

At the attention
The Chairman of the Scientific jury
appointed by order No 481 /23.12.2019
by the CEO of ACC Tokuda

STATEMENT

by Prof. Dr. Kiril Vasilev Draganov, MD, Ph.D, DSc
Head of Liver, Biliary, Pancreatic and General Surgery Clinic
Acibadem City Clinic Tokuda General Hospital

Doctoral Dissertation: for awarding the Educational and Scientific Degree 'PhD'

Higher education area: 7. Healthcare and sports, Sector 7.1. Medicine

Scientific specialty: "Gastroenterology"

Author: Dr. Petko Ivanov Karagyozov

Doctoral Degree Education Form: Self-directed

Scientific organization: Scientific Council of Acibadem City Clinic Tokuda General Hospital

Topic: "The place of cholangiopancreatography in the diagnosis and treatment of pancreatobiliary diseases"

Scientific supervisor: Prof. Dr. Simeon Stoynov, Ph.D., DSc

I received from the doctoral student Dr. Petko Ivanov Karagyozov a complete set of hard copies and electronic documents, related to the official defense of the thesis for the acquisition of the Educational and Scientific Degree 'PhD':

1. **Doctoral** Dissertation and abstract;
2. Order by Acibadem City Clinic Tokuda General Hospital CEO, determining the membership of the scientific jury;
3. Order by Acibadem City Clinic Tokuda General Hospital CEO, defining the membership of the Extended Scientific Collegium for conducting the internal defense;
4. Minutes of the internal defense against the Extended Scientific Collegium and the two reviews presented;
5. Doctoral Student CV;
6. Application by Dr. Petko Karagyozov for enrollment as a doctoral student in self directed learning and expulsion with the right to official defense;
7. Decision of the Scientific Council of the Acibadem City Clinic Tokuda General Hospital determining the membership of the scientific jury;

8. Copies of publications related to the topic of the doctoral dissertation.

The procedure for the defense of the doctoral dissertation of Dr. Petko Karagyozov is fully consistent with the current regulatory framework in the country – Law on the Development of the Academic Personnel in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for the implementation of the Law on the Development of the Academic Personnel in the Republic of Bulgaria at Acibadem City Clinic Tokuda General Hospital, the Rules for the conditions and procedure for acquiring academic degrees and occupying academic positions in Acibadem City Clinic Tokuda General Hospital.

At the first non-attendance meeting of the Scientific Jury, held on 03/01/2020, I was elected Chairman of the Jury and appointed to write a statement.

I got acquainted in detail with the doctoral dissertation of Dr. Petko Ivanov Karagyozov for the acquisition of Educational and Scientific Degree 'PhD'. I read the paper with interest and with pleasure.

The doctoral dissertation has a volume of 185 standard pages and is ***structured properly, according to the accepted criteria and requirements for this type of scientific production in the country.***

With the clear idea and conviction that the definitions of "unique" have been devalued in Bulgarian medical science and are found in a number of studies, publications and presentations of dubious scientific value, but claiming for "uniqueness", I will allow myself to define the ***dr. Karagyozov's doctoral dissertation as a truly unique piece of science.***

In the statement I will not "retell" the doctoral dissertation and cite data from the literature review, purpose, tasks, material and methods, results, discussions, conclusions and contributions, as we are usually accustomed to reading in reviews and statements. Instead, I will explain why the study is truly unique.

The doctoral student at ***for the first time in the country has applied the direct cholangiopancreatoscopes (ChPS)*** as a diagnostic and therapeutic method. So far, no specialized experience with this method has been reported in the Bulgarian specialized medical literature by other authors and collectives, and no similar studies have been presented, even with smaller patients' series in national or international scientific forums..

