

REVIEW

by

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Concerning: Competition for the academic position "Associate Professor" announced in State Gazette, issue 43/3.05.2019, in the scientific specialty "Management of health care", Professional field 7.4 Public Health, Higher education area 7. Health and sport, for the needs of the Educational Sector "Nursing Care" of the Department of Health Care at the Faculty of Public Health Care, Medical University "Prof. dr Paraskev Stoyanov" - Varna.

With Order No R-109-235 of July 26, 2019 of the Rector of the Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" - Varna I have been elected as a member of the Scientific Jury, and under the Protocol No 1 of the first non-attendance meeting of the Scientific Jury, I have been assigned to prepare a review.

The only candidate in the competition is **ass. prof. Anna Petrova Georgieva**, doctor in management of health care, from the Educational Sector "Nursing care" of the Department of Health Care at the Faculty of Public Health, for which the current competition has been announced. The candidate has presented all the necessary documents, arranged very accurately in complete accordance with the requirements of the Law for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (LDASRB) and in accordance with the Regulations for the development of the academic staff in the Medical University of Varna.

I. Short data on the professional development of the applicant

Ass. prof. Anna Petrova Georgieva was born on 19 September 1968 r. in the city of Varna. In 1991 she graduated from the Medical college "Dr Nencho Nikolaev" with a diploma in Paediatric Nursing. In 2005 she got a Bachelor degree in the specialty of Health Care Management, and two years later she graduated with a diploma for Master degree in the same specialty at the Faculty of Public Health at Medical University of Pleven. Within the period 2015/2016 Anna Georgieva was a doctoral student of self-study and in December 2016 she obtained a doctoral educational and scientific degree (DESG) in the specialty "Management of health care" at the Medical University "Prof. Parashkev Stoyanov - Varna.

She has a long professional experience as a nurse working in a number of clinical wards for 15 years, and reaching the position of Senior Nurse in 2006 at the Internal Medicine Unit of St. Anna Hospital in Varna.

After the opening of a Bachelor programme in nursing in 2006, Mrs Anna Georgieva has been among the first candidates that have passed a competition for teaching staff at the Department of Health Care of the Faculty of Public Health in Varna. Since 2011 she has been promoted to academic position of assistant professor.

She has been awarded a certificate of professional qualification for provision of quality health care, issued by the National Board on Quality of the Bulgarian Association of Health Care Professionals. In the period 2013/2014 she has completed a postgraduate specialisation

in "Nurse for social activities". Besides this, she has participated in more than 50 different forms of continuing education.

Her teaching activity includes conducting classes in 9 disciplines covering a broad range of branches in nursing care, while at the same time she has been actively involved in the development of teaching materials in these disciplines.

She has demonstrated high scientific activity participating in more than 50 scientific forums, 5 of which international.

He is a member of Bulgarian Union of Scientists, Bulgarian Association of Health Care Professionals, Bulgarian Public Health Association, European Public Health Association and Bulgarian Public Health Scientific Society.

She has good computer skills and a good command in English and Russian.

II. General characteristics of candidate's scientific publications

The candidate in the current competition ass. prof. Anna Georgieva has presented very precisely all the information about her scientific production in two directions:

1. List of scientific papers according to the criteria of the National Centre for Information and Documentation (NACID) to prove the fulfilment of the minimum requirements for the academic position of "Associate Professor", according to the LDASRB of 2018, which includes:

- = Criterion A. Indicator 1. Doctoral degree dissertation;
- = Criterion B. Indicator 3. Published monograph in volume of 248 pages;
- = Criterion D. Indicator 7. Publications in scientific journals, referenced and indexed in world-renowned databases - one article in Bulgarian journal of General Medicine;
- = Indicator 8. Publications and full-text reports published in non-refereed journals with scientific peer review or published in edited collective volumes (included in the National Reference List of Contemporary Bulgarian Scientific Editions with Scientific Review) - 25 articles.

Thus, with the total of 28 publications in this part, the candidate has fulfilled the minimum requirements for the academic position of Associate Professor with a total of 400 points.

