

TO THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SCIENTIFIC JURY

PROF. DR. KIRIL HRISTOZOV, PhD

APPOINTED BY ORDER No. R – 109-259/06.06.2025

TO THE RECTOR OF MU-VARNA

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### OPINION STATEMENT

by Prof. Mitko D. Mitkov, MD

Department of Endocrinology and Metabolic Diseases, Medical University of Plovdiv

**REGARDING:** Competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the scientific field of "Endocrinology" in the area of higher education 7. Healthcare and Sports, professional field 7.1. Medicine, published in State Gazette No. 30 of 08.04.2025, for the needs of the "Second Department of Internal Medicine," Faculty of Medicine, and Clinic of Endocrinology and Metabolic Diseases at UMHAT "Sveta Marina" EAD Varna.

At a meeting of the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Medicine at MU-Varna, according to Protocol No. 40/21.05.2025 and Order No. P-109-259/06.06.2025 of the Rector of MU-Varna, I was elected as a member of the Scientific Jury, and according to Protocol No. 1 from the first meeting of the SJ, I was appointed to prepare an opinion on the procedure for filling the academic position of "associate professor" in the specialty of "Endocrinology" **with two candidates for two positions.**

**Senior Assistant Dr. Savi Rinaldiev Shishkov** – candidate for the academic position of "associate professor" in the field of "Endocrinology," Medical University of Varna.

#### **I. Analysis of the candidate's career profile.**

Senior Assistant Professor Dr. Savi Rinaldiev Shishkov obtained a Master's degree in Medicine from the Medical University of Varna "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" in 2017. From

2017 to 2021, he was a resident in endocrinology at the Clinic of Endocrinology and Metabolic Diseases at the University Hospital " St. Marina" Varna. From 2018 to 2023, he was also a regular doctoral student at the Second Department of Internal Medicine, specializing in Endocrinology, at MU-Varna. In 2021, he obtained a medical specialty in Endocrinology and Metabolic Diseases. In 2023, he successfully defended his dissertation on "Androgen Levels in Men with Acute and Chronic Coronary Syndrome" to obtain an educational and scientific degree of "Doctor" in the scientific specialty of "Endocrinology." Additional qualifications: specialization at Leiden University Medical Center, Netherlands, on growth hormone treatment, transition of patients from pediatric to adult care; Highly specialized activit "Neck Ultrasound"; Completed "Europit" course.

In 2018, he was appointed assistant professor, and in 2023, senior assistant professor of endocrinology at the Second Department of Internal Medicine, Medical University of Varna.

2020 - 2021 - Master's degree in Health Management and Medical-Social Care

Medical University of Varna "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov"

Dr. Savi Shishkov is fluent in English and German – level C1. He teaches endocrinology and metabolic diseases – a full course of exercises to Bulgarian-speaking and English-speaking medical students. He participates in examination boards for semester and state examination sessions.

## **II. General description of the materials submitted for the competition.**

The materials submitted by the candidate for the competition contain all the information necessary for a quantitative and qualitative assessment of their overall academic development. The documentation is detailed and clearly organized in the form of reports, lists, and supporting evidence.

## **III. Assessment of the candidate's scientific works for overall academic development.**

The candidate participates in the competition with 23 scientific works, distributed as follows: habilitation thesis – 1; dissertation – 1; monographs, textbooks, teaching aids – 2; publications in journals and collections – 19. As a sole author, he has 4 publications, as a co-author – 19, of which: first author – in 11, second author – in 1, third author – in 6, and fourth author – in 1 publication. Publications in refereed journals – 8, in non-refereed journals – 11. Articles with impact factor – 1, citations – 13. He has participated in two projects funded by the Science Fund.

The scientific research covers the period 2019–2025 and encompasses various areas of endocrinology. The dissertation thesis "Androgen Levels in Men with Acute and Chronic Coronary Syndrome", the book based on the defended dissertation, and seven scientific publications are related to the connection between cardiovascular diseases and gonadal function

in men, in terms of supplementing the currently known constellation of symptoms as risk factors, with a view to the treatment and prevention of ischemic heart disease. Disorders in steroidogenesis in men with acute and chronic coronary syndrome have long been the subject of research, but remain extremely relevant and are one of the main areas of Dr. Shishkov's scientific research. After thoroughly analyzing the role of androgens in adaptation to ACS, as well as in the development of ischemic heart disease in men with acute and chronic coronary syndrome in his dissertation, Dr. Shishkov further develops his ideas in a book based on his dissertation and subsequent publications. The search for and, in particular, the verification of "additional risk characteristics" for acute coronary syndrome with accessible and easily measurable hormonal indicators would be of significant importance for clinical practice. The clinical cases described in relation to thyroid pathology and diabetes mellitus are of practical and scientific-educational value. The detailed clinical and theoretical presentation of the cases provides a methodology for in-depth study and understanding of the personalized approach, thus providing valuable educational material for residents, endocrinologists, and physicians of various specialties.