The topic is ***up-to-date and in purely scientific and in applied science aspect*** for a number of reasons. One proof of this is the bibliography, which is comprehensive and includes 222 sources. The literature review concludes with the formulation of 11 issues and discussion points. The latter prove the relevance of the topic, and addressing and answering it would be beneficial for the future of direct ChPS: improving the quality of the image and other technical characteristics and parameters of the equipment; reducing the percentage of false negative results in proving

(biopsying) malignant processes; to achieve a number of consensuses and algorithms regarding the place of ChPS in a number of conditions and nosological units, e.g. indeterminate biliary stenoses, conditions after liver transplantation, intraductal pancreatic neoplasms, pancreatic concretions, etc. Of greater significance and importance is the lack of a unified concept and protocols for complications after ChPS such as frequency, severity of manifestation, diagnosis, behavior, especially in hemobilia, bile leaks, etc.

Again, these 11 topical issues and controversial points have given grounds for Dr. Karagiozov to conduct his retrospective study, which purpose and tasks are specific, precisely formulated and a prerequisite for the proper conduct of the analyzes and processing of the obtained data.

I strongly believe that ***the volume of the clinical material from 208 procedures performed in 186 patients and the reported results in them, with three years being sufficient evidence that the doctoral dissertation has a very large volume of activity.***

The results are presented in descriptive, tabular and graphical form. Zero mortality and a low rate of specific complications comparable to those of other world leading schools and centers is another good attestation for the high quality of the activity performed.

The rich visualization (59 tables and 48 figures) as well ***presentation of clinical case studies*** give the doctoral dissertation ***sufficient clarity, scientific weight and persuasiveness***. The photographs (part of the figures) also contribute to this - all were made by procedures performed by the doctoral student's team – also enrich the doctoral dissertation.

On pages 155-156 in Chapter Four: "Discussing the Results," the doctoral student himself is exceptional ***objective and self-critical by pointing to several weak points and limitations of the study*** - retrospective design by only one team, lack of standardized protocol on number of biopsies taken and material processing, lack of control group, etc. On the one hand, this indicates Dr. Karagyozov's sober self-assessment of the real value of his research. On the other hand, it would be a good basis for future team researches and overcoming these weaknesses, for further conclusions, recommendations and conclusions.

I appreciate highly also the ***algorithms***, presented in Fig. 47 ("Algorithm for difficult concretions") and Fig. 48 ("Diagnostic algorithm for undeterminate biliary strictures"). ***They are based on experience and actual activity and experience gained*** from Dr. Petko Karagyozov's team, not just literature.

The logical conclusion of the study are the 17 conclusions, of which the most valuable and valuable for the practice I identify those with numbers 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13 and 15.

In connection with the topic of the doctoral dissertation, Dr. Petko Karagyozov presents a list of 5 full-text publications and 4 abstracta from international and national scientific forums. Approving an oral presentation or accepting a publication in an international journal is ***the true attestation of the high scientific value of a study.***

I can only refer to Dr. Petko Karagyozov's doctoral dissertation *three critical notes*: (1) the volume of the literature review is more than 30% of the total volume of development and should be more synthesized; (2) I consider some of the figures (photographs) representing the equipment and its various accessories unnecessary; (3) conclusions numbered 1, 2 and 16 are not supported by data from the chapter presenting its own results, respectively. They have no statistical justification, so they may not have been included.

I would like to emphasize, *that these critical remarks in no way diminish the scientific value and merits of the doctoral dissertation.*

In conclusion, I define Dr. Petko Ivanov Karagyozov's doctoral dissertation as one indeed *thorough, valuable and useful for science and practice research*. The doctoral student's work on it, the results obtained, their analysis, the conclusions drawn and the contributions prove *the personal merit of the doctoral student*.

The dissertation shows that *the PhD student possesses in-depth theoretical knowledge and professional qualifications and skills in* the scientific specialty "Gastroenterology".

Due to the foregoing, confidently I give my positive assessment survey and *I suggest that the members of the Honorable Scientific Jury vote positively for the award of Dr. Petko Ivanov Karagyozov to the Doctoral degree, for which I am firmly voting Yes.*

Statement author:

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(Prof. Dr. Kiril Vasilev Draganov, MD, Ph.D, DSc)

13.01. 2020