

TO:
THE CHAIRMAN OF SCIENCE
JURY,
DETERMINED BY ORDER
№ 164/29 03 21 OF
THE EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR OF
"AJIBADEM CITY CLINIC
MBAL TOKUDA " EAD

OPINION

**Professor Rosen Kirilov Nikolov PhD - Head of the Clinic of Gastroenterology
of the University Hospital "St Ivan Rilski" - Sofia.**

About

**DISSERTATION WORK FOR AWARDING THE EDUCATIONAL AND SCIENTIFIC
DEGREE "DOCTOR"**

Field of higher education: 7. Health and sports.

Professional direction: 7.1. Medicine.

Doctoral program: Internal Medicine.

Author of the dissertation: Dr. Girgina Manolova Stoyanova.

Dissertation topic: Heredity, precancerous lesions and monitoring in patients with colorectal cancer.

Tutor: Associate Professor Dr. Stoyan Handjiev MD

DEAR PRESIDENT OF THE SCIENTIFIC JURY,

I provide to your attention an opinion on the dissertation work of Dr. Girgina Stoyanova for obtaining the educational and scientific degree of doctor according to the relevant regulations.

- 1. Biographical data of the doctoral student:** Dr. Gigina Stoyanova graduated from the Medical Academy in Sofia in 1981 In 1986 acquired specialty in internal medicine and in 1990 of Gastroenterology and

Dietetics. During their career, Dr. Stoyanova was an intern doctor in Gastroenterological Department in City Hospital Yambol, doctor intern and senior doctor endoskopist in gastroenterological ward of the Fifth Sofia Hospital and Head of the Department of Gastroenterological in Fifth Hospital Sofia since 2012 and currently. Her interests are focused on diagnostic and therapeutic gastrointestinal endoscopy and in particular on precancerous lesions in the gastrointestinal tract and follow-up of cancer patients. There are numerous courses and specializations, as well as participation in scientific conferences at home and abroad. She is a member of the Bulgarian Society of Gastroenterology, ECCO and EASL.

2. General evaluation of the dissertation:

- The topic is relevant and is related to one of the most common and significant pathologies in gastroenterology. Colorectal cancer is a socially significant disease with a relatively high mortality rate. Precancerous conditions of the colon are common, asymptomatic and their diagnosis and treatment play a significant role in the prevention of colorectal cancer. It is not in vain that mass screening for these conditions has been introduced in a number of advanced countries.
PhD thesis consists of 203 standard pages and is illustrated with 134 figures and 24 tables. The bibliography contains 267 literary sources, 10 of which are in Cyrillic and 257 in Latin.
- **Literature review** is presented on pages 44 and shows a thorough understanding and study of the problem worldwide. The frequency in different countries, the screening systems, the follow-up of the patients were monitored, and special attention was paid to the diagnosis and follow-up of the individual precancerous lesions, as well as to the early-onset colon cancer. Based on the review, 9 conclusions were made, which serve as a basis for the development of the dissertation.
- **Purpose and Goals:** The aim is clear formulated, concise and specific and defines the overall appearance of the thesis. The tasks are 5 in number, are in accordance with the goal and determine the steps for its implementation.

- **Material and methods:** the study was conducted in 213 patients for a period of 7 years - 2012 - 2019. Patients are grouped into logical and substantiated groups, which supports data processing and interpretation of results. The individual approach and the grouping of a separate group in the respective patients makes a good impression. The author herself has performed a huge percentage of research, clinical examinations and other activities related to development. A wide range of modern statistical methods are used, which makes the results reliable.
- **Results:** are presented on 99 pages clearly and in order, analyzing sequentially the four main groups with a subgroup for early-onset colon cancer. Data by sex, age, location, prevalence, comorbidities, extracolon manifestations and quality of life index are shown. Especially valuable and interesting data from the subgroup with early arising colon carcinoma, which is established and the highest degree of heredity. Indicative are also the data on quality of life, which was used to demonstrate successful therapeutic interventions and as a criterion for discontinuation of monitoring with age. It would be good to have a control group or to use literature data to reduce the quality of life with age, in people without the studied diseases. It is noted that genetic testing has been performed in some patients, but they are not reflected in the results.
- **Discussion** of the results is 15 pages and is thorough and analytical. The results were compared with similar in countries with advanced medicine. Emphasis is placed on early postoperative follow-up and an algorithm has been proposed for monitoring precancerous lesions and surgery for colorectal cancer, which is particularly valuable.
- **The conclusions** are 8 and are a consequence of the whole study. They are formulated concisely and clearly and correspond to the set goals and objectives.
12 recommendations are also proposed as a consequence of the dissertation work to improve the early diagnosis and overall care for these patients.

- To illustrate the data from the study, 4 typical clinical cases are presented.
 - The closing summarizes the data and supports the conclusions.
 - **The contributions** are 18 and are not divided into original and confirmatory. I think that dividing them and summarizing them by reducing the total number would be a plus for the work.
3. The abstract is presented on 46 pages and it presents the most important facts from the dissertation. Meets regulatory requirements.
 4. The publications related to the dissertation are 4 in Bulgarian journals, respectively 2 in Medicart and 2 in the Journal of the Bulgarian Oncological Society. Two reports were presented at international forums, in English - in Moscow and Varna. I think that there is interesting data in the dissertation and it could be published in magazines with Impact index.

Conclusion: I believe that the dissertation on "Heredity, precancerous lesions and monitoring in patients with colorectal cancer" by Dr. Grgina Manolova Stoyanova is completed and meets the criteria for awarding the educational and scientific degree "Doctor", despite the insignificant critical remarks. Based on the above, I recommend the esteemed jury to vote positively.

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Prof. Dr. Rosen Nikolov, DM