

To the Chairman of the Scientific Jury,  
determined by order № P-109-167 /  
14.04.2022 of the Rector of MU-Varna  
Prof. Dr. Krassimir Ivanov, MD, PhD, DSc

## STATEMENT

by Prof. Dr. Nikola Vladov, MD, PhD, DSc  
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**Subject:** The scientific and practical activity of Dr. Alexander Kamenov Zlatarov, candidate in the competition for the academic position "Associate Professor", field of higher education 7. Health and Sports, professional area 7.1. Medicine, specialty "Surgery" - one, 0.5 full-time position for the needs of the Department of General and Operative Surgery at the Faculty of Medicine and 0.5 full-time position for the First Clinic of Surgery at the University Hospital "St. Marina" EAD-Varna. The competition was published in the State Gazette issue 14 / 18.02.2022: The scientific jury was appointed by order of the Rector of the Medical University - Varna № P-109-167 / 14.04.2022.

Distinguished members of the Scientific Jury,

Dear colleagues,

Dr. Alexander Kamenov Zlatarov graduated in medicine from the Medical University in Varna in 2012, obtaining a master's degree in medicine. In 2013, a 5-year specialization in general surgery began at the First Clinic of Surgery, University Hospital "St. Marina" - Varna. He has completed a number of courses and specializations in the field of endoscopic, laparoscopic, esophageal and liver surgery in Bulgaria and abroad. He conducted a course in Minimally Invasive Surgery for Esophageal Cancer and Wet-lab Endoscopic Mucosal Resection Division of Thoracic and Foregut Surgery, University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, Pittsburgh (USA) in 2014 and in Laparoscopic Liver Surgery & University Hospital Southampton, Southampton (UK) in 2018. He is certified as a console surgeon for the daVinci Xi robotic system.

He is a member of the Bulgarian Surgical Society and the Union of Scientists in Bulgaria.

He speaks English, German and Russian.

The scientific activity of Dr. Zlatarov is expressed in the authorship and co-authorship of 56 scientific papers. The publications include 1 dissertation, 7 sections of textbooks, manuals, monographs - 7, 10 full-text publications in foreign journals, 38 full-text publications in journals and scientific collections, 29 participations with reports at scientific forums in Bulgaria, 22 participations with reports at scientific forums abroad. 10

publications are presented as equivalent to a monographic work. Of the actual publications, the candidate is the first author in 3.6% of scientific papers, second - in 9.1% and in 87.2% of publications and participations - third and consecutive. The official citation reference from the Library of MU-Varna №143 / 04.04.2022 establishes 8 citations in scientific journals, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases.

The publications and references proposed for participation in the competition prove the high scientific productivity of the candidate in research, publication and applied aspects. All publications are correctly described and attached in full to the materials in the competition.

Dr. Zlatarov's scientific works can be grouped in the following areas: colorectal surgery, upper digestive tract surgery, hepatobiliary surgery, minimally invasive surgery for adrenal tumors, training in laparoscopic surgery, biotechnology. The scientific contributions are of predominantly original nature - with theoretical, methodological and practical-applied significance.

One of the main interests of the candidate is esophageal surgery and cardio-oesophageal ligament. In this direction is his dissertation - "Modern methods for the treatment of hiatal hernia." As contributions I can recognize the performance of a modern and statistically reliable study of the application of laparoscopic methods for the treatment of hiatal hernia. An analysis of the causes and anatomical variants of recurrence after laparoscopic surgery for hiatal hernia is presented. An analysis of the specific complications after laparoscopic fundoplication and behavior was performed. The principles for optimal operative approach in the laparoscopic treatment of hiatal hernia have been established. An algorithm for intraoperative behavior in esophageal shortening has been derived. The experience of laparoscopic fundoplication is presented in a series of publications presented at national congresses (G8-23; related to the dissertation G8-2, G8-4, G8-6). Rare cases of practice are described, describing rare diseases of the upper digestive tract and those in which an innovative minimally invasive method has been applied ( B4-1 , G8-2).

