

## **REVIEW**

**By Prof. Emil Georgiev Kovachev, MD, DSC**

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### **Regarding**

**Procedure for holding the academic position of Associate Professor in professional area 7.1. Medicine, speciality Obstetrics and Gynaecology, published in the State Gazette No. 102/28.11.2025, and open for the needs of**

**The Department of Healthcare, Shumen Affiliate of the Medical University – Varna**

**of Dr. Yonka Ivanova Kornovska, PhD**

### **ASSESSMENT OF CONTRIBUTIONS**

The personal contributions fall into the following categories:

#### **I. Contributions related to the doctoral thesis: Treatment of Cervical Precancerous Lesions by Large Loop Excision (LLETZ) in an Outpatient Setting**

In her thesis, Dr. Kornovska addresses a significant medical and social issue in contemporary gynaecology, related to the diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up of cervical precancers. These conditions arise most commonly as a result of persistent infection with human papillomavirus (HPV) and primarily affect women of reproductive age, which determines their high medical and public health significance. Cervical cancer remains one of the leading oncological problems in women, with approximately 500,000 new cases diagnosed annually worldwide, representing a substantial share of the structure of female oncological morbidity.

Based on her study, Dr. Kornovska formulates 9 conclusions and 11 scientific contributions, which are appropriately classified as original, confirmatory and practical contributions. Particularly significant are the practically applied contributions, which are directly applicable for optimising the diagnostic and therapeutic approach and the follow-up of patients with cervical precancerous conditions.

Among the most substantial contributions with practical application, the following should be highlighted:

1. An in-depth analysis of intraoperative, early (within the 30th postoperative day period), and late postoperative complications following the application of the LLETZ (Loop Electrosurgical Excision Technique) method has been carried out, which is of major importance for assessing the safety and efficacy of the method.

2. The histological results following loop excision in a significant number of patients (189 cases) with cervical precancerous lesions have been analysed, contributing to a better understanding of the morphological characteristics of the lesions and the therapeutic effect of the intervention.
3. Prognostic factors associated with the final histological results after LLETZ have been identified, which is of substantial importance for predicting the therapeutic outcomes and individualising the management of individual patients.
4. Prognostic factors for resection margin involvement by the pathological process have been established, including high-grade squamous intraepithelial lesions (HSIL), carcinoma in situ, and microinvasive or invasive carcinoma of the cervix, which is of major importance for assessing the radicality of surgical treatment and the risk of persistence or recurrence of the disease.
5. The frequency of recurrence and persistence of cervical precancers following loop excision has been studied, with the results being of substantial importance for optimising the follow-up algorithms and the long-term management of these patients.

## **II. Contributions in other fields of study not related to the doctoral thesis and habilitation work**

The presented academic studies and research are concentrated in current and significant areas of contemporary operative gynaecology and gynaecologic oncology. This includes the anatomical basis of surgical interventions, the application of the ERAS (Enhanced Recovery After Surgery) concept and prehabilitation, the introduction of erbium laser technologies, and the diagnosis and treatment of gynaecologic oncological diseases, including rare tumours and cases involving preservation of reproductive function.

In the field of operative gynaecology and surgical anatomy, the contributions are of substantial scientific and applied character. A thorough knowledge of the topographic anatomy of the lesser pelvis is of key importance for the safe performance of surgical interventions and for minimising intra- and postoperative complications. A particularly valuable original contribution is the development and implementation of an original surgical technique for primary reconstruction of the tissue defects after wide local excision in patients with locally advanced carcinoma of the vulva. This contributes to the optimisation of surgical outcomes and improves the functional and clinical results.

The studies related to the implementation of the ERAS concept in operative gynaecology represent a significant scientific and applied contribution. The results from the practical application of this multimodal system have been presented for the first time in the country. This pursuit targets optimising perioperative care, accelerating postoperative recovery, reducing hospital stay, and improving the quality of treatment. Particularly significant is the contribution related to the introduction of prehabilitation principles as an integral part of perioperative patient preparation, which has established significance for improving surgical outcomes and reducing complications.

Research in the field of laser technologies in gynaecology is innovative with practical applications. For the first time in Bulgaria, results from the application of erbium laser in the treatment of genitourinary syndrome in menopause and stress urinary incontinence have been

published. These studies contribute to the introduction of modern, minimally invasive therapeutic methods, leading to a significant improvement in patients' quality of life.

Significant scientific contributions are made in the field of gynaecologic oncology, including issues related to the combination of oncological disease and pregnancy, as well as the preservation of reproductive function in women of reproductive age. These studies are essential for the clinical practice, as they support the most favourable therapeutic decision-making in complex clinical situations requiring a multidisciplinary approach.

