

STATEMENT

From professor Ivanichka Atanasova Serbezova DS, p

Place of work: Angel Kanchev University of Ruse,

Faculty of Public Health, Department of Health Care

Contact address:

E-mail address: iserbezova@uni-ruse.bg

Cell: +359 888 731 063

of the dissertation for awarding

the educational and scientific degree “Doctor”

in the field of high education 7. “Healthcare and Sport”,

professional field 7.4. “Public Health”,

scientific specialty “Health Care Management”

As a member of the scientific jury I have been appointed by Order № P-109-277 / 31.07.2020, of the Rector of the Medical University - Varna.

*I present a Statement in order with the procedure for awarding ECD “Doctor” of **Zhana Georgieva Pavlovska**, a PhD student in an independent form of study in the doctoral program “Health Care Management” at the Health Care Department, Medical University – Varna. Topic of the dissertation: “**CONTINUING EDUCATION OF MIDWIFE – INNOVATIVE EDUCATIONAL APPROACHES**”.*

Scientific adviser Prof. PhD Sonya Toncheva, DS, ph

1. Professional biography, career development and connection with the topic of the dissertation

Zhana Pavlovska has completed basic education – “Dr. Nencho Nikolaev” Varna, basic education Specialty “Midwife” in 1983. In 2000 she received a Bachelor's degree – specialty “Health Care Management” at the Medical University Pleven. She also obtained a Master's degree in the same specialty in 2007 at the same university. The acquired educational degrees motivate the doctoral student's interest in the problems of health care and optimization of their organization.

She started her professional career in 1983 as a midwife in the village of Resen, Veliko Tarnovo region. Later she has worked as a midwife in the Neonatology Department, in the Gynecology Department of MHAT “Dr. St. Cherkezov “in the city of Veliko Tarnovo. In 1995 she became a senior midwife in the Department of Gynecology. Until 2015 she was a senior midwife of the joint Obstetrics and Gynecology Department. In 2015, after a competition, she was appointed in Veliko Tarnovo Affiliation of MU – Varna as an assistant, where she currently works.

Since September 2018, by order № P-109-556 of the Rector of MU – Varna, she has been enrolled in an independent form of doctoral studies in the field of high education 7. Healthcare and Sports, Professional Field 7. 4. Public Health, scientific specialty “Management of Health Care “at the Health Care Department, Faculty of Public Health, Medical University – Varna.

The indicated strokes in the professional biography declare that the chosen dissertation issues fit well both in the educational qualifications of the doctoral student and in the next professional realization. I am convinced for the conclusion that the proposed dissertation is a synthesis of proven creative experience in the field of health cares.

2. Package of administrative documents accompanying the procedure for defense of the dissertation

The presented package of administrative documents related to and proving the procedural validity of the procedure are prepared in strict accordance with the academic requirements for awarding educational and scientific degree “Doctor” in professional field 7. 4. Public Health, scientific specialty Health Care Management. The documents are in accordance with the Law for the Development of the Academic Staff in Bulgaria and the Regulations for its implementation, as well as with the ***Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the Medical University – Varna.***

I have received all the necessary documents for admission to the protection of paper and electronic media.

A list of 4 scientific publications is presented. Two of them are in proceedings of scientific conferences, one in the journal “Nursing”, and one in the “Health Care” journal. In three of the Zhana Pavlovska’s publications she is an independent author, one is in a co-author relationship. The cited publications have been made during the last three years of the dissertation research. I believe that in terms of number and content, the presented publications reflect the essential positions in the presented dissertation research.

The abstract is contently structured on the chapters of the dissertation. The textual material is selected appropriately and the same accurately reflects the content of the entire dissertation.

The required documents according to the Regulations for the Development of the Academic staff at the Medical University – Varna are published on the site, observing the set deadlines.

I can not share that the whole work shows the influence of the scientific supervisor – from the choice of dissertable, modern topic, through precisely proven formulations of the purpose of the dissertation, tasks, working hypotheses, organization of the study, conclusions, recommendations and contributions.

3. Actuality

Continuing education and related professional development exist in every profession, but it is especially relevant for obstetrics, which belongs to the regulated professions, of public importance and essential for human life and health. Despite the fact that Bulgaria has been working quite diligently in this direction for several decades, the continuing education of medical specialists and in particular midwives remains in the background. At this stage, there is still no working model linking the increase of professional competence with stimulation and career development. Employers, who must be leaders in providing professional qualifications, are not interested and do not invest resources in staff training. The deficit is not only on their part, but also on the part of all the institutions responsible for this, as well as on the part of the class itself. This deepens the problems and leads to demotivation of midwives for continuing education, low professional status and loss of public confidence in the professionalism of the midwife.

The actuality of the considered topic and the fact that in Bulgaria regarding the continuing education of midwives there are no developed and implemented in practice algorithms for effective management of this process and model for evaluation and accreditation is the reason for determining the topic of the dissertation.

4. Existence of a research problem (dissertability)

The proposed for consideration dissertation work treats a contemporary problem related to the optimization of the process of continuing education for midwives. The comparison of this training process in over 30 European countries leads to the conclusion that Bulgaria provides a wide choice for professional and career development of the midwife, but there is still something to be done to improve the quality of continuing education in our country and the quality of health cares.

