department of Surgery – MU - Varna

2013 ESD „ Doctor “– “Diagnostic and therapeutic strategy in patients with cholangitis.”

2015/2023 Associate Professor: “Surgery”

2016/ 2023 Head of ED of Abdominal Surgery at the Department of Surgery

2024 Academic Degree "Doctor of Sciences" Postcholecystectomy syndrome - a current view on an "old" problem. Diagnostics and modern therapeutic strategy." 2024г. Ръководител Катедра Хирургични болести

2024 Monography "Malignant tumors of the small intestine" ISBN 978-619-91772-6-6
2024

Member of: BLS, BGSS, IASGO Member of the editorial board of the journal "Surgery"; Vice President of BGSS 2024

Courses for professional specialization conducted:

1. 2001 - Hôpital Erasme Bruxelles Chirurgie digestive
2. 2017 - Chirurgia Generale e del Pancreas Policlinico “G.B. Rossi” Verona Italy
3. 2017 – 11-th European digestive surgery postgraduate course Budapest Hungary
4. 2017 – laparoscopic suturing course Herceghalom Hungary.

5. 2020 Departement of Colorectal Surgery, Beaujon Hospital, Clichy, and University of Paris, FRANCE
6. 2023 Global Surgeon Summit Third Convention of Surgery Meril Academy Gujarat India
7. 2023 IASGO Pre congress course – IOUS and ablations in liver tumors Verona Italy
8. 2024r. Basic skills in laparoscopic surgery 23-25. 09. Surgical training institute Bucharest, Romania

Foreign languages

English – B2- level;

French- French language school;

Russian – written and oral.

Evaluation of the candidate's research activity

The candidate in this competition has presented scientific production that complies with the minimum national requirements under Art. 2b, para. 2 and para. 3 of the Act on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and reflects his scientific and research activity, which includes:

- dissertation for the award of the EDS "doctor" degree
- monography,
- scientific publications in journals that are referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases of scientific information,
- publications and reports published in non-refereed journals with scientific review,
- two full-text publications in a scientific journal (beyond the minimum scientometric requirements for taking up Professor AD)
- 31 citations

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Bozhkov participated in the contest with 37 real publications, of which 17 in Bulgaria and 20 abroad, distributed as follows: as the single author - 3, first author - 9, as the second author - 11 and as the third and subsequent - 14.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Bozhkov participated in 50 Bulgarian and foreign scientific forums. According to a reference prepared by the Medical Library at MU-Varna, a list of 31/330 volumes is presented.

Scientific production

For this contest, Assoc. Prof. Bozhkov presents 32 scientific publications that meet the minimum requirements for acquiring the title of Professor and a monographic work on the topic "Malignant tumors of the small intestine" - 100 points by indicator B4

Sixteen (50%) of the scientific publications to meet the minimum national requirements for AD "Professor" are indexed in global databases (Scopus, Web of Science) (G7.1-G7.16) - 353.57 points with a minimum requirement of 80 points for clinical disciplines, and 16 are in non-refereed journals with scientific review (G8.1-G8.16) 126.9 points with a total number of points of 480.47 points with a mandatory minimum for indicators G5-9 - 200 points.

Main directions

1. Monography
2. Clinical cases
3. Diseases of the hepatobiliary system
4. Diseases of the small and large intestine
5. Herniology

1. Monography

The monography "Malignant Tumors of the Small Intestine" is dedicated to a serious problem in modern surgery, which for a very long time was underestimated at the expense of the more common, both benign and malignant diseases of other parts of the digestive system, such as the stomach and colon. It presents a particularly topical problem in abdominal surgery, presenting modern trends in the treatment of malignant tumors of the small intestine. The last part presents the own experience of the Second Clinic of Surgery in the treatment of small intestinal tumors. The clinical picture, the reason for hospitalization, the methods of imaging diagnostics, the intraoperative finding and histological studies are indicated. A wealth of photographic material is also presented. (B4)

2. Clinical cases

Solid pseudopapillary tumor of the pancreas - Frantz tumor (G7.1) - three cases of Frantz tumor - operated in the clinic. The past medical history, clinical presentation, imaging methods, intraoperative findings and histological results are described. A review of the world literature was performed.

