

STATEMENT

By Assoc. Prof. Dr. Klara Georgieva Dokova, MD, PhD
Dean of the Faculty of Public Health
Medical University "Prof. Dr. P. Stoyanov", Varna

Re: Competition for acquiring an academic position "Professor" in the area of higher education 7. Health and Sports, professional field 7.1. Medicine; specialty "**Social medicine and healthcare and pharmaceutical organization (investigation of work capacity)**" for the needs of the department of "Hygiene and epidemiology" at the Faculty of Public Health, Medical University "Prof. Dr. P. Stoyanov" Varna, promulgated in State Gazette 62/06.08.2019.

According to Order No P-109-313/07.10.2019 of the Rector of the Medical University of Varna I was appointed as an internal member of the scientific jury and with the decision of its first I was appointed to prepare a Statement.

In the present competition there is only one candidate, Assoc. Prof. Dr Paraskeva Mancheva, DSc, Head of educational sector "Rehabilitator", Medical College at the Medical University of Varna "Prof. Dr. P. Stoyanov", Varna. The candidate presented all necessary documents as required by the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Rules for its application.

I. Career development of the candidate

Paraskeva Mancheva was born on 17.03.1964 in the town of Dobrich. In 1989 she graduated from the Medical University, Varna with specialty "Medicine", followed by the acquisition of three medical specialties: Internal diseases 1994, Physiotherapy and rehabilitation medicine in 1999 and General medicine in 2001. In 2014 she acquires a second Master degree in Law.

The professional career of Dr. Mancheva is started as an intern at a department of Internal diseases, Regional hospital in the town of Kavarna. Her academic career at Medical University of Varna starts from 1999 as an assistant, head assistant professor and associated professor after a successful defense of a PhD thesis with the topic "Legal conscience to legalize euthanasia and quality of life in polymorbid patients with permanent disability". In 2018 Assoc. Prof. Mancheva acquires a Doctor of science degree and the topic of her thesis this time is in the area medical investigation of work capacity and more concretely "Medical and Social Issues of Disability in the System of Medical Expertise".

From 2014 Assoc. Prof. Mancheva becomes Head of the educational sector Rehabilitator at the Medical College, and from 2017 she is a Head of the University Center for Eastern Medicine.

In the period 2006-2012 Assoc. Prof. Mancheva works as an expert in internal diseases at the General expert committee on disability at the University hospital "St Marina"-Varna, and the experience gained in relation to organizational challenges in

front the expert committees and the problems of people with disabilities permanently directs her research interests towards that area.

She has participated in several postgraduate courses for specialization and the last have been related to her activities as a Head of the University Center of Eastern Medicine and are in the area of Ayurveda, Traditional Chinese Medicine, Acupuncture and Onco-rehabilitation.

Assoc. Prof. Mancheva has participated in 5 projects related to reproductive health of young people, education in mental health for general practitioners, prevention of HIV/AIDS and practical education provision in palliative care for medical students. Assoc. Prof. Mancheva uses actively Russian and English languages.

III. Scientific activity of the candidate

Assoc. Prof. Paraskeva Mancheva participates in the present competition with 61 full text scientific works including:

- 1 dissertation for PhD;
- 1 dissertation for acquisition of the scientific title “Doctor of science”;
- 1 monograph and 1 chapter in a collective monograph with multiple authors;
- 1 textbook in Bulgarian language;
- 56 full-text publications, published in scientific journals and books with scientific conference proceedings.

The articles of the candidate are published in prestigious scientific journals: Journal of IMAB, Social medicine, Health economics and management, General Medicine, Varna Medical Forum etc. In 38 of the scientific articles Paraskeva Mancheva is a single or first author, revealing her scientific activity and team leading abilities. There is evidence of 36 citations.

The quantitative analysis of the scientific publications of Assoc. Prof. Parakseva Mancheva confirms that they meet the criteria for occupying the academic position "Professor" in the area of higher education 7. Health and Sports.

Qualitative Characteristics of the Scientific Work

The scientific publications of Assoc. Prof. Paraskeva Mancheva can be thematically focused in five research topics that correspond with the professional development and reveal the scientific interests and achievements during the entire creative and professional development of the candidate. The five themes include:

1. Organization of the system for medical investigation of work capacity; Related to the first is the second topic;
2. Medico-social and judicial problems of people with functional limitations;
3. Assessment of the judicial awareness for euthanasia among patients with disabilities from the system of medical investigation;
4. Improvement of students' education (in rehabilitation, kinesitherapy and ergotherapy) in relation to complex rehabilitation of the chronically ill patient aiming at restoration of his work abilities;

5. Possibilities for introduction of eastern medicine as complementary therapy for patients with chronic disabling diseases.

On first place I put the topic "Organization of the system for medical investigation of work capacity", not only because it directly corresponds to the specificity of the topic of the present contest but also because it is presented with a big number of publications – 15 in total from the scientific works presented for reviewing, a bigger number of which have been published during the last 4 years. I highly appreciate the thorough, complex, systematic analysis of the situation of medical investigation of work capacity, first of its kind with a potential to inspire practical decisions.

Based on the theoretical research, on good understanding of the problems and expert assessment of the complex rehabilitation of people with functional limitations, the need for an integrated, hierarchical control of the system for medical investigation of work capacity is brought out. The next step is made with the development of a model concept for complex medico-social assessment of the work capacity, adapted to European experience. It includes a new hierarchical structure of the system, providing on-time adequate social integration which is a contribution of theoretical-methodological importance.

In the second topic "Medico-social and judicial problems of people with functional limitations" I accept the formulated contributions which have not only theoretical but also practical and applied significance. The revelation of the risk for spreading disadvantageous images of people with functional limitations as non-valuable and/or "privileged" social group, attracting significant public resources with no returns is of specific interest. The need for a new regulation of the process of medical investigation, integrating the medical and the social assessment of the expert reports of one committee is well reasoned.

