

OPINION

**FROM ASSOC. PROFESSOR DR. VLADIMIR HRISTOV GONCHEV, MD
ASSOCIATE ASSOCIATE AT FOSZG AT THE UNIVERSITY "PROF. DR. ASEN
ZLATAROV "BURGAS**

**OF THE DISSERTATION WORK OF ISKRA STANEVA KAPINCHEVA
ON THE TOPIC:**

**"COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE -
DEVELOPMENT AND PLACE IN BULGARIAN HEALTHCARE"**

**WITH SCIENTIFIC SUPERVISOR:
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR DR. DESISLAVA VANKOVA DM**

**FOR AWARDING THE EDUCATIONAL AND SCIENTIFIC DEGREE "DOCTOR",
FIELD OF HIGHER EDUCATION "HEALTH AND SPORT" CODE 7., SCIENTIFIC
FIELD 7.1 "MEDICINE",
SCIENTIFIC SPECIALTY: 03.01.53. "SOCIAL MEDICINE AND ORGANIZATION
OF HEALTHCARE AND PHARMACY".**

By order № P 109-556 / 01.12.2020г. of the Rector of MU-Varna I have been appointed as an external member of a scientific jury to present an opinion on the dissertation of Iskra Staneva Kapincheva on "Complementary and alternative medicine - development and place in Bulgarian healthcare" for awarding educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the scientific specialty "Social medicine and organization of healthcare and pharmacy", professional field 7.1. Medical, from the field of higher education 7. Healthcare and sports.

General characteristics of work

Presented for an opinion by Iskra Staneva Kapincheva, the dissertation contains 130 pages and is illustrated with 2 tables and 14 figures. The bibliographic reference includes 232 literary sources, of which 97 are in Cyrillic and 135 - in Latin.

The material is structured in the following several main sections: Introduction, Chapter I - Literary Review; Chapter II - Purpose, tasks and methodology of the study; Chapter III - CAM in the Bulgarian healthcare. Results from own research and discussion; Chapter IV - Conclusions, Recommendations, Contributions, Conclusion, References, Appendices

The relevance of the chosen topic is determined by the fact that in Bulgaria there are no socio-demographic and epidemiological data on the application of CAM in our country. On the other hand, folk medicine and naturopathy have long traditions. In Bulgaria, unconventional therapy has been legally regulated since 2005, but data on the CAM field in our country are scarce.

CAM is an innovative concept that has its place in European healthcare. Theoretical research related to CAM approaches and research on the effectiveness, efficiency and safety of CAM methods are timely and necessary.

In her introduction, Iskra Staneva Kapincheva convincingly substantiates the relevance and importance of the chosen topic.

The literature review shows the in-depth knowledge of the doctoral student in the field of research chosen for the problems.

It addresses the problem in several aspects:

- ✓ KAM-concept - theoretical research - basic concepts and definitions
- ✓ Types of CAM in Europe - acupuncture; anthroposophical medicine; Ayurveda; yoga; kinesiology; naturopathy; osteopathy; reflexology; Tibetan medicine; traditional Chinese medicine; phytotherapy; chiropractic; homeopathy; shiatsu
- ✓ General approaches of KAM
- ✓ Research in the field of CAM

The material presented in this chapter is rich, competently and critically analyzed by the author and shows his wide awareness and scientifically substantiates the need for research in the field of CAM in Bulgaria.

This gives her a basis for developing an adequate methodology through which she has carried out her own research.

The purpose and tasks of the dissertation are properly formulated and well justified. The specific scientific tasks, the object, the units and the signs of the observation are related to the specificity of the development. Adequately selected methods are used, which complement each other and allow for a comprehensive assessment of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM). An own survey was conducted.

The aim of this dissertation is to study the historical and scientific development of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM), and its place in Bulgarian health care with an emphasis on homeopathy as the most common CAM method in Europe.

The planned tasks fully correspond to the set goal:

First task: To define, study and present the innovative European concept CAM and its place in the Bulgarian healthcare.

