

## REVIEW

By Prof. Dr. Veselin Marinov, MD, DSc, Medical University of Varna, elected as a reviewer by decision of the Faculty Council with protocol N 52/ 12.01.2026 in connection with a competition for the position of Associate Professor announced in the State Gazette No. 102 of 28.11.2025 with the only candidate admitted to participate, Chief Assistant Dr. Turgay Kalinov, MD, in the field of higher education 7.1 "Medicine". Specialty "Surgery"

Biographical data about the candidate.

Dr. Turgay Kalinov was born on 16.01.1992 in the city of Pleven. He applied and was accepted to Medicine, graduating from the Medical University of Varna in 2017. He specialized in surgery at the University Hospital "St. Marina" in Varna. He obtained his specialty in 2022. From the beginning of his specialization and until now he has been working at the First Clinic of Surgery at the University Hospital "St. Marina" in Varna. He holds the academic positions of "Assistant" and "Chief Assistant", leading practical exercises for medical students. Since 10.01.2025 he has held the position of "Administrative Assistant". In 2022 he defended his dissertation on the topic "Importance of virtual reality simulators in the training of laparoscopic and robotic surgery" and acquired the ONS "Doctor". The submitted documentation shows his participation in the leadership of the student council and numerous scientific projects. He is certified as a console surgeon with the Da Vinci robotic system. He speaks English and Turkish.

Scientific research activity of the candidate

In this competition, Dr. Kalinov presents the following scientific production:

- Dissertation for the acquisition of the ONS "Doctor"
- Habilitation work – monographic book on the topic: "A complex modern approach to the diagnosis and treatment of pancreatic carcinoma".
- Full-text publications published in scientific journals, referenced and indexed in global databases of scientific information – 11 after awarding the ONS "Doctor"
- Publications and reports published in non-refereed journals with scientific review or published in edited collective forums – 4
- List of citations – 6
- Personal impact factor – IF – 11.7

Regarding the minimum national requirements for acquiring the academic position "Associate Professor" according to the ZRASRB and its regulations for application at the Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" Varna, the candidate Dr. Kalinov has presented the following reference:

1. By indicators group A – 50t out of required 50t
2. By indicators group B – 100t out of required 100t
3. By indicators group D – 200.59t out of required 200t
4. By indicators group E – 80t out of required 50t

The data show that the minimum criteria according to the Law on the Prevention and Control of the Corruption of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Prevention of Corruption of the

Republic of Bulgaria have been met and in terms of indicators in groups D and E they even exceed the required ones.

#### Educational and teaching activities

After taking up the position of JSC "Assistant" Dr. Kalinov began to supervise practical exercises of medical students at the Faculty of Medicine of the Medical University "Prof. Paraskev Stoyanov" from the 3rd, 4th, 5th year, as well as intern doctors. A report with a cumulative teaching hours of 2106 teaching hours from 2020 to the present is presented. Provides a certificate of teaching experience of 5 years, 8 months and 29 days.

#### Continuing qualification

From the submitted reference and the attached documents, it is evident that after 2017, the candidate has participated in 10 congresses and conferences on surgery in Bulgaria, with the majority of them participating with lecture presentations. 8 certificates of participation in training seminars, training, certification courses and scientific events abroad have been presented. He holds a certificate for Da Vinci robotic surgery. He has presented diplomas from training abroad in the field of laparoscopic pancreatic surgery, minimally invasive liver surgery. Several diplomas from training courses in hepatobiliary and pancreatic surgery, endocrine surgery.

He participated in the organizing committees of 5 consecutive congresses on colorectal surgery in the city of Varna – 2017, 2019; 2021; 2023, 2025.

