

To the Chairman of the Scientific Jury,
determined by Order No. R-109-280/25.05.2023
of Prof. Dr. V. Ignatov, PhD, Rector of Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov",
Varna

Attached I present: STATEMENT

by competition for the academic position "Associate Professor"
in "Nuclear Medicine" specialty
for the needs of the "Imaging Diagnostics, Interventional Medicine and Radiotherapy"
Department, announced in SG No. 28/28.03.2023.

Statement: Prof. Dr. Antonia Dencheva Tsonevska, Phd

Head of the Nuclear Medicine Clinic, ACS UMBAL Tokuda, Sofia
Scientific specialties – Medical radiology, Oncology

The opinion was drawn up in accordance with the requirements of the Medical University of
Varna Medical University - Conditions and procedure for occupying the academic position
"associate professor"

STATEMENT

In the legally established deadline for participation in the competition for "associate professor" for the needs of the Department of "Imaging diagnostics, interventional medicine and radiation therapy", announced in SG No. 28/28.03.2023, one candidate submitted documents - chief assistant. Dr. Zivka Dancheva Mezan, MD. All submitted documents and materials of the candidate have been prepared according to the requirements of PPZRASRB of the Medical University-Varna

1. Professional and academic development (career profile):

Dr. Zhivka Dancheva began her career as a nuclear medicine resident in 2010 at the Nuclear Medicine and Metabolic Therapy Clinic, St. Marina Medical Center and is currently a specialist in the clinic.

Since 2006 until 2012 she was a full-time doctoral student at the Department of Imaging and Radiotherapy, specialty "Medical Radiology and Radiology (incl. use of radioactive isotopes)" where she defended her thesis "Metabolic radiopharmaceutical therapy with ^{89}Sr (Metastron) of painful bone metastases in patients with carcinoma of the prostate and mammary gland". From 2016 to the present, she is the chief assistant at the Department of Imaging, Interventional Medicine and Radiotherapy.

Dr. Zhivka Dancheva has gone through a number of qualification courses and specializations.

During her work in the field of nuclear medicine, Dr. Zhivka Dancheva established herself as a respected colleague, with high professionalism, with a drive for innovation, initiative, a sense of responsibility, communicative and businesslike. She has proven herself to be one of the best nuclear medicine specialists in the country.

2. Evaluation of the research activity:

The total number of scientific publications of Dr. Zhivka Dancheva to date is 50. 30 scientific works have been submitted for participation in the current competition, 23 of which have been published in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information (Web of Science and/or Scopus). 1 monograph, 7 full-text articles and 22 reports with published abstracts in scientific publications, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases with scientific information and impact factor are presented in the competition.

The impact factor presented so far is IF 204.073.

The total number of citations is 26. 5 are specified in the current competition.

It is clear from the presented academic report that the scientometric indicators presented by Dr. Zhivka Dancheva for the academic position "Associate Professor" fully cover and exceed the minimum scientometric requirements.

Dr. Zhivka Dancheva has numerous participations in the annual national and international scientific forums in the field of nuclear medicine.

She is a member of the Bulgarian Society of Nuclear Medicine, WIN Bulgaria, European Association of Nuclear medicine, European Society of Hybrid, Molecular and Translational Imaging

Dr. Zhivka Dancheva has a successfully defended dissertation on "Metabolic radiopharmaceutical therapy with ^{89}Sr (Metastron) of painful bone metastases in patients with carcinoma of the prostate and mammary gland". In the dissertation work, for the first time in Bulgaria, a comprehensive assessment was made of the role and place of metabolic treatment with Sr-89 in patients with prostate cancer. The effect of combining Sr-89, bisphosphonates, chemotherapy and radiation therapy was also studied in patients with breast carcinoma. The main factors that could enhance the effect of adding Sr-89 therapy were investigated.

The therapeutic effect of the Sr-89 treatment after the first and subsequent applications as well as the side effects of the treatment were monitored. The incorporation of Sr-89 into bisphosphonate, chemotherapy, and radiation therapy has been extensively investigated. There is definitely a place for Sr-89 in the therapeutic plan of patients with bone metastases. Criteria were developed for the optimal selection of patients who would benefit from the inclusion of Sr-89 in complex treatment with bisphosphonates, chemotherapy and radiation therapy.

Special attention deserves the candidate's peer-reviewed monograph, of which she is the sole author: "Cutaneous melanoma through the eyes of nuclear medicine"

The monograph is a summary of the world and Bulgarian experience in the staging, follow-up and reporting of the effect of the treatment of skin melanoma, with an emphasis on Nuclear Medicine, both from the point of view of lymphoscintigraphy, as the gold standard for nodal staging in early melanoma, as well as hybrid positron -emission tomography with computed tomography (^{18}F -FDG PET/CT) in advanced disease.

An educational and methodological contribution are the guidelines for conducting sentinel lymphoscintigraphy, recommendations and contraindications for conducting it. An original contribution is the presentation of personal results of over 500 patients for staging, the evaluation of the effect of treatment and the follow-up of high-risk groups of patients with ^{18}F -FDG PET/CT, which are based on both literature data and own results. The most common side effects of immunotherapy detectable with ^{18}F -FDG PET/CT are presented, and its role in the early, subclinical detection of the latter, which is of practical importance in the need for treatment correction, is summarized.

The scientific research activity and publication activity of Dr. Zhivka Dancheva are diverse and directed in several directions. The leading and original scientific contributions, visible from the articles presented in the competition and participation in scientific forums of Dr. Zhivka Dancheva, are mainly related to her long-term rich experience with the application of ^{18}F -FDG PET/CT and ^{68}Ga -PSMA PET/CT. Studies with ^{18}F -FDG PET/CT are in several main areas - head and neck carcinomas, breast carcinoma, multiple myeloma. The presented publications on the application of ^{68}Ga -PSMA in prostate carcinoma show in-depth studies and own results and experience.

3. Evaluation of teaching activities:

Dr. Zivka Dancheva is the main assistant at the Department of "Imaging diagnostics, interventional medicine and radiotherapy" and has a teaching experience of 6 years and 9 months. According to the study load report, she has an average of 150 hours of lectures and exercises each year.

4. General assessment of the applicant's compliance with the mandatory conditions and mandatory quantitative criteria and scientometric indicators according to the Regulation on the occupation of the academic position "Ass.Profesor".

After a detailed acquaintance with the scientometric indicators and quantitative criteria in the documents of Dr. Zhivka Dancheva, I believe that they absolutely meet and exceed the national requirements in the ŽRASRB and the Regulations for its application, as well as the Regulations for occupying the academic position "Associate Professor" provided for in the Regulations of Medical University-Varna.

CONCLUSION:

Dr. Zhivka Dancheva possesses the qualities of an excellent professional and a thorough and forward-looking scientist who, along with her practical work, poses and successfully solves current and important scientific problems.

Bearing in mind the criteria of ZRASRB and PPZRASRB, as well as the scientific production presented by Dr. Zhivka Dancheva and taking into account my long-term observations of her professional and academic development, I can confidently state that Dr. Zhivka Dancheva is a leading specialist in nuclear medicine. It has proven authority in scientific circles and professional organizations.

The analysis of the scientific-research and teaching qualities of Dr. Zhivka Dancheva, as well as her scientific potential, give me reason to confidently propose to the honorable scientific jury to vote positively for her election to the academic position "Associate Professor" for the needs of the Department "Imaging diagnostics, interventional medicine and radiation therapy", MU-Varna.

Prof. Dr. A. Tsonevska, MD



28.07.2023