Felinositis of the spleen (G7.2) - a rare case of felinositis is described in a patient operated on for a spleen abscess. Anamnesis - data on a pet - a cat. Histological result - spleen abscess caused by *B. Bourgardorferi*

Malignant melanoma. Four cases of metastases from the GIT (G7.3) (G8.2), – These are patients who presented with a clinical picture of small intestine, ileus with a history of melanoma – underwent treatment, underwent surgery, resection with subsequent anastomosis. Histological result – metastasis from melanoma.

Small intestinal ileus (G7.8) caused by “insertion” of a small intestinal loop at the site of a trocar from a laparoscopic myomectomy performed a few days earlier. The patient underwent emergency surgery. Resection and anastomosis were performed. A review of the world literature was conducted and attention was focused on a different type of pathology resulting from the widespread introduction of laparoscopic surgery into surgical practice and the subsequent risks.

Gastric actinomycosis. A case report and review of the literature. (G8.3) Abdominal actinomycosis, although recognized more than 150 years ago, is still largely unknown to most clinicians. It is generally believed that its various clinical manifestations represent a malignant process rather than an infection. This chronic infection has a tendency to mimic malignant diseases. Gastric actinomycosis is a very rare and benign gastric disease. When clinically recognized, it is a difficult diagnosis to make before obtaining a surgical specimen. A case of intramural gastric actinomycosis is presented and a review of cases of abdominal and gastric actinomycosis, which have been rarely reported in the literature, is conducted.

3. Diseases of the hepatobiliary system

Characteristics of acute cholecystitis and mortality after cholecystectomy in adult patients (G7.16) The study subjects were a total of 45 patients with acute cholecystitis, with a mean age of

71.50 ± 7.02 years (range 60 to 88 years) - 27 men and 18 women, hospitalized as an emergency and operated on at the Second Surgery Clinic. A constellation of indicators characterizing some of the important features of the diagnosis and treatment of these patients was analyzed, with an emphasis on the role of GPs in increasing the efficiency and improving the quality of medical care for this specific population group.

Modern diagnostic and therapeutic approach in patients with biliary-digestive fistulas and biliary ileus (G8.5). The diagnosis and treatment methods in patients with biliary-digestive fistulas and biliary ileus were studied, with a view to improving postoperative results and reducing morbidity and mortality of this group of patients. 26 patients were hospitalized and operated on. Preoperative diagnosis remains very difficult due to the lack of specific clinical and laboratory indicators. The type of surgical intervention in BDF should be strictly individual - depending on the etiology, localization of the fistula and the degree of change in the organs involved in its formation.

Postcholecystectomy syndrome – a new challenge for the general practitioner (G7.5) - The increase in the number of laparoscopic cholecystectomies worldwide has led to an increase in the number of patients with PCS, which requires a new approach to this problem. 262 patients with PCS hospitalized at the Clinic were analyzed. The causes of PCS were biliary atresia - 75; residual choledocholithiasis - 64; stenosing papillitis - 12; pyogenic liver abscess - 5; residual cystic duct - 4. Diagnosis and treatment of PCS require an interdisciplinary approach and should be performed in centers specializing in the treatment of biliary pathology.

Postcholecystectomy syndrome – diagnostic and therapeutic strategy (G7.6)- The aim of the article is to familiarize colleagues from general medical practice with modern diagnostic and therapeutic strategies and treatment methods in patients with PCS and their role in optimizing the final results and reducing complications and mortality in these patients. This poses the challenge for the general practitioner to know the main diseases that can lead to the development of PCS.

Both publications are directly related to the dissertation work of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Bozhkov, MD, PhD. "Postcholecystectomy syndrome - a current view on an "old" problem. Diagnostics and modern therapeutic strategy." This work provides a comprehensive analysis of the causes leading

to the development of postcholecystectomy syndrome, the experience of the Second Surgery Clinic in the treatment of patients with this syndrome.