Particularly valuable are the publications on rare gynaecologic oncological tumours and rare clinical cases, which enrich the medical literature and are of substantial importance for improving diagnostics and the therapeutic approach in these conditions. The presentation of such cases contributes to expanding clinical experience and enhancing diagnostic accuracy.

In summary, the presented research papers contain significant original, scientific-applied, and methodological contributions that build on established knowledge and have immediate relevance for the development of contemporary operative gynaecology and gynaecologic oncology. The candidate's research output demonstrates a high level of scientific competence, consistency in research activity, and a significant contribution to medical science and clinical practice.

### III. RESEARCH ACTIVITY

The overall scholarly output of Dr. Yonka Kornovska, PhD, includes 144 entries across 81 published research papers and 63 participations at national scientific forums. For this procedure, the candidate has submitted 38 of her scientific works, distributed as follows:

22 papers are printed in peer-reviewed journals indexed in Scopus and Web of Science, of which 6 have an impact factor. There are 16 publications in non-peer-reviewed journals with a scientific review. The impact factor of the submitted papers is 15.1. All 38 submitted works serve as evidence for fulfilling the minimum national requirements for filling the academic position of Associate Professor in accordance with the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff.

**Table 1. Minimum required points for the academic position of Associate Professor at MU-Varna**

Group of indicators	Contents	MU-Varna criteria	Dr. Yonka Ivanova Kornovska, PhD
A	Indicator 1	50	50
B	Indicator 2	—	—
C	Indicators 3 or 4	100	100.9
D	Sum of indicators 5 to 9	200	203.32
E	Sum of indicators 10 to 12	100	150
F	Sum of indicators 13 to 22	60	—
G	Teaching workload	100	—
	Academic position	200	—
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>504.22</b>

#### **IV. Participation in science courses, scientific societies and associations**

Dr. Kornovska's professional interests are in the field of operative gynaecology and endoscopic gynaecological surgery, for which she holds the relevant certificates:

- ✓ Laparoscopy in Gynaecology – Level I
- ✓ Laparoscopy in Gynaecology – Level II
- ✓ Hysteroscopy – Level I
- ✓ Hysteroscopy – Level II
- ✓ Colposcopy
- ✓ Ultrasound in Obstetrics and Gynaecology
- ✓ Laser treatment in gynaecology with Prof. Marco Gambojani
- ✓ Basic methods in aesthetic gynaecology with Dr. Tinatin Tomadze

Dr. Kornovska is an active member of several national scientific societies and associations:

- ✓ The Bulgarian Medical Association
- ✓ The Bulgarian Society of Obstetrics and Gynaecology
- ✓ The Bulgarian Association for Minimally Invasive Gynaecological Surgery
- ✓ The Bulgarian Association of Gynecologic Oncology

#### **V. Brief biographical data**

Dr. Yonka Kornovska was born in 1975. She graduated from the Higher Medical Institute in Pleven with honours in 1999. In 2005, she obtained her Certificate of Completion of Special Training (CCST) in Obstetrics and Gynaecology." In 2020, she started her academic career as a part-time assistant professor at the Department of Healthcare at the Shumen affiliate of MU-Varna. Following a competitive selection in 2021, she was appointed as a full-time assistant professor, and from 2023, she has been Chief Assistant Professor at the Department of Healthcare. Dr. Kornovska has worked as a physician, obstetrician-gynaecologist from 2004 to 2005 at Maichin Dom Medical Complex – Varna. From 2005 to 2020, she was a senior medical representative and regional coordinator for Pfizer, Sanofi-Aventis Bulgaria, and Novartis Pharma Services. Currently, she holds the position of obstetrician-gynaecologist at the Women's Health Centre "Prof. Yavor Kornovski" and the Gynaecology Clinic at St. Anna Hospital – Varna.

In 2022, Dr. Kornovska successfully defended her doctoral thesis on *Treatment of Cervical Precancerous Lesions by Large Loop Excision (LLETZ) in an Outpatient Setting* and was awarded a PhD degree in Medicine at MU-Pleven.

## VI. Conclusion

Dr. Kornovska's scientific output meets the generally accepted standards. As attested by the scientometric criteria and teaching activities of Dr. Yonka Kornovska, PhD, I believe that she fulfils all requirements for the acquisition of the academic position of Associate Professor.

I take the liberty to recommend to the esteemed members of the Scientific Jury to vote positively for the awarding of the academic position of Associate Professor in Obstetrics and Gynaecology to Dr. Yonka Kornovska, PhD, in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of the Medical University – Varna for the Development of Academic Staff.

**Date: 09.03.2026**

**Prepared by:**

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**Prof. Emil Kovachev, MD, DCS**

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