

To the
Scientific Committee, appointed by
Order No. 15-05-99 dated 05.08.2024
of the Executive Director and
Procurator of Acibadem City Clinic
Tokuda University Hospital, Sofia.

OPINION

by

Prof. Dr. Vasil Tsankov Yablanski, MD
Head of the Orthopedics and Traumatology Clinic at Acibadem City Clinic Tokuda
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Regarding: Competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the professional field 7.1 Medicine, scientific specialty "Neurosurgery," for the needs of the Neurosurgery Clinic at Acibadem City Clinic Tokuda Hospital – Sofia (State Gazette – Issue 47 of 04.06.2024).

By Order No. 15-05-99 dated 05.08.2024 of the Executive Director and Procurator of Acibadem City Clinic Tokuda University Hospital, Sofia, and at a meeting of the Scientific Council of the same organization (Protocol 53/26.06.2024), I was appointed as a member of the Scientific Committee for the announced competition.

At the first remote meeting of the Scientific Committee, a decision was made for me to prepare an opinion.

Candidate:

Dr. Toma Yuriev Spiriev, MD, a physician at Acibadem City Clinic Tokuda University Hospital, Sofia, Bulgaria, in the Neurosurgery Clinic, is the only candidate who submitted documents for participation in the competition within the legally defined period. He meets the requirements of the Academic Staff Development in the Republic of Bulgaria Act (ASDRBA), its implementing regulations, and the regulations for the conditions and procedures for obtaining academic degrees and holding academic positions at Acibadem City Clinic Tokuda University Hospital, Sofia. Based on meeting the necessary requirements, Dr. Spiriev has been admitted to participate in the competition and be evaluated by the Scientific Committee.

II. Biographical Data and Career Profile of the Candidate

Dr. Toma Yuriev Spiriev was born on November 25, 1984, in Sofia, Bulgaria. He graduated from the 9th French Language High School "A. de Lamartine," Sofia, in 2003, and from the Medical University of Sofia with a Master's degree in medicine in 2009. During his medical studies, he received numerous awards, including:

Certificate of Excellence for outstanding achievements in mastering medical science and practice

National award "Student of the Year 2009" in the professional field "Medicine and Sports"

2009, Eureka Foundation – "Acad. Metodi Popov" award for achievements in mastering knowledge in medicine and biology

"Prof. Asen Zlatarov" award for high achievements in mastering medical science

Dr. Spiriev began and completed his neurosurgery specialization at Acibadem City Clinic Tokuda University Hospital, Sofia. During this period, he demonstrated excellent qualities as a surgeon and researcher, for which he received the following awards:

Award from the European Association of Neurosurgery/Congress of Neurological Surgeons for an exchange scholarship – Neurosurgery course, San Francisco, USA, 2014

Award from the European Association of Neurosurgery/Codman for a training period at the University Clinic of Neurosurgery, Marseille, France, and the University Clinic of Zurich, Switzerland, 2014

Resident of the Year 2011 – Tokuda Hospital, Sofia

Award from the MAZ Association, Linz, Austria, for a course in microsurgery, 2010

He successfully passed the neurosurgery specialization exam on December 9, 2015.

As a specialist, Dr. Spiriev has continued to receive significant awards and honors, such as:

European Association of Neurosurgical Societies (EANS) – Research Fund Award for the 3D Atlas of Neurological Surgery project: <https://3datlasofneurologicalsurgery.org/>

Braakman Award for the highest score among all candidates in 2018, Prague, Czech Republic

"Young Medic" award in the PhD category, Bulgarian Medical Association/Standard Newspaper, 2017

Award for best essay from the European Association of Neurosurgery – Scholarship for the Advanced Neuro-oncology Course, London, UK, 2016

In 2020, Dr. Spiriev earned a Master's degree in Healthcare Management from the Medical University of Sofia.

He successfully passed the exam of the European Association of Neurosurgery on March 3, 2018.

Dr. Spiriev defended his PhD dissertation on the topic: "Preoperative 3D Planning and 3D Simulation of Neurosurgical Approaches in Cranial Surgical Interventions." His scientific advisor was Prof. Hristo Tsekov, Acibadem City Clinic Tokuda University Hospital, Sofia, Bulgaria, June 2019.

During this period, he worked at the Neurosurgery Clinic of Acibadem City Clinic Tokuda University Hospital, Sofia, Bulgaria.

He also teaches at the Department of "Anatomy, Histology, Pathoanatomy, and Forensic Medicine" at the Faculty of Medicine, Sofia University, Lozenets Hospital – as a part-time assistant professor of anatomy.

In his work, Dr. Spiriev has gained experience in training students and young doctors.

He is a member of the Management Board of the Bulgarian Society of Neurosurgery.

III. Evaluation of the Candidate's Scientific Work

Dr. Toma Spiriev, MD, is participating in the competition with 72 scientific works, including a dissertation, a monograph, and articles published in full text in scientific journals, as well as contributions with posters and reports at scientific forums without the publication of a full-text report. He is the first author of 14 of these works and the second

author of 18. The publications with an Impact Factor (IF) are 29. The candidate has been cited 681 times in the Scopus database.

International Projects Won:

"Three-Dimensional Photorealistic Atlas of Neurological Surgery," 2022, under the Research Fund of the European Association of Neurosurgery. This project was selected alongside seven others from a total of 90 applications

(<https://www.eans.org/page/RFGGrantWinners>).

The project is a collaboration with the Department of "Anatomy and Histology, Pathology, and Forensic Medicine" at Lozenets University Hospital, as well as:

- Neurosurgery Clinic and Department of Anatomy, University Hospital Düsseldorf, Heinrich Heine University, Germany
- Neurosurgery Clinic and Department of Anatomy, University of Copenhagen, Denmark
- Neuroanatomy Lab Ibris, Salerno, Italy

All models are available on a public website, developed specifically for the project:

<https://3datlasofneurologicalsurgery.org>

Thematic areas covered in the publications address current issues in the following fields:

- Preoperative 3D planning and 3D simulation of neurosurgical approaches
- Integration of 3D visualization systems (Virtual Reality, Mixed Reality) in preoperative planning
- 3D printing in neurosurgery as part of preoperative planning
- Neurosurgical anatomy
- Use of surface scanning algorithms to create highly specialized photorealistic 3D neuroanatomical models
- Use of 3D visualization systems in the training of neurosurgery residents and medical students

IV. Conclusion

I believe that, with his qualifications, research, teaching, and clinical work, Dr. Toma Yuriev Spiriev, MD, clearly meets and exceeds the minimum requirements for the academic position in this competition.

This gives me reason to confidently vote in favor and to recommend that the esteemed members of the Scientific Committee support his appointment as "Associate Professor" at Acibadem City Clinic Tokuda University Hospital, Sofia, Bulgaria, in the Neurosurgery Clinic.

15.09.2024
Sofia

Prepared by:
/Prof. Dr. Vasil Yablanski, MD/