Antimicrobial treatment of intra-abdominal abscesses. (G7.13) - The social and economic importance of intra-abdominal abscesses is measured by the significant burden of health resources they require in terms of the need for emergency care, hospital admission, imaging and laboratory diagnostics, surgery (both initial and repeat interventions). In addition, ineffective initial empirical antimicrobial therapy can lead to a significant increase in treatment costs.

Treatment of patients with liver abscess (G7.14) Liver abscess and its complications are one of the common problems in surgical practice. During the period 2019-2021, 26 patients with liver abscess were treated at the Second Surgery Clinic of St. Marina University Hospital - Varna. The female:male ratio = 1:1.36. Ultrasonography was used to determine the number, size and location of abscesses and for possible percutaneous aspiration. We used three types of drainage techniques: percutaneous drainage under ultrasound or CT control (with or without catheter placement) (9 patients), surgical drainage (16 patients) and drainage via ERCP (1 patient). Early diagnosis and treatment is a crucial step in the treatment of these patients. The correct choice of surgical tactics, good knowledge of the problem and anatomical features, as well as the presence of a highly qualified team are the main prerequisites for favorable therapeutic results.

Complicated hepatic echinococcosis - postoperative biliary dyskinesia. Behavior. (G8.9) A 12-year period from 2005 to 2017 was analyzed. with 121 hospitalized patients with UCHE. Biliary dyskinesia in the postoperative period was found in 5 patients. Four men aged 25 to 62 years and a woman aged 15. Open surgery with echinococcectomy was performed in all patients. Communication between the cyst and the biliary tree was found in all. Relaparotomy was required in one of the patients.

4. Diseases of the small and large intestine

Intussusception in adults (G7.12) - a rare disease that differs significantly in etiology from the same disease in children. All patients underwent surgical intervention. All underwent resection and primary anastomosis, and one patient underwent disinvagination. As for patients with intussusception of the colon: 12 patients underwent resection with primary anastomosis, and 6

patients underwent resection with colostomy. Surgical intervention - radical resection of the affected segment is preferable and is the only radical method, since in most cases the cause of intussusception is a malignant lesion.

Neuroendocrine tumors of the colon and rectum (G7.4) and (G7.9) - A retrospective cohort study of patients diagnosed with NENs who underwent surgical interventions at the Second Clinic of Surgery in the period 2010-2022 is presented in 32 patients (19 women and 13 men). The localizations of the neuroendocrine tumors were: colon and rectum - 9 patients, small intestine - 6 patients, stomach - 4 patients, pancreas - 7 patients, adrenal glands - 2 patients, liver metastases - 4 patients. The histological type was: neuroendocrine tumor - 27, insulinoma - 3, pheochromocytoma - 2. Highly differentiated tumors of the rectum (< 2 cm) are indicated for endoscopic resection. Tumors with dimensions greater than 2 cm are recommended for surgical resection with a higher risk of distant metastases. The best results in the treatment of NET are achieved in highly specialized centers, with the participation of endoscopists and surgeons.

Metastatic colorectal carcinoma associated with pyogenic liver abscess (G8.16) Four cases of metastatic colorectal carcinoma associated with pyogenic liver abscess are presented, which were treated at the Second Clinic of Surgery. The patients were operated on and the following interventions were performed - in one - segmentectomy; in two - liver resection with right hemicolectomy; in one - incision, biopsy and drainage; and in one - percutaneous drainage. The prognosis in these cases is unfavorable due to the malignant diseases and the higher frequency of septic complications.

Intestinal fistulas. (G8.7) Most intestinal fistulas (75-80%) occur as a complication of previous abdominal surgery. Twenty-six patients with intestinal fistulas were hospitalized. The diagnosis was made using clinical symptoms, physical status, and imaging studies (ultrasound, CT, and MRI). Surgical treatment performed on patients included bowel resection followed by laterolateral or end-to-end anastomosis, stoma creation, and in some cases abdominal wall reconstruction with a flap.