Dr. Shishkov has participated in 12 scientific forums with oral presentations or posters and in 9 scientific conferences and seminars with a issued certificate.

#### **IV. Evaluation of a monographic work submitted in the competition for "Associate Professor."**

The monograph "Organized Transition to Adult Care for Rare Endocrine Diseases" addresses one of the current issues in modern healthcare—the organized transfer of patients with rare endocrine diseases from pediatric endocrinologists to adult specialists. The sharp 18-year-old boundary imposed by the division of healthcare services between pediatricians and adult specialists contrasts sharply with the smooth, gradual, and complex nature of the changes that occur during the transition to adulthood and requires the development of a national strategy to successfully overcome all possible obstacles to the implementation of this process.

For the first time in Bulgarian literature, the concept of "organized transition" is introduced, i.e., systematic observation and treatment until reaching adulthood. A comprehensive literature review on the problems of organized transition is presented. Its individual elements are examined, with an emphasis on the practical features of each of them. In accessible language, Dr. Shishkov shares his own experience—the results of the first survey conducted in Bulgaria in 2022, which aimed to determine the awareness of parents of children with rare diseases regarding the transition to adult care. He examines in detail the practical recommendations for transition management strategies. He presents the characteristics of the transition period for specific rare endocrine diseases that represent a significant part of clinical practice. Of particular importance are the algorithms presented for diagnostic behavior in patients with growth hormone deficiency and for a comprehensive medical and psychosocial approach to managing the transition period in patients

with rare endocrine diseases, which can form the basis of a program for organizing the transition process for rare endocrine diseases in Bulgaria.

**V. Impact (citation) of the candidate's publications in national and foreign literature (publication image).**

Academic reference 162/22.04.2025 lists 6 citations in international journals, which meet the minimum requirements for the position of associate professor. There are currently three positive citations in refereed and indexed scientific publications and three in non-refereed journals. Hirsch Index (h index) – 3.

**VI. Comprehensive, qualitative assessment of teaching and methodological activities.**

Dr. Savi Shishkov's teaching activities include lectures, seminars, and courses for students, residents, and intern doctors. He teaches endocrinology and metabolic diseases—a full course of seminars for Bulgarian- and English-speaking medical students. He participates in examination boards for semester and state examination sessions.

The total teaching load at MU-Varna for the last 5 academic years has averaged 229.3 hours per year.

**VII. Critical remarks and recommendations.**

The above analysis of Dr. Savi Shishkov's professional, scientific, educational, methodological, and teaching activities gives me no reason to offer any critical comments. I can only recommend that this fruitful and diverse activity continue in the same direction, while at the same time increasing his publication activity in refereed and indexed journals.

**VIII. Overall** assessment of the candidate's compliance with the minimum national requirements under Article 2b, paragraphs 2 and 3, respectively, the requirements under Article 2b, paragraph 5 of the ZRASRB and the specific requirements for MU-Varna in terms of areas and units with/without clinical activity, as defined in the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of MU-Varna.

The materials provided by Dr. Savi Shishkov meet and exceed the minimum national requirements and those of MU – Varna for Associate Professor – Academic Reference 162/22.04.2025 (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Minimum required points by indicator groups for academic position "Associate Professor"

Parameter	Criteria of MU-Varna	d-r Shishkov, PhD
Parameter A	50	50
Parameter B	-	-
Parameter C	100	100
Parameter D	200	205.14
Parameter E	50	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>415.14</b>

## IX. Conclusion

Dr. Savi Rinaldiev Shishkov, PhD, is a renowned specialist with a wide range of professional and scientific interests, as well as extensive teaching experience. His research activities cover a broad range of topics and focus on current medical and social issues. His scientific works contain theoretical, methodological, and scientific-applied contributions at the national and international level. Based on all this, I confidently give my positive vote and propose that the esteemed Scientific Jury award Dr. Savi Rinaldiev Shishkov, MD, the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the scientific specialty "Endocrinology," professional field 7.1. Medicine at the "Clinic of Endocrinology and Metabolic Diseases" at the Medical University of Varna.

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Plovdiv

/Prof. Dr. M. Mitkov, MD/