

Statement

From Assoc. Prof. Nevyana Feschieva, MD, PhD

Subject: Procedure for holding the academic position of Associate Professor in Public Health Management specialty,

7.4. Public Health – professional field, 7. Health-care and sport – higher education area, opened for Rehabilitation Training Sector at the Medical College – Varna,

Medical University of Varna,

published in the State Gazette, No. 8 on January 28th, 2020

I have been appointed as a Member of the Academic Advancement Board, pursuant to Order No. – 109-177/03.06.2020, of the Rector of the Medical University – Varna to make a position statement on the procedure for holding the academic position of Associate Professor opened for the Rehabilitation Training Sector at Medical College – Varna, MU-Varna, in 7. Health-care and sport – higher education area, 7.4. Public Health – professional field; Public Health Management specialty.

Assist. Prof. Nikolay Svetoslavov Nedev, PhD, is the only candidate for filling the academic position.

Information about the procedure and relevant documentation. The procedure was opened in accordance with the requirements of the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act (DASRBA) and its implementation rules. The applicant has submitted all relevant documents meeting the requirements. No legal violations were found in the competition procedure.

Brief career profile of the applicant. Nikolay Nedev was born on November 23, 1982. *Education.* In 2005, he acquired a Bachelor's degree in Kinesiotherapy at Angel Kanchev University of Ruse. In 2005 – 2007, he acquired his Master's degree in Health Management at MU-Varna. In the period of 2014 to 2018 N. Nedev successively acquired a Master's degree in Rehabilitation, Sea Treatment, Wellness and SPA at MU-Varna (2014/2016), and a Master's degree in Kinesiotherapy at the National Sports Academy – Sofia (2017/2018). In 2016 – 2017 he was a doctoral student in Public health on an independent development plan. His doctoral thesis on *Rehabilitation Care and Quality of Live of Patients – Stroke Survivors*, earned him a

PhD degree in 2018 at MU-Varna, Department of Social Medicine and Organization of Healthcare.

Professional career: In 2005, after graduating at the University of Ruse, N. Nedev started as a kinesiotherapist at the City Hospital in Ruse for seven months. In 2006 – 2008, he was a manager of Eleganza Beauty Centre in Varna. Since Feb. 15th, 2009, he was appointed an Assist. Prof. at the Rehabilitation Training Sector, Medical College – Varna; from 2013 through 2015 he was elected to serve as a Head of the Rehabilitation Training Sector. Since June 2015, to the present day, he is a Deputy Director of the Medical College – Varna. Nikolay Nedev is actively involved in the accreditation preparation of the specialties at the Medical College, he is a member of the Curriculum Board for the Rehabilitation specialty at the Medical College, and of Rehabilitation, sea treatment, wellness and SPA Master's program at the Faculty of Public Health.

Applicant's career development is distinguished by educational advancement and accumulation of experience, both professional and managerial.

Evaluation of the applicant's research work

Nikolay Svetoslavov Nedev, PhD, has presented 19 research papers, all relevant to the profile of the position opened to competition. Their scientometric distribution is as follows:

- Thesis – 1;
- Habilitation paper (monograph) – 1;
- Publications in research journals referenced and indexed in refereed and indexed in world-renowned research databases – 1;
- Publications in peer-reviewed journals not referenced in world-renowned research databases – 12;
- Publications related to the PhD thesis – 4.

14 papers published after the PhD thesis defence procedure are subject to review.

In regard to applicant's collaboration as an author, his publications are distributed as follows:

- Single author – 5 publications - 36%
- First and second author – 4 publications - 28%
- Third and consecutive author – 36%.

Most of the presented research papers are published in the Varna Medical Forum, one paper is published in a journal indexed in world-renowned research database (in English), and two papers are available in foreign language journals (in Russian) not indexed in world databases. Most of the applicant's papers have been reported and discussed at science forums prior to publication.

Nikolai Nedev's research is subject-oriented in three research areas:

- ✓ Post-stroke rehabilitation therapy;
- ✓ Healthcare rehabilitation in chronic conditions;
- ✓ Optimisation of the educational process at the Medical College – Varna.