2. Besides this, the applicant has submitted an additional list of **29 full-text publications** which were published in non-refereed peer reviewed journals or published in edited collective volumes of scientific papers. Among them 6 papers have been published abroad (1 - in a scientific journal with ISSN and 5 - in scientific journals without ISSN).

From the second list, ass. prof. Anna Georgieva scored a total of 251 points in group G (indicators 5-9) and 105 points in Group D (indicators 10-12).

Therefore, in total, the candidate has submitted **57 scientific publications**, of which she has accumulated 756 points, which significantly exceeds the minimum requirements of 400 points for the academic position of associate professor.

It is worth pointing out that the submitted scientific works are predominantly personal contributions of the candidate, which is evidenced by the ranking of authors in the authors' teams: she is the only author or first author in 31 publications (54.39%; a second author – in 18 (31.58%); a third and subsequent author - only in 8 publications (14.03%).

The real full-text publications of ass. prof. Anna Georgieva have been published in professionally relevant scientific journals, which contributes to the enrichment of scientific knowledge in the field of nursing in Bulgaria.

For the overall characteristics of the applicant's research activity another 52 participations in scientific forums could be added (5 of which have been abroad), and although they haven't been reviewed and evaluated according to the NACID criteria, they could serve as an evidence of her systematic research activity.

II. Characteristics of the theoretical and applied contributions of candidate's scientific publications

In my estimation, the 57 scientific presented publications could be grouped into the following thematic areas:

- I. Informed consent of the patient in the context of healthcare - 21 publications;
- II. Training of healthcare professionals - 22 publications;
- II. Organisational and management aspects of health care - 13 papers

I am ranking on the first place and putting in a separate thematic area her most significant publication - the monograph "Long-term care for adults and people with disabilities".

Assessment of the monograph

The choice of the topic of the monograph in the area of long-term care for the elderly and people with disabilities is a good evidence of the candidate's awareness of the importance of one very important contemporary public health problem on a global scale, and especially in our country, in the context of a steady increase of proportions and needs of adults and people with disabilities in long-term care. The candidate has correctly emphasized that the potential of the nurses in our country to meet these needs has not been used enough and there is no legal framework in this direction. The monograph has been developed on the basis of detailed critical analysis of publications and on the results of her own studies in this area. Altogether 258 sources have been used (101 in Cyrillic and 157 in Latin).

Among the **theoretical contributions** of the monograph, it should be emphasized that this is the first attempt to independently, thoroughly and systematically study the problem of "long-term care" and the nurses' autonomous role in Bulgaria and in other countries. The nature, the basic principles, tasks and aspects of long-term care, as well as the ethical and psychosocial issues have been well clarified. A number of good foreign practices in the field of long-term care have been presented and the nurse's professional competencies as a team member and coordinator in the provision of long-term care have been outlined. The needs of patients and the attitudes of future nurses to work in the context of long-term care also have been examined. An in-depth SWOT analysis of the status of long-term care in Bulgaria has been made and the opportunities for nurses to provide long-term care have been outlined by introducing innovative practices and autonomous activities within the acquired competences.

As for **the applied contributions** of the monograph, it could be pointed out the proposed model for the Centre for long-term health care, adapted by S. Toncheva, which is based on the holistic approach in providing patient-centred, accessible and comprehensive long-term care and on team approach that includes interaction with the family, the informal

network support and support of all institutions related to medical and social aspects of care. A number of specific proposals have been made to refine the regulations in the Republic of Bulgaria in relation to the opening and financing of innovative nursing practices that could create more opportunities for autonomous nursing activities.

Scientific papers, related to the thematic area **"Informed patient consent in the context of health care"** could be seen as a natural continuation of the candidate's doctoral thesis and as an expression of her further professional development in this important research area. The relevance of this topic is justified by the growing role of nurses, who should not only carry out physicians' prescriptions. They should be equal participants in healthcare delivery, providing health care services to patients 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and 365 days a year. As such, they have an important role to play in the process of informing patients and assisting them in the process of informed consent.