#### Main directions in the candidate's scientific activity.

It is evident that the candidate's interests are in the field of minimally invasive and robotic surgery. Main directions are represented in hepatobiliary and pancreatic surgery, training programs in minimally invasive surgery. The following directions can be deduced:

1. Minimally invasive approach in colorectal surgery
2. Modern treatment of hiatal hernias
3. Surgery in oncological diseases of the pancreas
4. Training programs in the field of laparoscopic and robotic surgery
5. Emergency surgery

The main direction in the practical and scientific research activity of Dr. Turgay Kalinov is pancreatic surgery. The habilitation work on the topic "Complex modern treatment and surgical approaches in pancreatic cancer" is a current scientific work summarizing modern approaches in the diagnosis and treatment of pancreatic carcinoma. Based on modern publications on this topic, the author deduces diagnostic and multimodal therapeutic approaches in patients with pancreatic carcinoma in the different stages of the disease such as follows:

- Development of an algorithm for diagnosis and treatment of patients with pancreatic carcinoma at different stages of the disease
- Comparative analysis of different surgical approaches for localization of the disease in different anatomical areas of the gland
- Emphasis on multimodal therapy - neoadjuvant, adjuvant, surgical and radiotherapy in patients with pancreatic cancer.

- Role of AI in planning and conducting surgical treatment.

Colorectal surgery is another main topic in the candidate's research activity. Some of the publications consider modern minimally invasive approaches in the treatment of colorectal cancer - laparoscopic and robotic. Emphasis is placed on the possibilities of achieving surgical radicality in robotic rectal resections with preservation of functional pelvic capabilities; standard application of ICG to assess colon perfusion and reduce postoperative complications, training protocols in minimally invasive colorectal surgery.

Dr. Kalinov's dissertation is on the topic "The Importance of Virtual Reality Simulators in the Training of Laparoscopic and Robotic Surgery". The dissertation demonstrates the benefits and need for integrating VR platforms in the training of young surgeons, as this approach shortens the learning curve and is accompanied by higher levels of patient safety.

Some of the candidate's publications concern topics of emergency surgery and minimally invasive approaches in the treatment of hiatal hernias.

#### Scientific and practical contributions

Considering the submitted scientific production, the scientific and practical contributions that can be deduced are related to the defended dissertation, monographic work and publications in international and national publications.

I agree with the deduced contributions from the dissertation work for the acquisition of the ONS "Doctor", namely:

The role of virtual reality and simulation training in the acquisition of operational skills, spatial orientation and motor coordination in young surgeons is proven. The need to integrate virtual reality platforms into the educational process is justified.

Contributions of the candidate related to the monographic work. They are based on standardized behavior in pancreatic cancer and offer a justified model for personalized surgery. It is important to introduce multimodal approaches in the treatment of this disease into practice.

Contributions related to publications on the topic of minimally invasive colorectal surgery. The minimally invasive onco-functional approach in rectal surgery is confirmed with an emphasis on preserving the pelvic nerves and preserving continent and sexual functions. A multidisciplinary approach to the treatment of locally advanced CRC. Methods for reducing perioperative complications in colorectal surgery.

#### Conclusion

From the submitted documents it is clear that the candidate's scientometric indicators meet the requirements of the ZRASRB and the regulations for its application at the Medical University of Varna. Dr. Kalinov is a practicing surgeon with extensive clinical practice, confirming modern trends in the development of minimally invasive approaches in surgery of the colon, pancreas and liver. The candidate is a proven specialist in the field of abdominal surgery and recognizable in the Bulgarian surgical community. He meets all the requirements for occupying the position of Associate Professor in

IN THE FIELD OF HIGHER EDUCATION 7. HEALTH AND SPORTS, PROFESSIONAL DIRECTION 7.1 MEDICINE, IN THE SCIENTIFIC SPECIALTY "GENERAL SURGERY" FOR THE NEEDS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL AND OPERATIVE SURGERY AT THE "PROF. DR. PARASKEV STOYANOV" VARNA.

Based on the presented documents and my personal impressions, I confidently vote FOR awarding the title of Associate Professor to Dr. Turgay Kalinov and invite the esteemed members of the scientific jury to vote positively.

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

01.03.2026

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