The importance of rehabilitation therapy as a effective method for the prevention of preventable disability and/or in support of the treatment of patients with chronic diseases is the cornerstone of the first two research areas. Any endeavour to improve rehabilitation care in the context of limited resources of our health system has the potential for efficient development of tertiary prevention. Applicant's contribution to the first area of research is associated with his assessment of the quality of life of stroke patients with certified disability through WHOQOL-BREF. Such an assessment has been performed for the first time. He is a pioneer in studying the degree of motor ability of the affected limbs in stroke-survivors by Brunnstrom test. Along with the above, N. Nedev has researched and analysed stroke patients' opinions on the current rehabilitation potentials, including duration and place of the rehabilitation therapy. A Model for in-home rehabilitation therapy for stroke patients has been developed within this frame of reference, focusing on personalised care and a follow-up of the overall rehabilitation results.

A broader deliberation of rehabilitation care in chronic lung disease patients stands out as the second area of research interest. The monograph *Respiratory Health – A Challenge for Modern Kinesiotherapy* elaborates on the potentials of using a variety of kinesiotherapy techniques for the treatment and prevention of chronic lung disease. The monograph (ISBN 978-619-221-254-44) has two reviews by established specialists in the field, and substantial bibliography, and meets the requirements of the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act and the Rules and Regulations of MU-Plovdiv for the academic staff development. The rest of the publications in this area are designated to the role of rehabilitation therapy in chronic diseases, lumbar pain, cervical osteochondrosis, and various types of musculoskeletal dysfunction. There are conceptual and applied contributions.

In collaboration with colleagues from the Medical College, the applicant directs his efforts in the third area of research interest. The aim is to optimise the educational process by enhancing students' feedback, especially with respect to new teaching methods and innovative methods in disciplines such as marketing communications, etc.

The visibility of N. Nedev's research output is documented in a bibliographic and scientometric Reference report provided by the Research Library of MU-Varna. There are citations in 10 publications in peer-reviewed, not referenced journals. Self-citations are excluded.

The table below shows the applicant's scientometric indicators meeting the minimum requirements of the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act and its implementation rules.

Group of indicators	Content	Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act	Nikolay Nedev
A.	Indicator 1. PhD thesis	50	50
B	Indicators 3 and/or 4. Habilitation paper, i.e. monograph, submitted for habilitation procedure	100	100
G	Total of indicators from 3 to 9 – Publications	200	200
D.	Total of indicators from 10 to 12 – Citations	50	50

Evaluation of applicant's tutoring academic performance. The applicant has almost 11 years of teaching activity, or 10 years, 11 months, 24 days to the date of the procedure opening. A Reference report from the Medical University of Varna shows that with a benchmark of 180 tutorial hours per year, Nikolay Nedev teaching workload for the last 5 years accounts for 453, 245, 215, 249, 285 hours per year, respectively. He has 5 hours of lectures annually, and the rest are practical classes and exercises.

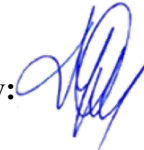
Recommendations. Nikolai Nedev, PhD, has the potential and academic duty to extend his research and practice activities. My first recommendation to him is to endeavour the implementation of the Model for in-home rehabilitation therapy for stroke patients and to pursue potentials for its wider implementation. Last but not least, I find it beneficial for N. Nedev to focus on summarising his previous research and practical activities, especially in the field of post-stroke rehabilitation care, in a paper/papers intended for international research journals with larger visibility.

Conclusion. The applicant meets the minimum requirements of the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act (DASRBA) and its implementation rules for the academic position of Associate Professor. His academic and career profile bears persistent development potential. Nedev's research holds contributions; he has a significant teaching activity and advancement perspective. Nikolay Nedev gains my affirmative vote for his application. My vote is in favour, and I recommend Nikolay Svetoslavov Nedev, PhD, for the position of Associate Professor at the Medical College – Varna in Public Health Management specialty, 7.4. Public Health – professional field, 7. Health-care and sport – higher education area.

28.07.2020

Varna

A Statement by:



Assoc. Prof. N. Feschieva, MD, PhD