

OPINION

by Prof. Razvigor Borislavov Darlenski, MD, PhD, DSc

Regarding: a competition for the academic position of “Associate Professor” in the scientific specialty “Dermatology and Venereology”, professional field 7.1 “Medicine”, area of higher education 7. “Health Care and Sports”, for the needs of the Clinic of Dermatology and Venereology at Acibadem City Clinic Tokuda University Hospital.

The procedure for announcing and conducting the competition has been carried out in accordance with the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, as well as the relevant provisions of the regulations for its implementation and the internal rules of Acibadem City Clinic Tokuda University Hospital. By order of the Executive Director of the medical institution, I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury to evaluate the candidate for the academic position of Associate Professor in Dermatology and Venereology.

There is one candidate participating in the announced competition – Dr. Bisera Kotevska-Trifunova, PhD, specialist in Dermatology and Venereology and Chief Assistant at Acibadem City Clinic Tokuda University Hospital. The submitted documentation is complete and complies with the requirements of the national legislation governing academic career development and the institution's internal regulations.

I. Biographical Data and Professional Development

Dr. Bisera Kotevska-Trifunova graduated in Medicine from the Faculty of Medicine at the Medical University of Sofia in 2011. Immediately thereafter, she began her residency training in Dermatology and Venereology at Acibadem City Clinic Tokuda University Hospital, which she successfully completed in 2016.

In 2018, she defended a doctoral dissertation devoted to allergic contact dermatitis in childhood, in which the etiopathogenetic mechanisms, clinical manifestations, and diagnostic approaches to this condition were analysed. In the following years, the candidate continued to develop her professional qualifications by participating in international training courses and specialised programmes at several European centres, including Budapest, Trieste, and Amsterdam.

In 2023, Dr. Kotevska-Trifunova won a competition for the academic position of Chief Assistant at the Clinic of Dermatology and Venereology. Her professional development has been complemented by numerous specialised trainings covering dermatologic surgery, paediatric dermatology, laser technologies, dermatopathology, non-invasive diagnostic techniques, and modern biological therapies.

Among the distinctions reflecting the early recognition of her work are the Michael Hornstein Memorial Scholarship awarded at the EADV Spring Symposium and a prize for a clinical presentation at an international course on laser technologies.

II. Research Activity

The candidate's scientific output is substantial both in volume and thematic diversity. A total of 138 scientific contributions are presented, including publications in Bulgarian and international scientific journals, chapters in monographs, and participation in scientific forums.

The candidate is the author or co-author of 64 scientific publications, a considerable proportion of which have been published in international journals. In 24 of these publications, Dr. Kotevska-Trifunova is the leading author, demonstrating her active role in initiating and developing scientific topics.

These publications have been cited in international databases, with the journals' combined impact factor reaching 19.8. A total of 28 citations have been registered in Web of Science and Scopus. The candidate's main scientific interests focus on several areas: clinical aspects and modern treatment approaches in psoriasis; problems in allergodermatology and

childhood contact dermatitis; and reports of rare clinical cases in dermatological practice. Part of her scientific activity also involves interdisciplinary research in clinical biochemistry.

The presented scientific results have both theoretical and practical importance, contributing to a better understanding of several dermatological conditions and to the optimisation of diagnostic and therapeutic approaches.

III. Teaching Activity

Dr. Kotevska-Trifunova actively participates in the training of medical students and resident physicians. In the period 2019-2024, she conducted practical classes in the discipline "Dermatology and Venereology" for fourth-year medical students at the Faculty of Medicine of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski".

In addition, the candidate has a considerable teaching workload in training residents at Tokuda University Hospital, demonstrating a commitment to the education of young physicians and the transfer of clinical experience.

IV. Critical Remarks

The presented scientific production is extensive and thematically diverse. Nevertheless, it would be beneficial if part of the candidate's future research were directed towards larger prospective clinical studies, primarily in the fields of dermatology and venereology, to further expand the evidence base for the reported results.

Furthermore, broader participation as a leading author in international multicentre publications in dermatology and venereology could further increase the international visibility of the candidate's scientific work.

V. Conclusion

Based on the submitted materials, it can be concluded that Dr. Bisera Kotevska-Trifunova possesses the necessary scientific, teaching, and clinical qualifications for the academic position of Associate Professor. Her professional development is characterised by consistent progress, active research, and strong commitment to the education of students and residents.

For these reasons, I provide a positive evaluation and support the candidacy of Chief Assistant Dr. Bisera Kotevska-Trifunova, PhD, for the academic position of Associate Professor in the specialty "Dermatology and Venereology."



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