

## **OPINION**

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**Subject:** Competition for the academic position of "ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR" in PEDIATRICS in the professional field 7.1. Medicine, in the Pediatrics Clinic at Acibadem City Clinic, Tokuda Hospital, Sofia

Based on Order No. 15-05-31/11.02.2025 of the Executive Director of Acibadem City Clinic MHAT Tokuda EAD and by decision of the Scientific Jury under Protocol No. 55/28.11.2024 of its absentee meeting, I have been appointed to prepare an opinion on the above-mentioned competition with a sole candidate Dr. Vesselina Ivanova Kenderova, MD.

All requirements and deadlines for the competition procedure have been met. The documents have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Law on the State of Higher Education and Research of the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for the Development of Academic Staff in . Acibadem City Clinic MHAL "Tokuda" EAD Sofia

### **Candidate's career profile**

Dr. Vesselina Kenderova was born in 1973 in the town of Polski Trambesh. She graduated from the Medical University of Sofia in 1997 with very good results. In 2004 In 2006, he earned a degree in Pediatrics, and in 2006, he defended his dissertation on the topic: " Hemorrhagic diatheses in childhood" and obtained the educational and scientific degree "Doctor". He has been a specialist in pediatric pneumology and phthysiology since 2015. He defended his master's degree in public health and health management at the Faculty of Public Health at the Medical University - Sofia in 2015.

From 2006 to the present, he has been a pediatrician-pulmonologist at the Pediatrics Clinic, ASK UMBAL Tokuda, Sofia.

He is a member of the following professional organizations: BULGARIAN MEDICAL

UNION, BULGARIAN PEDIATRIC ASSOCIATION , BULGARIAN PEDIATRIC RESPIRATORY SOCIETY, EUROPEAN RESPIRATORY SOCIETY .

**Evaluation of the candidate's scientific activity based on the documents submitted for participation in the competition.**

Documents for the academic position "Associate Professor" do not repeat evidence (publications, etc.) for the acquisition of the ONS "Doctor"

In this competition, the scientific works of Dr. Kenderova are presented in total 27 scientific works: one dissertation work for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" - "Clinical - immunological studies in immune thrombocytopenic purpura in childhood" , 2005 ; 6 scientific publications and scientific communications, described in a list presented under No. 8 of the mandatory documents for entering the competition. Of the 26 publications presented, 11 are in refereed and indexed scientific journals - 10 Bulgarian and 1 international; 15 are in non-refereed and indexed, with 14 being Bulgarian and 1 international.

Scientific activity also includes 27 participations in congresses and conferences. In 11 (41%) of them he is the first or sole author.

**Impact Factor (IF)**

The official reference of the Central Library of Medicine has identified 396 citations – 18 in Bulgarian sources, 378 – in foreign ones: Scopus (Elsevier) – 15 1 and Web of Science (Clarivate) – 227. The calculated h- index in Scopus is 2, and for Web of Science – h- index is 3. In this competition, 7 articles were used from all citations, of which 1 article is in the Scopus database , 1 article in monographs and collective volumes with scientific review and 5 are in non-refereed journals with scientific review in Bulgaria

**Quotes:**

According to the attached official references from the Central Medical Library (CML) at MU-Sofia, 396 citations have been identified – 18 in Bulgarian sources, 378 – in foreign sources.

**Evaluation of the candidate's scientific contributions:**

As a thorough, ambitious and established member of the Pediatric academic community, Dr. Kenderova demonstrates in his research activities diverse scientific interests with original, scientific-theoretical and scientific-applied contributions, which can be summarized in the following thematic areas:

Pediatric hematology: Hemorrhagic diatheses, Anemias in childhood .

Pediatric pulmonology: Acute respiratory infections, Bronchial asthma, Foreign bodies in the lung, Non-traumatic chest pain.

Pediatric rheumatology: Macrophage activation syndrome, Childhood myositis, Vasculitis.

Rare clinical cases: Pulmonary manifestations in rheumatic diseases, febrile conditions and Varia.

A large part of the work is multidisciplinary. They are the result of teamwork with specialist dermatologists, pathologists, pediatricians from the medical universities Acibadem City Clinic, Tokuda Hospital - Sofia, Alexandrovska University Hospital - Sofia, and international teams.

The transfer of her workplace to the Pediatrics Clinic of ASK UMBAL "Tokuda" redirected Dr. Kenderova's professional interests to the problems of pediatric pulmonology.

As a pediatric pulmonologist, Dr. Kenderova discusses the problem of childhood bronchial asthma. This is a chronic inflammatory disease of the respiratory tract, characterized by reversible (complete or partial) bronchial obstruction, which disappears with or without the use of specific therapy. Inflammation of the respiratory tract is the result of the interaction of many cells and cellular elements, cytokines. Ultimately, it leads to recurrent or persistent bronchospasm, which leads to the so-called wheezing, shortness of breath, rapid breathing and coughing, especially at night or after physical exertion . Bronchial asthma is considered a socially significant disease, especially among the pediatric population, which is why she discussed certain aspects of the disease in the publication: "Bronchial asthma in childhood. Basics in etiopathogenesis, diagnosis and treatment".