A major part of the scientific work is devoted to the topic of surgical treatment of colorectal cancer . An author's study on an innovative for the country method for endoscopic submucosal dissection in early rectal carcinoma (carcinoma in situ, T1sm1 and T1sm2) was conducted. An analysis of our own results from the application of laparoscopic intersphincter resection in patients with low rectal cancer has been performed. Particular attention is paid to modern standards for radical surgical treatment of rectal cancer. Review publications on the possibilities of stenting and decompression in colonic ileus as a method for improving operative and oncological results and modern surgical strategies in malignant colonic obstruction are presented. (G7-4 , G 7-9 , G8-1, G8-4, G8-5, G7-11, G8-21). A series of publications prepared by a multidisciplinary team focused on diagnostic methods for colorectal cancer, including endorectal ultrasound, FGD-PET-CT, imaging markers for rectal cancer in the context of neoadjuvant therapy, virtual colonoscopy, early diagnosis and colonoscopy . of colorectal cancer. An overview of modern algorithms for the diagnosis of rectal cancer in the context of neoadjuvant therapy has been made. ( B4-2 , B4-3 , B4-10 , G8-3, G8-6, G8-9, G8-13, G8-16, G8-18). Modern standards in the diagnosis and treatment of colorectal cancer are reflected in chapters of a collective monograph . A multidisciplinary team reviewed the application of radiation therapy for esophageal and gastric cancer (G7-5, G7-6, G8-23). Own experience in patients with acute non- varicose bleeding from the upper GIT is presented, and a comparison of the author's algorithms with the data from the literature (G8-20) is performed.

In the field of hepatobiliary surgery, publications are presented reflecting our own experience in the application of minimally invasive techniques such as percutaneous biliary drainage in mechanical jaundice, multimodal therapy for liver metastases, including modern methods such as portal venous embolization. An analysis of the postoperative follow-up of patients with liver resections for colorectal metastases is presented. A study



was performed on the dynamic changes in serum levels of five enzymes in patients undergoing monosegmentectomy, bi- and trisegmentectomy or hemihepatectomy, which contributes to the adequate treatment of functional disorders of the liver. (G7-2, G8-7, G8-8, G8-10, G8-14, G8-15, G8-17, G8-24, G8-25, G8-26, G8-27, G8-28, G8-29).

Dr. Zlatarov also participates in the team developing laparoscopic adrenalectomy at the University Hospital "St. Marina ". This activity is reflected in three publications analyzing my own experience with the use of laparoscopic adrenalectomy, confirming the advantages of the minimally invasive method over conventional adrenalectomy. A rare case study from a 9-year-old patient with adrenal oncocytoma was also presented. (G7-1, G7-3, G8-22)

The candidate presents an innovative study for Bulgaria on the training of students through virtual simulators for laparoscopic surgery. Based on the analysis of the results, a course has been developed, laying the foundation for creating a methodology for assessing the level of laparoscopic technical skills of medical students. (G7-8)

In co-authorship with a team from the Department of Medical Equipment, Electronic and Information Technologies in Healthcare, a publication on 3D-technology for printing fabrics was presented, which is used in the production of anthropomorphic phantoms. The potential of using modeling and simulation techniques in evaluating the suitability of 3D printed materials for breast tissue presentation for X-ray imaging techniques has been assessed. (G7-7)

Dr. Alexander Zlatarov's training includes practical exercises in "General and Operative Surgery" - students of Medicine Bulgarian and English language training, III year, "Surgical Diseases" - students of Medicine Bulgarian and English language training, IV and V year " Surgery incl. Anesthesiology and Emergencies "- students of Dental Medicine - Bulgarian and English language training - III year, " Surgery "- students majoring in " Midwife ", " Rehabilitator ", " X-ray technician "- 2169 teaching hours for the previous 5 years at a rate of 220 hours per year. Impressive is the increasing workload in the training of English-speaking students, which is a high certificate for the preparation of the candidate.

### **Conclusion**

The quality and quantity of the scientific production of Dr. Alexander Zlatarov fully complies with the requirements of ZRASRB, the Regulations for its implementation and the Regulations for the development of the academic staff of MU-Varna. The presented documents are a testament to her qualities as an established surgeon with solid theoretical training and clinical experience. On this basis, I recommend the esteemed members of the Scientific Jury to vote positively for the award of Dr. Alexander Zlatarov, MD, to the academic position of "Associate Professor" in General Surgery for the needs of the Department of General and Operative Surgery at the Faculty of Medicine "and 0.5 full-time position for the First Clinic of Surgery at the University Hospital" St. Marina "EAD-Varna.

06.06.2022  
Sofia

Prof. Dr. Nikola Vladov, MD, PhD, DSc  
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