This area contains a number of important **theoretical contributions**. The first ever comprehensive, focused and in-depth study of options for optimizing the nurses' involvement in the patient's informed consent process has been realised. The opinions of nurses, physicians, patients and graduates in nursing on the need for legal regulation of the nurse participation in the process of informing and obtaining patient consent have been studied. The range of information that the nurse could provide within the limits of her competences to patients and families has been well outlined. Based on a comparative legal analysis of the legislation in many developed countries, it has been shown that the obligation to inform patients applies also to the nurse as a healthcare professional, and she has certain obligations in this process.

As examples for **applied contributions** may serve the author's developed model of the "Technical form for informed consent in case of intravenous injection" as a typical invasive nursing procedure and "Patient informed consent" algorithm, the expert evaluation of which demonstrates the need to obtain written consent for some invasive nursing interventions to ensure quality and safe nursing care. A number of specific proposals have been made for changing the regulatory framework in the Republic of Bulgaria in relation to the investigated problem and proposals and recommendations have been formulated to the responsible institutions for optimizing the nurse participation in the process of informed consent of the patient.

The **second scientific area „Training of Health Care Professionals”** includes 22 publications demonstrating the candidate's clear understanding that trainees must work permanently for the optimization of the learning process and for its enriching with effective innovative techniques in order to create good professional competencies for trainees as a necessary prerequisites for the provision of quality, effective, safe and ethical health care services.

A number of **theoretical and applied contributions** can also be outlined in this thematic area. An emphasis has been placed on such important problems as: the role of effective communication; the prevention of nosocomial infections; the role of nurses in the health education of patients and their families; the opportunities for continuing and

postgraduate training of nurses; the importance of joint efforts among healthcare professionals themselves; the role of Bulgarian Association of Health Care Professionals, educational institutions and employers for the effectiveness of continuing education.

Along with the formation of professional competences, the role of university education in creating values and beliefs embedded in the philosophy of nursing has been explored. The motives for professional orientation and attitudes towards professional realisation of healthcare professionals have been studied. This is extremely important nowadays in the context of an increasing shortage of nursing workforce at the global and national levels. The study of this specific problem has another important applied contribution, pointing out the role of trainers and health managers to stimulate students' motivation for adequate professional orientation and subsequent career development in those health care sectors where the shortage of health professionals is the most intensively expressed.

In a number of publications some specific details and approaches have been developed for the improvement of the practical training by combining the specifics of learning content with creative approaches. The specific features of practical training of students in the specialty "Management of Health Care" have also been analysed, paying special attention to the organisation and realisation of the pre-graduate internship in accordance with the modern theory of pedagogy, management and practical needs. Some papers have been devoted to the role of critical thinking and the need for its building in the early stages of university education; some approaches for making adequate decisions in non-standard situations of emergency and stress have also been emphasized. The importance of the competence approach in preparation of future nurses has been studied and proven.

The thematic area "**Organizational and managerial aspects of health care**" emphasizes the growing importance of the organisation and management in nursing within the current context of scarce nursing resources. In this field, some applied contributions could be outlined, such as studies on the turnover of nursing manpower; the impact of occupational stress on this process; the importance of effective health care management; the role of the leader in creating a positive organizational climate, using effective delegation to provide more autonomy and opportunities to participate in decision making process, etc.

Interesting studies have been conducted on workplace stress, its characteristics, factors, the relationship with the individual characteristics of nurses, etc. An important role in health care management has been given to the study of patient satisfaction and its determining factors during the hospitalisation, patient expectations and requirements to today's nurse behaviour. The results of these studies could serve as a base for specific managerial decisions for optimisation of the quality of patient-centred health care. In some other studies, the patients and their relatives' views on the role of the nurse in health promotion and health education in primary care settings have been examined. The need for innovation in nursing practice and the attitudes of nursing students to participate in the development and application of innovations in their work have been explored,

Citations. A reference from the Library of MU-Varna for 27 citations based on the automated information from the scientific databases of Web of Knowledge, Scopus and

Google Scholar has been presented: 4 citations in monographs and collective volumes with scientific review and 23 citations in non-refereed journals with scientific review.

