

## **OPINION**

**by Associate Professor Dimitar Simeonov Shalamanov, MD, PhD  
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**on the participation of Chief Assistant Eliana Panayotova Ivanova, MD, PhD  
in a competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" at the  
Department of Hygiene and Epidemiology at the Faculty of Public Health of  
the Medical University "Professor Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" Varna**

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Dr. Eliana Ivanova graduated in medicine in 1992. Her work experience is related only to epidemiology - initially as a doctor at Regional Health Inspectorate Burgas, and since 2012 as an assistant at the Department of Hygiene and Epidemiology at MU Varna. Since 2016 she has been a PhD student on self-preparation in the department and in 2017 she successfully defended her dissertation for educational and scientific degree "Doctor".

### **General characteristics of the publishing activity**

Dr. E. Ivanova presents a scientific production including one independent monograph, one chapter of a co-authored monograph, 33 scientific articles and 34 reports. She has participated in 9 international scientific forums and in 25 national scientific forums.

Her research papers are from different areas of the epidemiology of infectious diseases, and her studies have been conducted on a variety of topics, using a wide range of methodologies. The obtained results are interesting because they reflect on important aspects of the anti-epidemic activity in the Varna region - both in the past and in the present.

The monograph "Epidemiological Chronicles of the Fight against Infectious Diseases in the Varna Region (1878-1944)" is one of the most significant contributions among the publications. This paper is an extended retrospective study on the spread of infections relevant to the region and the country from the last decades of the 19th century to the middle of the last century. In addition, a brief overview of the global epidemic situation was made during the analyzed period, in which the accents of the fight against each infectious disease were very well highlighted and the achieved results were chronologically reflected. In this sense, for the book published by Dr. Ivanova can rightly be said that the author has appropriately used the historical-epidemiological approach and on the other hand, the national literature fund of epidemiology has

been supplemented by an interesting source. It should be taken into account that the information in the monograph is presented in a high scientific style and is accompanied by many illustrations - authentic retro photographs and detailed / comprehensive tables.

In another publication - a collective monograph, Dr. E. Ivanova presents an extended retrospective study on the fight against rabies among humans. For this purpose, the development of the anti-rabies station in Varna during the period 1925-1950 is traced and the activity of the emblematic for the city donor hospital "Paraskeva Nikolaou" is described. The study is in the form of a separate chapter, and the method used is medico-historical, so the work can be referred to the "History of Medicine" rubric.

Another area of research is the immunoprophylaxis. Research on the epidemiological effectiveness of this type of preventive activity in the Varna region is the topic of her dissertation. In it, she reflects on the successes in the management of the epidemic process in the main for the public health vaccine-preventable infections - tuberculosis, polio, diphtheria, pertussis, measles, rubella, mumps and viral hepatitis B. In addition to the dissertation, several other materials from the recent years are dedicated to problems in this area of applied epidemiology. Among them is the development of a structural model of the epidemiological effectiveness of immunoprophylaxis, which describes the characteristics of the national system for epidemiological control and compares with existing analogue systems at European and global level, taking into account the specific features. The several other publications in the field of immunoprophylaxis also address current aspects, they deserve attention, as well, and can be highly praised. Among them is the study on post-vaccine side effects, in which reactions were followed for a 6-year period in the Varna region. The study of the attitude and professional training of general practitioners and neonatologists in the Varna region regarding immunoprophylaxis is similar.

Other articles and reports presented in this competition by Dr. Ivanova address issues on the current state of measles and listeriosis, and research on them has been conducted according to the methods of epidemiological analysis. The results are interpreted according to the accepted principles. The conclusions are scientifically substantiated according to objective criteria. To this group of publications can be referred the article about diphtheria - a disease that has not been registered in our country and Europe for a long time, but a few years ago there was a case in a country in the continent as a result of a breakthrough in immunoprophylaxis.

The article in the field of hospital epidemiology is original, considering the risk of infection of the medical staff when performing diagnostic and treatment procedures with the use of sharp and cutting objects / instruments. For this purpose, a study was conducted in a multidisciplinary hospital for active treatment. The analysis shows the type and structure of the risk exposure, the most affected occupational groups and the immune status of patients and exposed persons with respect to blood-borne infections. The results of the monitoring were used by the author's team to identify high-risk activities in everyday practice leading to injuries with sharp tools or needles, as well as to give recommendations on possible steps aimed at reducing and preventing the risk of infection.

Some topics from the publications submitted for participation in the competition correspond to other areas of medicine. An example of this is the article examining the role of vitamin K, published in a journal of the Union of Scientists - Journal of Medicine and Ecology. A similar example is the article assessing coastal waters regarding the possibility of these sites to manifest as factors for the transmission of infectious agents. The study was conducted in collaboration with microbiologists. In some other materials, interrelationships with health management and hygiene can be observed. All of them are prepared by interdisciplinary teams in which Dr. E. Ivanova participates. In my opinion, this is an indicator for an expanded range of scientific interests and, respectively, for the search of innovation in medicine, as well as for successful work in an interdisciplinary research team.

### **Teaching activity**

The report from the Educational Activity Directorate for the last 5 years shows that Dr. Eliyana Ivanova covers the accepted mandatory university standard for classroom employment. In addition to practical classes, after obtaining the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" she has been giving lectures in the volume allowed by the regulations for this type of teachers.

### **Contributions**

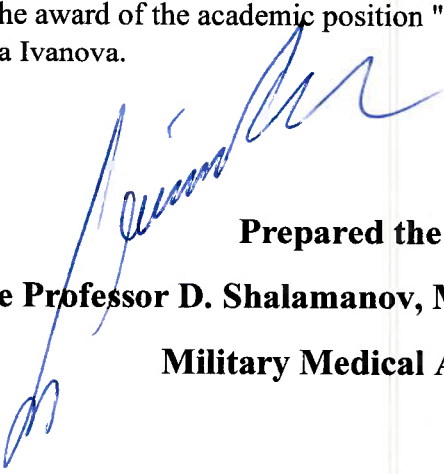
I accept the presented list of contributions that relate to the indicated areas of conducted research.

### **Conclusion**

The conclusions and proposals from the works of Dr. E. Ivanova are aimed at optimizing the routinely applied anti-epidemic measures on a scientific basis. The analysis of the overall research activity shows that the university scientometric criteria and the requirements for the purpose of the national legislation in this case are met. The candidate has accumulated sufficient experience in teaching the discipline "Epidemiology" to students in the specialties in which training is conducted at MU "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" Varna.

Therefore, I confidently give my positive vote and recommend to the members of the Scientific Jury formed for this purpose to vote for the award of the academic position "Associate Professor" to Chief Assistant Dr. Eliana Panayotova Ivanova.

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**Prepared the opinion:**  
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