REVIEW

by

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of a dissertation for the award of the educational and scientific degree **"Doctor"** in the professional field **7.1. Medicine**, doctoral program **"General Medicine"**, according to the Order of the Rector of MU-Varna No. R-109-518 /16.12.2025.

Author: Dr. Ivelina Lyudmilova Hristova-Nikolova
Department: General Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, Medical University "Prof. Parakev Stoyanov" - Varna
Topic: "**Congenital anomalies of the urinary system in children up to 3 years of age**"
Scientific supervisor: Prof. Valentina Madzhova, MD, PhD

General presentation of the doctoral student and the procedure

The presented set of documents complies with the requirements of MU-Varna for conducting a dissertation defense for the award of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor".

The doctoral student Dr. Ivelina Lyudmilova Hristova-Nikolova is a GP with consistent and purposeful professional and academic development. She graduated with a Master's degree in Medicine and acquired a specialty in "General Medicine", combining her clinical activity with a

the Faculty of Medicine of the Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" - Varna, and since 2020 she has been a full-time doctoral student in the same specialty. Her scientific interests are focused on pediatric nephrology, prevention and the role of the general practitioner in the early diagnosis of diseases of the urinary system. The doctoral student is the author and co-author of publications and scientific communications related to the topic of the dissertation work, and actively participates in scientific forums. The presented dissertation is a logical continuation of her professional and scientific development.

Topic relevance

The presented dissertation is dedicated to an extremely topical and socially significant problem – congenital anomalies of the urinary system in early childhood and the role of primary care for their early diagnosis, monitoring and prevention of complications. The topic is particularly relevant for general practice, since the general practitioner is the first and key unit in the monitoring of the child from birth and has a significant role in the early recognition of risk conditions.

Characteristics of the dissertation work

The dissertation is developed in a volume, structure and content that meet the requirements for awarding the educational and scientific degree of "doctor". The structure is logical and consistent, including an introduction, a comprehensive literature review, clearly formulated goals, tasks and working hypotheses, a description of material, design and methods, presentation and discussion of one's own results, conclusions, contributions and bibliography.

The literature review is in-depth, logically structured and demonstrates a very good knowledge of the modern scientific literature on the issue under consideration and a good theoretical preparation of the doctoral student. The main etiological, pathogenetic and clinical aspects of congenital anomalies of the urinary system in early childhood are presented, from the embryonic development of the urinary system, types of congenital anomalies, etiological factors, to the relationship between congenital anomalies and the development of chronic kidney disease in childhood. Current publications are analyzed, making a clear connection between specialized

knowledge and the role of the general practitioner. A particularly positive impression is made by the emphasis on the role of the general practitioner, diagnostic algorithms in primary care and the need for screening programs. The review creates a solid theoretical basis for formulating the goal, tasks and methodology of the dissertation.

The goal and objectives of the dissertation are clearly formulated, logically connected and fully consistent with the developed topic. The working hypotheses are adequately formulated and are confirmed in the course of the research.

In **the Materials and Methods section**, the doctoral student clearly and consistently presents the design of the study, the scope of the study population, and the methods used for data collection and analysis. The inclusion and exclusion criteria are described, as well as the characteristics of the observed groups, which ensures reproducibility and transparency of the study. The statistical processing of the results is adequately selected and correctly described, using appropriate statistical indicators and tests. The methodological approach is consistent with the set goals and objectives and allows for obtaining reliable and valid results.

The **results** clearly outline the prevalence and spectrum of congenital anomalies of the urinary system in early childhood, as well as their relationship with the risk of developing chronic kidney disease. The analysis shows the importance of early diagnosis and timely referral to a specialist, emphasizing the key role of the general practitioner. Data are presented on the awareness and attitudes of parents, which are of essential importance for the prevention and early detection of diseases. The results support the need to implement a structured diagnostic algorithm and to improve screening practices in primary care.

The discussion is thorough and well-reasoned, with the results analyzed in the context of contemporary literature data. The doctoral student demonstrates critical interpretation skills by comparing his own data with the results of other national and international studies.

The conclusions drawn are logically justified and demonstrate a good understanding of the clinical significance of the identified associations. The emphasis on the practical implications for general practice and preventive activities is particularly positive.

The dissertation contains clearly formulated **scientific and applied scientific contributions** that are important for general practice. Data are presented that contribute to a better understanding of the role of congenital anomalies of the urinary system as a risk factor for the development of chronic kidney disease in early childhood. Of particular value are the conclusions related to the

need for early diagnosis, systematic follow-up and implementation of a structured diagnostic algorithm in primary care. The contributions have the potential for practical application and can serve as a basis for improving preventive activities and child health care.

The submitted **publications and scientific communications** on the topic of the dissertation are adequate in number and content and reflect the main results of the research conducted. They have been published in appropriate scientific publications and presented at scientific forums, which testifies to the relevance and significance of the issues being developed. The personal contribution of the doctoral student is clearly recognizable, both in the collection and analysis of data, and in the interpretation of the results and the formulation of conclusions. The publication activity confirms the ability for independent research work and commitment to scientific development in the field of general practice.

The abstract is prepared in accordance with the established academic requirements and correctly reflects the structure, content and main results of the dissertation work. The goal, tasks, methods used, main results, conclusions and contributions are clearly presented. The text is logically structured, clear and allows the reader to get an accurate idea of the scientific value and practical significance of the research.

The doctoral candidate demonstrates very good scientific preparation, knowledge of contemporary literature and **skills for independent research work**. The presented publications on the topic of the dissertation confirm the active scientific activity and contribution of the author in the field under consideration.

Based on the results obtained, it can be recommended that a structured diagnostic algorithm for early detection of congenital anomalies of the urinary system be more widely implemented in general medical practice. It would also be appropriate to expand the education of general practitioners and parents about early symptoms and risk factors. The need for the establishment of a national registry and future prospective studies would contribute to better monitoring and prevention of chronic kidney disease in childhood.

In conclusion, the dissertation is distinguished by good scientific value, methodological precision and applicability of the results in clinical practice. I believe that the dissertation fully complies with the Law, the Regulations for the implementation of the Law and the Regulations of MU-Varna.

Due to the above, I confidently give my **positive assessment** of the conducted research, presented by the above-assessed dissertation, abstract, achieved results and contributions, and I propose to the scientific jury to award **the educational and scientific degree "Doctor"** to **Dr. Ivelina Lyudmilova Hristova-Nikolova** , in the doctoral program in **"General Practice"** , professional field **7.1. Medicine** , field of higher education **7. Health and Sports.**

13.02.2026

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

Reviewer:

Prof. Radost Spiridonova Asenova, MD, DMSc