IV. Assessment of candidate's pedagogical activity

Ass. prof. Anna Georgieva has a continuous teaching experience of over 12 years by June 26, 2019, out of which 4 years as a trainer and 8 years – in academic position of assistant professor.

Her pedagogical activity covers a wide range of disciplines in nursing according to the academic plan for the specialty "Nurse" and at the same time she has actively participated in the development and updating of the programmes in these disciplines:

- Philosophy and introduction to nursing;
- Nursing home care;
- Nursing care for eye, ear and throat diseases;
- Nursing care for infectious patients;
- Nursing care for somatically ill patients;
- Nursing care for surgically ill patients;
- Nursing care for children and adults with disabilities;
- Nursing in maternity and new-borns care;
- Nursing care for adults.

Ass. Anna Georgieva is the first author in the textbook "Nursing for Infectious Diseases" for students in Nursing, that has been reprinted twice (2012 and 2018). She is also the first author in "Nursing handbook for Infectious Diseases" (2012) and co-author in "Practical Guide in Nursing" (2017). In 2018, she published another important teaching paper on "Contemporary Aspects of Nursing Care for People with Disabilities" in volume of 136 pages.

Ass. Anna Georgieva participates as a mentor in both editions of the Student Practices project BG05 1 PO00 1 -3.3. 07-0002 (2013-2014) and 8G05M20P001-2.002-0001 (2014-2020) funded under OP "Human Resources Development" and OP "Science and Education for Smart Growth".

According to the information about her pedagogical activity, issued by the Medical University of Varna, her average annual academic overload during the last 5 years is 847 hours (from minimum 722 hours for 2017/2018 academic year to 965 hours for 2015/2016).

The aspiration of ass. Anna Georgieva for continuous improvement of her teaching and professional experience is supported by the evidence for participation in 53 different forms of continuing education.

Personal impressions

I have known the candidate since 2002 when she successfully has passed the serious competition to be a student in the Bachelor programme in Management of Health Care and just after her graduation, she has been enrolled in the Master programme at the same specialty. Within both programmes, she has been extremely dedicated to her studies, very accurate in all her activities and graduated with excellence. For me, her achievements as an assistant professor at the Medical University of Varna during the last 12 years are not surprising. They are related to her high intelligence and persistency.

Recommendations

I am recommending ass. prof. Anna Georgieva to continue with the same efforts her scientific development by preparing some full-text publications in foreign scientific journals, referenced and indexed in world-renown databases.

V. Conclusion

Ass. prof. Anna Petrova Georgieva participates in this competition with a sufficient number of real publications, significantly exceeding the minimum requirements for the academic position of "Associate Professor" according to the LDASRB and the Regulations of the MU-Varna. Her publications are in-depth, focused and dedicated entirely to the broad field of nursing care, which contributes to the enrichment and expansion of nursing knowledge. Her monographic publication is dedicated to one of the most current problems in health care - continuous care for adults and children with disabilities. All publications are predominantly her personal contribution and contain theoretical and applied contributions. The candidate is a highly qualified assistant professor with over 12 years of teaching experience and with a sufficient long-lasting professional practice in nursing.

After a thorough examination of the submitted documents according to the criteria of NACID, LDASRB, and the Regulations for the development of academic staff at the Medical University "Prof. Dr. Parashkev Stoyanov" - Varna I conclude that Assistant Professor Anna Petrova Georgieva meets the requirements for the academic position "Associate Professor".

Based on the above, I would encourage the honourable members of Scientific Jury to vote positively and to propose to the Rector of Medical University – Varna to appoint **ass. prof. Anna Petrova Georgieva**, doctor of management of health care, in the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the scientific specialty "Management of Health Care" for the needs of the Educational sector "Nursing care" of the Department of Health Care and the Faculty of Public Health at the Medical University " Prof. Dr. Parashkev Stoyanov" - Varna.

Reviewer: 

(Assoc. Prof. Dr. Gena Georgieva Penkova-Grancharova, MD, PhD)

15 September 2019