In topic 3 "Assessment of the judicial awareness for euthanasia among patients with disabilities from the system of medical investigation" the first encompassing research on euthanasia among vulnerable groups of the population – disabled with multiple diseases with low quality of life has been carried out, including a historical review of the phenomenon, its moral and ethical aspects, as well as a study of its regulatory arrangements in the world and in Bulgaria.

An original tool for the assessment of euthanasia awareness, attitudes and behavioral preparedness has been developed and implemented among chronically ill patients with multiple diseases. The results show that pain and low quality of life, determined by the lack of social support are the main causes for the euthanasia decisions. A very important result of the study reveals that patients with multiple diseases who have sought medical investigation in specialized expert committees do not approve the legalization of euthanasia in Bulgaria, especially in its active form.

The need for guiding the health and social security system towards finding solutions to the problems of chronically ill, disabled patients with low quality of life before discussions on changes in euthanasia regulations has been brought out.

In the fourth research topic "Improvement of students' education (in rehabilitation, kinesitherapy and ergotherapy) in relation to complex rehabilitation of the chronically ill patient aiming at restoration of his work abilities" not only the students' needs and satisfaction with the educational process in rehabilitation, kinesitherapy and ergotherapy have been studied but also the patients' satisfaction with the work of rehabilitators and physiotherapists during their practical courses of education in the summer practice and within the framework of the project "Student's practices". Based on the study results timely changes and adaptations of the study programme documentation have been offered including the content, the form and the teaching methods, aiming at improvement of the quality of education, supporting the complex assessment of the educational process with a focus on the problems of the rehabilitation of people with disabilities, and restoring their abilities for qualified work.

Research topic 5 "Possibilities for introduction of eastern medicine as complementary therapy for patients with chronic disabling diseases" is the next evidence of the big potential and the wide spectrum of the interests in the scientific and practical work of Assoc. Prof. Paraskeva Mancheva. In that area she studies the possibilities and points out the advantages of combining the potential of the Eastern and Western medicine in Bulgarian conditions, focusing on the problems, aiming at improvement of the quality of life of chronically ill patients with poor quality of life.

The analysis of the scientific works of Paraskeva Mancheva provided for review, reveals interesting and well - grounded ideas, competency in the researched area, good knowledge and interpretation of recent scientific sources, good structure, language and style of the scientific work on up to date topics.

IV. Educational activities

Assoc. Prof. Paraskeva Mancheva has rich, more than 20 years long teaching experience, which fulfills the requirements of the Academic development Act and the Rules for its application and with the conditions of the present competition as announced in the State Gazette.

The presented information on teaching hours reveals that for the last 4 school years the teaching hours of assoc. prof. Mancheva are more than twice the normatively regulated number, reaching 330 teaching hours on average per year which does not include the time devoted for mid-term and semester exams spent from her as a member of examination committees in all specialties which she is teaching

Assoc. Prof. Paraskeva Mancheva uses and applies an optimal amount of the wide spectrum of her specialized training and competence in her teaching activities. She leads the education and the development of teaching documents and educational materials for the disciplines: Investigation of work capacity for the Master programme in "Public Health Protection and Control", "Labor and insurance law", "General medicine", "Kinesitherapy", kinesitherapy Rehabilitation and Eastern medicine".

Beyond the work with students, Assoc. Prof. Mancheva has taken active part in the education of practicing health professionals – general practitioners and nurses, midwives and social workers on topics related to HIV prevention.

Assoc. Prof. Mancheva has supervised three PhD students who have successfully finished their dissertations and one more PhD student is still in the process of his education.

V. Personal Impressions

I know Assoc. Prof. Paraskeva Mancheva since the time she was an assistant at the department of General Medicine. During the course of our joint work on tasks with different character I had the opportunity to observe the activity, the precision and energy which she invests in the achievement of the objectives, the persistence and her professional correctness.

I am convinced that the above mentioned attributes guarantee that Paraskeva Mancheva will continue to develop her potential in the higher academic position for which she is applying and will contribute to the development of the Department kinesitherapy "Hygiene and Epidemiology" at the Faculty of Public Health, MU-Varna

VI. Compliance with the requirements of MU-Varna for obtaining the academic position „ Professor”

The presented information reveals that Assoc. Prof. Paraskeva Mancheva covers and exceeds in some groups the minimal indicators for occupying the academic position "Professor" required under the Rules for Development of the Academic Staff of the Medical University of Varna (table 1).

Table 1: Compliance with the requirements of the MU-Varna for obtaining academic position "Professor"

Group of indicators	Required number of points	Achieved number of points by assoc. prof P. Mancheva
A	50	50
B	-	100
C	100	100
D	200	490
E	100	240

VII. Conclusion

The analysis of the complete research and educational activities of Assoc. Prof. Paraskeva Mancheva, DSc proves that she covers the requirements for occupying the academic position "Professor" required by the Academic development Act and the Rules for its application.

Assoc. Prof. Mancheva has sufficient number of valuable scientific work, prestige of a good lecturer, demonstrates potential for further intensive work.

These are the grounds for my positive assessment of the application of Assoc. Prof. Paraskeva Mancheva, PhD, DSc for the academic position "Professor" for the

scientific specialty "**Social medicine and healthcare and pharmaceutical organization**" for the needs of the Department of Hygiene and epidemiology, Faculty of Public Health, Medical University "Prof. Dr. P. Stoyanov" – Varna.

3.11. 2019 г.

Signed:

/Assoc. Prof. Dr. Klara Dokova, MD, PhD/