Complicated diverticulosis of the colon. Diagnostic and therapeutic strategy. (G8.10) A retrospective analysis of 213 patients with colonic diverticulosis was performed. Of these, 94 were male and 109 were female. Their mean age was 60.9 (32-91) years; 10% were under 50 years of age; 33% were 50-60 years of age; 42% were 60-80 years of age; and 15% were over 80 years of

age. Diverticulitis was classified as complicated or uncomplicated based on: computed tomography data, history, severity of clinical symptoms, and imaging data.

Periappendicular abscesses (G8.11), (G8.12) Periappendicular abscesses belong to the group of complicated intra-abdominal infections. They are part of the non-visceral intra-abdominal abscesses and, by their nature, represent local, limited forms of secondary peritonitis. 46 patients are presented for the period from 2016-2020. The patients underwent appendectomy and drainage. According to the results of the microbiological examination, antimicrobial therapy with Cephalosporins - second and third generation, carbapenems, fluoroquinolones and Metronidazole for five days was carried out.

6. Herniology

Choice of surgical method for treatment of patients with postoperative hernias (G8.12)

The surgical treatment of postoperative hernias (incisional ventral hernias - IVH) remains a challenge in the present of modern surgery with wide margins of documented recurrences, which according to a number of authors reach a frequency of up to 45% of cases. The aim of the study is to summarize and analyze the results of different approaches in the surgical treatment of postoperative hernias for a 5-year period (2013-2017). 281 postoperative hernias were operated on (93 men, 188 women), of which 38 were recurrent (men:women - 0.41-1).

Recurrent postoperative hernias (G8.12) Recurrent postoperative hernias are a common problem in modern surgical practice, occurring in up to 40% of cases after transitional abdominal wall plastic surgery, and the problem is associated not only with the surgical technique and the prosthetic materials used, but also with numerous patient-related predisposing factors. Over a 5-year period (2013-2017), 38 patients with recurrent postoperative hernias were operated on (men:women - 0.41-1), with more than a third of the patients (14) being over 70 years of age.

Teaching and learning activities

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Bozhkov has consistently participated in the teaching activities of the Department of Surgery since 2007, regardless of his academic development, which includes teaching students in the discipline "Surgical Diseases" for students of the specialty "Medicine", Bulgarian-language and English-language teaching. From the attached reference, the teaching

workload is as follows: The teaching experience of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Bozhkov is 17 years, 11 months and 17 days.

Horarium for the period 2020-2024:

2020/2021г.	166 BEO	454 AEO	620
2021/2022г.	66 BEO	330 AEO	396
2022/2023г.	12 BEO	375 AEO	387
2023/2024г.	94 BEO	408 AEO	502
Total	338 BEO	1583 AEO	1905

Medical and diagnostic activities

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Bozhkov has 24 years and 10 months of experience in the specialty and actively participates in the operational activities of the Second Clinic of Surgery of UMHAL "Sveta Marina" - emergency and elective. For the last three years, Assoc. Prof. Bozhkov has participated in 1017 - surgical interventions - 426 emergency and 591 planned. As an established surgeon, he masters both conventional and minimally invasive surgical techniques. He applies laparoscopic surgery as the preferred method for surgical treatment of diseases of the hepatobiliary system.

Conclusion:

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vasil Bozhkov, MD PhD DSc, is an established lecturer with very good theoretical and practical training and many years of experience in the Department of Surgical Diseases. He is characterized by high professionalism, ethics and organizational skills.

The professional qualification, scientific research and teaching activities meet the requirements of the Regulations on the conditions and procedure for acquiring scientific degrees and for occupying the academic position of "Professor" at the Medical University of Varna.

Therefore, I confidently give my positive assessment and recommend to the Honorable Scientific Jury to award Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vasil Markov Bozhkov, MD, PhD, DSc the Academic Position "Professor" in the Scientific Specialty of General Surgery.

24.03.2025г.

Varna

prof. d-r. Nikola Kolev MD, PhD, DSc.

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