Working in the Pediatrics Clinic at the ASK UMBAL "Tokuda", initially under the leadership of Assoc. Prof. Marusya Lilova and subsequently Assoc. Prof. Kalin Lisichki, allows Dr. Kenderova to participate in the diagnosis and treatment of diseases that are beyond the scope of her subspecialty. This significantly expands

the spectrum of her medical knowledge. One such pathological condition is macrophage activation syndrome (MACS). It is characterized by a hyperinflammatory response of the human body to various stimuli, which in most cases leads to severe and often fatal consequences.

Of particular interest is the publication "Allergy to corticosteroids in macrophage activation syndrome - two clinical cases and a review of the literature", which also describes two cases of SMA who developed allergy to corticosteroids (CS) during treatment, and in the second we have consecutive allergic manifestations to different groups of CS. The side effects of CS are well known, but allergic reactions are little known and are not accepted as a serious adverse effect. Information about these conditions in the scientific literature is scarce, the relationship between the concepts of CS and allergy is counterintuitive, even at first glance - paradoxical, which is why doctors rarely think about them. We describe the most common clinical manifestations, the allergenic potential of different CS depending on their molecular structure and the method of administration, as well as an algorithm for diagnosis and behavior in case of allergy to CS .

Varia group discussed Systemic Capillary Leak Syndrome, Childhood Myositis and Coronaviruses, which have long been known pathogens for both humans and animals. The COVID-19 pandemic has posed many challenges to doctors and healthcare systems. As a result of emerging mutations, several viral variants have been registered (alpha, beta, delta). They cause disease primarily in patients over 18 years of age. With the emergence of the Omicron variant, it becomes clear that children are not spared either. It became necessary to develop algorithms and approaches for treating COVID-19 in children. This is proving to be a difficult task, both due to the nature of the pathogen and the fact that medications for adults do not have sufficient clinical studies in children. These problems are discussed in the scientific article "Therapeutic options and trends in COVID-19 among the pediatric population".

### **Teaching and learning activities**

By the time of submitting documents in this competition, Dr. Kenderova has a total work experience of 18 years, 6 months and 5 days. A detailed report on her teaching and workload is presented. Dr. V. Kenderova presents a multifaceted, with a significant workload teaching and teaching activity. She leads a lecture course

English-language training in the discipline "Pediatrics" for medical students. Dr. Kenderova's academic employment is as a part-time lecturer at the Faculty of Medicine, Department of "Internal Medicine, Pharmacology and Clinical Pharmacology, Pediatrics, Epidemiology, Infectious and Skin Diseases". After reviewing the individual reports of Dr. Vesselina Ivanova Kenderova, MD, it was found that the academic workload for the period 2019-2024 is as follows: For the academic year 2019/2020: Total academic workload 210 hours, of which: - 210 classroom hours For the academic year 2021/2022: Total academic workload 420 hours, of which: - 420 classroom hours For the academic year 2022/2023: Total academic workload 360 hours, of which: - 360 classroom hours For the academic year 2023/2024: Total academic workload 420 hours, of which: - 420 classroom occupancy".

Her teaching and learning activities include theoretical and practical classes with Pediatrics residents and general practitioners in the Pediatrics module. She actively participates in conducting their colloquiums.

### **Medical and diagnostic activities**

Dr. Kenderova is an established, valued and respected specialist in the field of Pediatrics. Her knowledge, skills and experience in the various fields of pediatric science and practice date back to her appointment as a pediatrician at the University Hospital "Aleksandrovska". She is an extremely active member of the medical and diagnostic activities of the ASK Hospital Tokuda. She is well versed in differential diagnostic thinking in solving everyday and rarer, casuistic cases. Her specialized knowledge and skills in the field of pulmonology make her one of the few specialists in Bulgaria who successfully and competently develop the problems of patients in this group. Her scientific interests follow modern trends in contemporary pediatric reality. She is an active member of the Bulgarian Academy of Pediatrics, Bulgarian Academy of Pediatrics , Bulgarian Society of Pediatrics and ERS. With her knowledge of English, Dr. Kenderova is a regular participant in international and national pediatric forums, where she constantly improves her professional qualifications.

### **Conclusion**

Dr. Vesselina Kenderova is a well-established, thorough and experienced specialist pediatrician. She is a respected member of the Pediatrics Clinic at the ASK,

UMHAT Tokuda and the Bulgarian Pediatric Society. Her research, teaching and medical-diagnostic activities fully meet and exceed the requirements for holding the academic position of "Associate Professor".

Based on the above, I would like to recommend to the Honorable Jury to award Dr. Vesselina Ivanova Kenderova, MD, the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the specialty "Pediatrics", professional field 7.1

"Medicine", field of higher education 7. "Healthcare and Sports".

Sofia, 28.02.2025

Prepared the opinion:



Prof. Dr. Zdravka Demerdzhieva, MD