

OPINION

By **Assoc.Prof. Dr. Rositsa Kirilova Enikova-Kosovska, PhD,**

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member of a scientific jury according to the Order of the Rector of MU-Varna No. R-102-260/23.06.2022 under the procedure for occupying the academic position of "**professor**" in the specialty "**Hygiene** (incl. labor, communal, school, radiation, etc.)" at the Faculty of "Public Health" at the **Medical University - Varna.**

The competition was opened in SG No. 32/26.04.2022 in the field of Higher Education 7 - "Health and Sport", in professional direction 7.1. "Medicine" and scientific specialty "Hygiene (incl. labor, communal, school, radiation etc.)", for the needs of the "Hygiene and Epidemiology" department at the "Public Health" faculty. Associate Professor Darina Naydenova Hristova, PhD, with a recognized medical specialty "Nutrition and Dietetics" (2011) was the only candidate who participated in the competition.

The following volume of scientific production, published after her election as an associate professor (2015), which covers and exceeds the established scientometric criteria is provided for opinion:

- Monograph (habilitation thesis) in full text on the topic "Eating behavior disorders. Clinical practice aspects of the doctor in the field of nutrition and dietetics" (2022);
- Full text of 24 articles and reports, 6 of which were published in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information; 9 articles and reports published in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals or edited collective volumes; 9 articles beyond the minimum scientometric requirements;
- Summaries of: the candidate's doctoral dissertation, the habilitation thesis; 15 articles and reports published in refereed databases and in non-refereed journals.

A list of 96 reports and posters presented at national and international scientific forums at home and abroad is attached. The participation of Associate Professor Dr. D. Naydenova in 19 scientific projects, approved and financed by the Medical University of Varna, the Municipality of Varna, the Science Fund, etc., is documented.

The attached author reference for the scientific contributions of papers and reports is realistic and objective.

Dr. D. Naydenova (after her election as an associate professor) is a co-author of three university textbooks and three teaching tools for students in the field of hygiene and ecology.

Her academic workload, mainly with lectures is high and in the last 4 years has exceeded twice the norm. The academic disciplines she teaches are in the fields of environment and health, hygiene and ecology, nutrition and dietetics, nutrition and socially significant health problems, nutrition hygiene, food safety, etc. They are mostly for Masters in

Medicine, Dentistry, Pharmacy, Health Management, Health Care as well as for Nursing, Laboratory Technicians, Pharmacist Assistants and other bachelor medical specialists.

The activity of Assoc. Prof. Dr. D. Naydenova in her capacity of a scientific supervisor of PhD students, two of whom have successfully defended, and 6 are in the process of developing dissertations, is impressive. She also supervises medical interns in Postgraduate Education to acquire a specialty in "Nutrition and Dietetics" and graduates of master's programs. She is currently the chairman of the State Commission for taking the state exam in "Nutrition and dietetics".

The scientific output of Assoc. Prof. Dr. D. Naydenova is in the field of nutrition and dietetics in the aspect of their relationship with a lot of current modern non-infectious pathologies, which in the 21st century are becoming alarmingly epidemic in nature. The main theoretical and applied contributions are in the areas of eating behavior disorders, nutrition in the maternity period, in the neonatal and nursing period, nutritional behavior and status in adolescents, the importance of many current nutritional deficiencies. Research in a team with clinical specialists - obstetrician-gynecologists, pediatricians, psychiatrists, etc., provides a basis for in-depth examination of problems related to pathogenesis, epidemiology, clinical symptoms, diagnostics and diet therapy as an important part of the treatment strategy.

The second monography of Assoc. Prof. Dr. D. Naydenova (published after her election as an associate professor) is of an indisputable contribution, which examines feeding behavior disorders, their classification, genetic and epigenetic factors for their appearance and development (anorexia neurosis, bulimia neurosis, orthorexia, bigorexia, compulsive feeding). The role of the modern information environment, which aggressively preaches "healthy" feeding patterns, leading to nutritional deficiencies of macro- and micronutrients, with direct and remote negative consequences for health, including reproductive health, is also important for their spread. The case studies from the author's real medical practice are an example of her responsible approach to diagnostics and diet therapy.

Associate Professor Dr. D. Naydenova is also interested in nutrigenetics. In her scientific production, a serious place is occupied by the problems of the role of vitamin D as an epigenetic factor and its effects in the etiology of obesity, metabolic, cognitive disorders, osteoporosis, some autoimmune pathologies, etc. In an interesting angle is the study of the ketogenic diet as a possible therapeutic approach for metabolic disorders, autism, Alzheimer's, etc. There are studies on the needs of ω -3 FA, vitamin B12 during pregnancy and breastfeeding; on food allergies and iron deficiency anemia in infancy. In adolescents, the pattern and regime of nutrition, physical activity were studied; Deficiencies of vitamins C, B1, B2, FK, A, D, ω -3 FA, calcium, fiber, bioflavonoids were found in girls. Based on real data on the nutritional status of children with adolescent idiopathic scoliosis, recommendations for nutrition and supplementation have been formulated.

Other problems related to the preventive aspects of nutrition science fall into the author's field of vision - for example, the role of caffeine and antioxidants in protective-professional nutrition, technological additives, some biological risks of bacterial food infections.

The above gives grounds for a high evaluation of the theoretical and applied scientific activity of Assoc. Prof. Dr. D. Naydenova. She is an experienced teacher with proven pedagogical skills at various qualification levels in teaching students - masters and bachelors. A high rating can also be given to her activity as a scientific supervisor of doctoral dissertations, of specialists and graduates. The accumulated significant scientific-theoretical, methodological and pedagogical experience and potential give her the opportunity for a successful career in the field of preventive medicine and as a university teacher.

IN CONCLUSION:

The presented scientific production, the educational and teaching activity in the multidisciplinary field of hygiene and preventive medicine, the prominent opportunities for scientific-theoretical and pedagogical activities give me the basis for the opinion: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Darina Naydenova Hristova to occupy the academic position of "professor" in the scientific specialty "Hygiene" in the Department of "Hygiene and Epidemiology" at the Faculty of "Public Health" of the MU - Varna, in accordance with the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations of the MU-Varna for its application.

THE OPINION IS PREPARED BY:

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(Assoc.Prof. Dr. Rositsa K. Enikova-Kosovska, PhD)

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