Second task: To outline the CAM approaches on a national scale and to study the historical and scientific development of the types of CAM therapies in Bulgaria.

Third task: To make a situational analysis of CAM in the Bulgarian healthcare, including a classic SWOT analysis based on the studied world and European experience.

Fourth task: Study of the socio-demographic profile and health-related results of patients with chronic complaints who have been treated for more than a year with homeopathy - the most common CAM method in Europe. Tracking attitudes and awareness related to homeopathy.

Fifth task: To study the reasons for the choice of homeopathy in the treatment of children.

A working hypothesis has been developed

In her own research Iskra Staneva Kapincheva followed the mix-method approach, applying a converging parallel mix-method design, which consists of three separate parallel phases

First phase: CAM context: historical, international and national analysis.

Second phase: Quantitative analysis by observational multicenter study, direct survey - quantitative data were collected using a survey method through tools - standardized questionnaire for subjective health assessment, EQ-5D-3L, Multicenter study in clinics of homeopaths with over 20 -year experience, with European diploma in homeopathy, in the cities of Burgas, Varna, Veliko Tarnovo and Sofia

Third phase: Qualitative research through semi-structured interviews - Target population are parents who have chosen the homeopathic method for the treatment of their children.

Selection framework: Qualitative study with semi-structured interviews of a target group of parents who have been treating their children with homeopathy for more than a year.

Evaluation of the results.

The comprehensive quantitative study confirms the public need for more scientific information on homeopathy.

The analysis of the presented own researches and conclusions in the field of homeopathy leads to the formation of the following approaches:

- 1) broader understanding and social promotion of homeopathy as KAM in Bulgaria;
- 2) greater appreciation of the importance of evidence-based homeopathy for public health;
- 3) growing interest in the use of QOL3-tools as patient-reported results in the monitoring of therapies for chronic conditions, including CAM and in particular homeopathy.

The conclusions of the study naturally follow from the analysis of the obtained results. Iskra Staneva Kapincheva draws five conclusions that correspond to the five tasks set in the study. Specific **recommendations** have been made:

- ✓ Recommendations at the level of national health policy for CAM
- ✓ Recommendations on investing in CAM research
- ✓ Recommendations at educational level
- ✓ Recommendations at the level of professional integration
- ✓ Recommendations at the social level
- ✓ Recommendations at the level of legal and ethical aspects
- ✓ Recommendations of professional and patient organizations

Evaluation of contributions. I agree with the contributions indicated by the doctoral student, which are appropriately grouped and systematized in two groups

- ✓ Contributions of original character and
- ✓ Practical contributions.

Abstract and publications on labor

The abstract to the dissertation correctly reflects the structure of the development and contains the most important results and conclusions of the study.

In connection with the topic of the dissertation there are three publications and three participations in scientific and educational forums which are related to the topic of the dissertation. reflect parts of the dissertation.

In general, I give a positive assessment of dissertations.

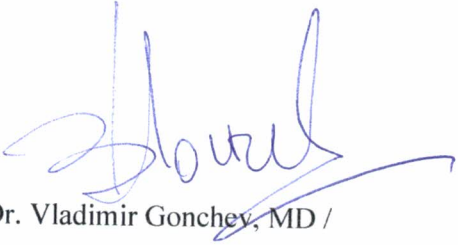
Conclusion

I believe that the dissertation of Iskra Staneva Kapincheva on "Complementary and alternative medicine - development and place in Bulgarian health care" in relevance, scope and significance of the contributions meets the requirements of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in Bulgaria and the Regulations of MU-Varna for its implementation.

In connection with all the above, I give my positive assessment and strongly recommend the esteemed scientific jury to award the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the scientific specialty 03.01.53 "Social Medicine and Organization of Health and Pharmacy" by Iskra Staneva Kapincheva.

04.02.2021

Prepared the opinion:


/ Associate Professor Dr. Vladimir Gonchev, MD /