

## STATEMENT

by

**ASSOC. PROF. MIGLENA ILIEVA BALCHEVA-ENEVA, DMD, PHD**

**Medical University “Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov” – Varna**

**Vice Dean of the Faculty of Dental Medicine**

**Head of EU of Oral Pathology, Dental Allergology and Physical Therapy  
at Department of Conservative Dentistry and Oral Pathology**

**Member of the Scientific jury by order № P-109-101 / 07/03/2022 of the Rector  
of MU – Varna**

**On dissertation for awarding the educational and scientific degree “Doctor of  
Philosophy”**

**Topic: Drug addicted patients – oral health and management**

**Sphere of higher education:** 7. Health and sports

**Professional field:** 7.2. Dental Medicine

**Scientific specialty:** Therapeutic Dentistry

**Author:** Simeon Zdravkov Chokanov

**Form of doctorate programme:** regular

**Department:** Conservative Dentistry and Oral Pathology, FDM, MU – Varna

**Scientific supervisor:** Assoc. Prof. Assya Krasteva - Panova, DMD, PhD, DSc

## **GENERAL PRESENTATION OF THE PROCEDURE AND THE PHD STUDENT**

The presented set of documents and materials on electronic media is prepared correctly in compliance with the requirements of the LDASRB, the Regulations for its implementation, and the Regulations for the development of the academic staff at MU – Varna, and includes:

1. Enrollment order № P-109-258 / 01/08/2019;
2. European form of CV signed by the author;
3. Copy of the diploma of completed Master's degree;
4. Doctoral minimum exam report (in the specialty);
5. Protocol from the Department's Council №6 / 16/02/2022 with positive decision on the readiness for defense;
6. Deduction order № P-109-101 / 07/03/2022 for the right to defense;
7. List of publications in connection to the dissertation, signed by the author; copies of the same publications;
8. Declarations;
9. Dissertation;
10. Abstract.

### **Biographical data of the PhD student**

Dr. Simeon Zdravkov Chokanov was born on 7<sup>th</sup> May 1991. He graduated from high school in 2010 ("St. Kliment Ohridski" High School – Troyan), and in 2017, he obtained a Master's degree in Dentistry at Medical University of Varna (diploma №004629). Since March 8, 2018 Dr. Chokanov has been working as an assistant professor in the Department of Conservative Dentistry and Oral Pathology at the Faculty of Dental Medicine, MU – Varna, taking part in the educational course – preclinical and clinical practical classes, both in Bulgarian and English.

## **CHARACTERISTICS AND EVALUATION OF THE DISSERTATION**

### **Analysis of the structure of the dissertation**

The dissertation of Dr. Chokanov is structured according to the requirements of the Regulations for the development of the academic staff at MU – Varna. It consists of 145 standard pages and it is illustrated with 27 tables, 33 figures and 5 applications. The bibliography contains 218 literary sources, 8 of which in Cyrillic and 2103 in Latin; 27 of them are published in the last 10 years.

## **Relevance of the topic**

Drug use is a socially significant problem, affecting different groups of people, regardless of their age, gender, race and religion. In some cases it is a matter of abuse, and in others it is an addiction. This leads to many problems and risks for addicts and the doctors/dentists who treat them.

Therefore dissertation like this one, presenting the oral symptoms in drug addicts and offering a model and algorithm for diagnostics, treatment and behavior of the dentist in these specific patients, is relevant.

## **Literature review**

**The introduction** is short and tight and directs us to the problem. **The literature review** presents the available information on the selected topic (12.4% of the literary sources are published in the last 10 years), as the emphasis is on the use of various drugs, alcohol, nicotine and medications. Special attention is paid to the underlying infectious diseases in these patients and the effect of long-term drug use on oral health. The analysis of the review points to the unresolved issues regarding the lack of awareness of dentists about oral symptoms in these patients and the prevention and treatment approach.

## **Aim and tasks**

**The aim** of the dissertation is to assess the oral health and features of oral pathology in drug addicts, followed by the development of a specific algorithm for prevention and treatment in this group of people. To achieve the aim, 5 **tasks** have been set, and they are completely sufficient.

## **Materials and methods**

Dr. Chokanov conducts his own research on 2 target groups – drug addicts and a control group. These are 154 people aged 18-65, among whom men predominate. Patients fill out 2 questionnaires. Their oral status (dental, periodontal and mucosal one) is registered and various salivary indices (quantity, pH, buffer capacity, microbiology, etc.) are studied. The medical records of drug addicts have been studied. The results are processed using a specialized package IBM SPSS Statistics 19 and are presented in graphical and tabular form.

## **Results and discussion**

Dr. Chokanov finds in the **first task** that drug addicts have a lower assessment of oral health – higher DMFT and PBI values. Most of them also have coated tongue, halitosis, worsened saliva and marked growth of pathogenic bacteria and fungi.

The results of the **second task** show that a very large share of patients have concomitant infectious diseases (various forms of hepatitis and HIV), manifested alone or in combination, which further contribute to the worsening of oral health. The incidence of oral lesions such as leukoplakia, geographical language and candidiasis is also higher among drug addicts.

The survey presents the profile of the drug addict – a single man without children, low-skilled and unemployed. The control group is also dominated by men, but they are more often engaged/married, with children, educated and employed.

In the **third task** is established that the drug-addicted patients use a variety of drugs, more often in combination, which leads to worsening of their oral health with the manifestation of dental decay, periodontitis, candidiasis and oral lesions.

The results of the **fourth task** emphasize that the unsatisfactory care for the oral health of drug addicts is due to both their lack of interest and the reluctance of dentists to work with this group of patients.

In the **fifth task** Dr. Chokanov proposes an algorithm for the diagnostics and treatment of drug addicts.

## **Conclusions**

There are 4 groups of conclusions.

## **Contributions**

Dr. Chokanov divides the contributions of his research into two groups – original and scientifically applied.

## **Assessment of the publications**

The results of the study are promoted through 3 congress participations and 2 publications – Dr. Chokanov is the first author of one of them.

## Abstract

The abstract of 48 pages is presented in the appropriate volume required by the rules set out in the Regulations for the development of the academic staff at MU – Varna. It is properly structured, well illustrated and corresponds to the individual sections of the dissertation.

## Critical remarks

There are several things that I do not like in the dissertation – I do not agree with the wording and presentation of some conclusions; no model for describing the sources in the bibliography was followed.

## CONCLUSION

Dr. Simeon Zdravkov Chokanov, doctoral student and an assistant professor in the Department of Conservative Dentistry and Oral Pathology at the Faculty of Dental Medicine – Varna has submitted for statement a completed dissertation.

The dissertation meets the criteria for acquiring the educational and scientific degree "Doctor of Philosophy", set out in the Law for development of the academic staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for its implementation, and the Regulations for the development of the academic staff at MU – Varna.

This gives me grounds for **positive assessment and I propose to the esteemed Scientific Jury to award the educational and scientific degree “Doctor of Philosophy”** to Dr. Simeon Zdravkov Chokanov.

Varna

18/04/2022

.....  
(Assoc. Prof. Miglena Balcheva-Eneva, DMD, PHD)