

## STATEMENT

By Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mariyana Mihaylova, MD, PhD  
Head of the Training sector of Thalassotherapy, Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation  
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Department: Physiotherapy, Rehabilitation, Thalassotherapy and Occupational Diseases  
Member of Scientific Jury according to Order No P-109-174 of 23 April 2021 issued by  
the Rector of Medical University of Varna

**Regarding:** competition for acquiring an academic position of "**Associate Professor**" in the area of higher education 7. Healthcare and Sports, professional field 7.4 Public Health, speciality Public Health Management - for the needs of Rehabilitation Therapist Educational Sector at Medical College - city of Varna, upon completion of a competition announced in State Gazette No 17 of 26 February 2021

### **I. Analysis of the Candidate's Career Development**

In 1992, the candidate completed Yordanka Filaretova Medical College in the city of Sofia, as a Rehabilitation Therapist and in 2000, she completed Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov Medical University - Varna, with a degree in Health Management. In 2016, Silvia Filkova acquired another master's degree in Rehabilitation, Thalassotherapy, Wellness and SPA at Medical University - Varna.

In 2017, she defended a thesis on prevention of spinal deformities in preschool age children and acquired educational and scientific degree Doctor upon completion of a doctoral programme Public Health Management.

Her professional career as an assistant at Rehabilitation Therapist Educational Sector of Medical College - Varna began in 2012, and since 2018, she holds the academic position of chief assistant. Since 2020, the candidate has been holding the position of Head of Rehabilitation Therapist Educational Sector.

She reads lectures and conducts exercises on Kinesitherapy and Therapeutical Massage to first and second year students majoring in Rehabilitation Therapist at Medical College - Varna. The report on academic workload of Chief Assistant Silvia Filkova, PhD, shows that the average workload is significantly above the required one throughout her period of work as an assistant.

She speaks Russian and English.

### **II. Overall Statement of the Materials presented in the Competition**

The materials presented by Silvia Filkova include all documents required by the Rules for Development of Academic Staff of Medical University of Varna.

This statement has been prepared based on the materials provided by the candidate.

### **III. Evaluation of the Candidate's Scientific Papers and of the Overall Academic Development**

The materials submitted for participation in the announced competition for acquiring of an academic position of "Associate Professor" meet the requirements of Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act and the Rules for Development of Academic Staff and Holding of Academic Positions at Medical University - Varna.

The total publishing activity of Silvia Filkova includes 31 scientific papers.

14 of them are used as evidence in the summary of implementation of the minimum requirements for holding the academic position of "Associate Professor", according to Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act of 2018. Three additional publications are presented to support the evidence for implementation of the minimum requirements for holding the academic position of "Associate Professor".

Thesis: 1 piece

Monograph 1 piece

Full text articles: 29 pieces

(5 articles are related to the thesis; 9 articles are related to obtaining the position of Chief Assistant; 15 articles are related to obtaining the position of Associate Professor) of which 4 articles are published in scientific journals and are referenced and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information and 25 articles are published in scientific peer-reviewed unreferenced journals.

### **Qualitative Characteristics of the Scientific Activity**

The research work and the main scientific contributions of Silvia Ivanova Filkova, PhD, are focused on the following three main areas:

1. Health Promotion;
2. Prevention of Spinal Deformities and Lower Back Pain;
3. Innovative Approaches in Recreation and Rehabilitation.

A large part of the publications are dedicated to the prevention of spinal deformities and lower back pain. The developed recommendations for ergonomics of the learning environment when using electronic technologies, the recommendations for implementing health educational programmes with an emphasis on the optimal physical activity age aimed at the parents, and the recommendations for improving physical activity and supporting prevention of spinal deformities are considered as practical contribution. The toolkit of diagnostic methods and modern rehabilitation approaches for prevention and treatment of spinal deformities and lower back pain is also relevant.

The analysis of the scientific papers of Silvia Filkova submitted for review shows the wide knowledge and high competence of the candidate in the studied public health areas.

Silvia Filkova, PhD, has participated in a number of conferences and scientific sessions on important topics related to public health.

### **IV. Evaluation of the Monographic Work submitted for Participation in the Competition for acquiring an Academic Position of Associate Professor by the Candidate**

The monographic work of the author - chief assistant Silvia Filkova, PhD - Modern lifestyle and Functional Spinal Deformities is dedicated to the extremely important issue of preventable spinal deformities. The widespread introduction of high technologies in our daily lives and the deteriorating epidemiological situation in the last year throughout the world have led to significant increase in the behaviour related to the lack of movement of the rising generation. The lack of movement results in a number of adverse health effects, one of which is the poor posture, which can subsequently develop into structural deformity of spine. The monograph presents modern methods for diagnosis of scoliosis, and studies innovative and well-established correction and treatment methods. A comprehensive overview of the existing screening and prevention practices at the national and global level has been made. The model presented by the author of selected spinal deformity screening tests adapted for use in schools

is of great practical importance. Recommendations for children's body posture ergonomics and guidelines for control by their parents are very well presented.

In this sense, the monographic work of Silvia Filkova, PhD, is relevant and presents the world experience in prevention, prophylaxis, diagnosis and treatment of scoliosis.

#### **V. Reflection (Citation) of the Candidate's Publications in the National Literature**

The competition documents are accompanied by Transcript of Records issued by the Library of Medical University of Varna based on information provided by the author and automated information taken from the international scientific databases: Google Scholar, Research Gate, ORCID, Researcher ID and eLibrary. Citations in scientific journals, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information (1 pc.), in scientific peer-reviewed monographs (5 pcs.) and in scientific peer-reviewed unreferenced journals (2 pcs.) are presented. Their total number is 8.

#### **VI. Personal Impressions**

I have known Silvia Filkova from the day she started working as an assistant at Rehabilitation Therapist Educational Sector of Medical College of Varna. At our first meetings I was impressed by her energy, activity and ability to work in a team. She also shows a lot of enthusiasm into her work with students. Silvia Filkova has the qualities of motivator and organiser. She easily attracts students to participate in various initiatives, research and projects. In the course of our joint work on tasks of different nature, I had the opportunity to be convinced of the accuracy and precision of her work and of her loyalty to the colleagues.

#### **VII. Conclusion:**

The analysis of the overall research and teaching activity of Chief Assistant Silvia Filkova, PhD, shows that she meets all requirements for acquiring an academic position of "Associate Professor" of Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act and the Regulations for its implementation.

Silvia Filkova has done sufficient valuable research work and has the authority of a good teacher and researcher and high potential for further intensive work and development.

In view of the above facts, I support the award of the academic position of "Associate Professor" in a professional area at Medical College - Varna, Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov Medical University - Varna, to Silvia Filkova.

**City of Varna**  
**1 June 2021**

**Assoc. Prof. Mariyana Mihaylova, MD, PhD**

