

STATEMENT

From Assoc. Prof. Dr. Kiril Stefanov Slaveykov, MD

1st Department of Infections Diseases and General Medicine at Medical Faculty,

Trakia University of Stara Zagora

Member of scientific jury appointed with order Nr. R-109-592/31.12.2021 by the Rector of Medical University Varna

With regards to the PhD Dissertation with the topic **“Immunization calendar and vaccinations in Bulgaria – contemporary tendencies, challenges and possible solutions”**

as a part of the competition for obtaining the PhD title.

Professional area: **7.1. Medicine**

Specialisation: **General Medicine**

Candidate: **Vanya Antonova Alexandrova, MD**

Scientific Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Valentina Hristova Madjova, MD

On behalf of Department “General Medicine”, Faculty of Medicine, Varna

By a decision of the faculty of Public Healthcare, protocol Nr. 57.21.12.2021, in accordance with Order Nr. R-109-592/31.12.2021 by the Rector of Medical University Varna, Prof. Dr. Valentin Ignatov MD, I have been appointed to share a scientific opinion with regards to the dissertation of Dr. Vanya Antonova Alexandrova, MD, PhD candidate within the self-learning PhD programme “General Medicine” and assistant at Department of General Medicine at Medical University “Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov”, Varna, with dissertation topic “Immunization calendar and vaccinations in Bulgaria – contemporary tendencies, challenges and possible solutions”, aiming at the educational and scientific title of PhD.

1. Biographical summary of the candidate

Vanya Antonova Alexandrova, MD is born on 28th of September 1969 in Varna. She graduated her higher degree at the Medical University in Varna in 1997. She obtained her specialization in Pediatrics in 1999, and her specialization in General Medicine in 2008. Since 2005 she is working as a general medical practitioner. Since 2015 she is also following a teaching activity as scientific assistant at the Department of General Medicine at Medical University Varna.

2. Relevance of the topic

The dissertation of Vanya Alexandrova, MD is addressing the very contemporary and relevant topic of the importance of immunoprophylaxis as an important factor in the maintenance of collective immunity in our society in order to prevent the spreading of infectious diseases that can be prevented by vaccinations.

The global pandemic situation, as well as the popular social anti-vaccination tendencies, compromising the efficacy of the vaccination plan execution both at a national as well as global level, add even more relevance to the dissertation topic.

This is a contemporary scientific topic, that has been profoundly addressed in the work of Vanya Alexandrova, MD. The work deeply analyses the social attitudes towards the vaccination calendar in Bulgaria, considering the opinions of parents, to-be-parents, medical practitioners on important topics related to the immunoprophylaxis, as well as the resulting difficulties that medical practitioners face in the context of paediatric consultations.

3. Problem Knowledge and Understanding

The dissertation encompasses 145 standard typewriter pages and is visually supported by 45 figures and 26 tables. It includes 196 references, 41 of which in Bulgarian and 155 of which from foreign authors. The dissertation's structure is aligned to the relevant generally accepted format.

4. Characteristics and Evaluation of the Dissertation

The candidate has provided a detailed overview, presenting the main literature data in connection to vaccination rejection, the related challenges and the possible solutions. The scientific literature analysis is focusing on the potential challenges to the execution of the immunoprophylaxis programmes in Bulgaria and other countries and is proposing action models to overcome those challenges.

The candidate has identified six assignments for the dissertation and manages to fulfil all of them within the dissertational work provided. The provided results are to be considered as reliable, as contemporary data investigation collection and analysis methods have been used. Specific demographic and socio-economic factors have been identified as characteristics of the individuals, who are hesitant towards the mandatory vaccines. Eight main conclusions are drawn based on this analysis. All eight of them have been logically and correctly formulated, ensuring both relevance of and solution to the defined assignments. The scientific contributions of the dissertation are eight – four of which with an affirmative and four with an original character. I do accept all eight of them.

5. Conclusion

The dissertation has scientific, scientific-practical and affirmative character, contributing to science in an original manner and fulfilling the requirements of the Law for Academic Development in the Republic of Bulgaria, as well as the policy for its implementation at the Medical University Varna.

All of the above provides me with a solid ground to positively evaluate the dissertation work and recommend to the Scientific Jury a positive vote with regards to the obtaining of the academic and scientific title of PhD in General Medicine to Vanya Alexandrova, MD.

26.01.2021

Signed:

Assoc. Prof. Kiril Slaveykov, MD, PhD