The importance of the issue of continuing education and the participation of midwives in this process is determined by the continuous development of medical science and practice. New treatment and diagnostic methods often have different probabilities of success, involve multiple risks for the patient and put to a serious test indisputably established health norms and values. Today, modern midwives must be equal participants in the process of medical care for patients, with their own autonomous functions and responsibilities. Therefore, the study of

the possibilities for optimizing the process of continuing education of midwives is of great scientific and practical importance.

This current dissertation paper is an attempt at a comprehensive study of the process of continuing education of medical professionals in the context of the participation of midwife in it in order to improve the quality of obstetric health care and improvement and career development of medical professionals themselves.

The purpose and tasks of the research are formulated and research protected. The design of the research is precisely described, as working hypotheses, organization, methods, tools, conceptual apparatus used for its implementation are defined. All this gives me reason to accept that the chosen topic and the approach for its problematization in the research tasks are realistic, adequate, measurable and achievable.

5. Characteristics of the dissertation work

5.1 Volume, structure, layout and style

The volume, structure and layout of the dissertation meet the requirements and expectations for this type of research. It has a total of 189 pages and is structured in five main chapters. Includes 69 figures, 6 tables and 6 annexes.

The bibliographic list includes 205 literature sources, of which 96 in Cyrillic, 67 in Latin and 42 Internet addresses. The semantic correlations of the research are set in the introduction. The first chapter contains 9 paragraphs, has a volume of 62 pages – it is a literature review on the topic, and the second one is presented with a total volume of 5 paragraphs, 18 pages and contains the methodology of the dissertation. In the third chapter in 73 pages and 6 paragraphs the results of the own research are described in detail and competently, they are analyzed, and the SWOT analysis of the continuing education of midwives in Bulgaria is especially valuable. In the fourth chapter, in 32 pages and four paragraphs volume, the author presents her innovative approaches to assessing continuing education. This chapter is also the center of dissertation research. In it, she proposes an **Algorithm for effective management of continuing education, Model for evaluation of continuing education, External evaluation of continuing education – accreditation**, supported by **Expert Opinion on continuing education of midwives in Bulgaria**. The content of the fifth chapter is significant, in which chapter the conclusions, recommendations and contributions are set out. There is a logical connection between all the chapters, so the overall study follows a good methodology. The content of each chapter is accompanied by the necessary evidence material. The applications are 16 pages long.

The conclusions and decisions to the whole dissertation, as well as the recommendations to the responsible institutions are written with competence, synthesis. What is written in this part of the dissertation from pages 185 to 190 is a theoretical summary of the methodology, design decision, procedure and results in support of the practical value of the dissertation research and its contributions.

The style of the presentation is clear, scientifically sound, and the text is readable. Regarding the logic of the exhibition – it is observed. The grammatical perfection of the text is impressive.

5.2 Conceptual maturity of the research approach and adequacy of the used scientific methods

It is obvious that the innovativeness of the research has forced the author to approach its conceptual and methodological modeling boldly and at the same time balanced. Therefore, it is understandable and logical in the study of previous experiments and approaches to stop on the broadest possible scientific basis, combining points of view and research results in the field of medical-pedagogical theory and practice. This has probably made it possible to formulate one's own research focus and conceptual framework accurately.

In the course of the empirical research, an author's research toolkit has been used, which allows value measurements and conclusions. As an important aspect of the adequacy of the methodology used, I would highlight the appropriate selection of the research sample, covering 498 respondents – regular midwives, students, health care managers, habilitated lecturers, from almost all over the country.

5.3 Scientific competence, correctness and effectiveness

The author has managed to derive and formulate clearly the two current findings, assessments and summaries, as well as to present and convincingly defend the products of her research, analytical and applied work. On this basis, she offers her practical approaches to optimize the participation of midwives in the process of continuing education.

5.4 Recommendations and questions to the doctoral student

I recommend the doctoral student to expand her publishing activity with independent publications in publications with impact factor.

6. Scientific and scientific-applied contributions

The contributions are presented in the dissertation and objectively reflect the real achievements of the author. They are structured in two directions: contributions with a theoretical character and contributions with a practical-applied character, which I accept as a logical consequence of the competent solution of the set purpose and tasks in the work. Collectively considered, the data from the Dissertation enrich the vision of the complex relationships between midwives, health care managers, employers, BAHCP, educational institutions. The need for uniform accreditation of continuing education, which would guarantee its quality, has been proven, as well as the need for efforts of all parties in the process. The author sees the satisfaction of this need in the introduction of a ***Continuing Education Assessment Model***. For us, the hope remains to see the realized model of Assistant Pavlovska in Bulgaria. All these accents can serve as a basis for future work of many of the institutions involved in the problem.

7. Conclusion

The dissertation shows that the doctoral student has in-depth theoretical knowledge and professional skills, demonstrating the qualities and capabilities for independent research work.

Giving a very good assessment of the significant research work on volume and the results achieved, I strongly suggest that the esteemed Scientific Jury be awarded the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the scientific specialty: Health Care Management of Zhana Georgieva Pavlovska.

September 28, 2020 r.

Prof. Ivanichka Serbezova