

STATEMENT

From

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Subject. Health and Sport, professional field 7.4. Public Health and Doctoral Program in Health Care Management

By Order No. P-109-548/06.12.2023 of the Rector of Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" - Varna on the basis of Protocol No. 214/22.11.2023 of the Faculty of Public Health at MU - Varna, I have been appointed as an external member of the Scientific Jury to prepare an opinion on the procedure for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" , candidate Inna Stoyanova Nenova.

This opinion has been prepared in accordance with the Academic Staff Development Act in the Republic of Bulgaria (ASDA), the Regulations for the Implementation of the ASDA (RDA) and the Regulations for the Development of Academic Staff at Medical University - Varna.

Brief details of the doctoral student's career development and qualifications

Inna Nenova was born on 16.06.1992. In 2015 she graduated from Medical University - Varna - Faculty of Public Health, specialty "Midwife". In 2019 she obtained a Master's degree from MU - Varna - FPH; specialty - Health Management and Health Care Management. She has completed many additional courses for the period 2015 - 2023. She started her professional career in 2015 in Medical Centre "St. Antony". She started her career in 2005 at St. Anthony's AMC in the position of Medical Registrar. In the period 2017 - 2018, she worked as an office manager at Medical centre "Prof. D. Stamatov". From 2015 to 2020 she worked as a "Midwife" at the Medical Center "Chaika" Ltd. From 2021 until now Inna Nenova has been Chief Midwife at Medical centre "Prof. D. Stamatov".

General characteristics of the thesis.

The dissertation thesis developed by Inna Stoyanova Nenova is in a volume and form that meets the requirements of the Academic Staff Development Act and the Regulations for Academic Staff Development of Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov" - Varna. It contains 209 standard pages, and is structured in five chapters: chapter one - literature review; chapter two - aim, objectives, material and methodology of the study; chapter three - results and discussion; chapter four - electronic management system for obstetric care - practical application. Chapter five - conclusions, recommendations and contributions.

The dissertation is illustrated with 66 figures, 27 tables and 8 appendices. The bibliographic list includes 181 references, of which 77 are in Cyrillic, 104 in Latin.

The relevance of the dissertation is based on the need for accountability and written recording of activities performed by the health care professional. In outpatient care settings, there is a wide range of activities that midwives can perform independently or under the direction of a physician, but there is a lack of documentation where activities performed can be

recorded. The management of midwifery care in outpatient care will contribute to improving the quality of health services provided, and create the conditions for working in a multidisciplinary team. The midwife is the health professional who provides care and advice on issues related to pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding, child development, contraception and family planning.

Evaluation of the Literature Review. Written over 48 pages, the review demonstrates the doctoral student's good awareness of the literature on obstetric care, the possibilities of integrating the electronic obstetric record into medical software, and the electronic record as a telemedicine tool. The historical aspects of midwifery care and their development in Bulgaria are described in detail. Particular attention is paid to independent obstetric care - experiences and practices. Health care professionals are highly trusted, both in matters related to the course of pregnancy and in matters related to postpartum recovery, breastfeeding, newborn care. Patients embrace and support the idea of bringing into practice an obstetric model of care that has the best public health outcomes and proven health, economic and social benefits. The midwifery model is distinguished by its holistic nature - it contains not only traditional medical activities, but also care for the social aspect of the event, the psycho-emotional state of the woman and cultural characteristics of the family. The obstetric model also differs significantly from the medical model in the approaches applied. In it, the woman is an active participant, supported to express her preferences and make informed choices at each stage of pregnancy.

The benefits of digitising records are many. The evolution of documentation, from paper to electronic format, aims to improve communication, reduce errors and ensure continuity of care according to individual needs. The introduction of electronic records will significantly change the way patient care is delivered. Involving patients in the development of a care plan has a number of benefits such as positive attitudes towards the goals set, increased personal motivation by incorporating the patient's wishes and shared responsibility in decision making. The modern healthcare system requires specialised knowledge, skills and practices from the midwife. Electronic documentation of activities and processes is necessary for the realization of consistent, continuous and individualized health care. Health care requires efficiency, safety and cost-effectiveness.

The presented literature review is thematically focused, logically built on strong sources. With its independent relevance, it is a very good basis for building an adequate methodology of one's own study. With the review thus presented, the PhD student fulfils the requirement for the PhD - to be able to use and analyse scientific literature and formulate research objectives on its basis.

Assessment of the aim, objectives, methodology and organisation of the study

The aim of the dissertation developed is to investigate and optimize the management of obstetric care by developing a methodology to integrate an electronic obstetric record in outpatient care. The aim is clearly and precisely defined, corresponding to the topic and content of the independent studies. In order to achieve the objective thus formulated, the PhD student has defined seven tasks that detail the steps to investigate the problem.

- To explore the development of obstetric care for the pregnant woman, the parturient and the newborn child.

- To study the Bulgarian and foreign experience in the application of specific nursing/midwifery documentation in independent obstetric care.
- Identify best practices for nursing/midwifery care planning.
- To explore the views of experts, health care educators and midwives on the need to introduce an electronic midwifery care record.
- To undertake a theoretical analysis of the documentation associated with recording independent midwifery activities and care.
- To establish the feasibility of integrating an electronic midwifery record into current medical software.
- To develop and propose a methodology for the creation of an electronic management system for midwifery care in outpatient settings.

Four hypotheses are presented that reflect the doctoral student's in-depth knowledge and practical experience.

The subject of this study is the specific midwifery documentation in planning, organizing and conducting activities in midwifery practice.

Depending on the subject of research, the dissertation includes two main components of research: theoretical study and empirical study.

The object of the study are:

- Normative documents regulating the professional activities of the midwife;
- Literature/electronic sources on best practices in organizing and providing nursing and midwifery activities and care;
- Practical activities of the midwife in providing self-care;
- Database management systems;
- Midwives working in outpatient settings in midwifery care;
- Health care educators from higher education institutions across the country who are involved in teaching the theoretical and practical foundations of nursing and midwifery care;
- Experts from the structures of the Bulgarian Health Care Association, with competence and specialized knowledge in the field of midwifery activities and care.

For the theoretical study, a traditional method was applied to analyze the content and nature of the independent activities of the midwife in outpatient care; a content analysis (quantitative analysis) of documentation; and a method for determining data structures.

An in-depth interview method was applied to the case study to gather information - reflecting the views of health care professionals and proven experts in midwifery practice.

Participants in this study were 40, selected on a voluntary basis, under preformed criteria. Included were 30 respondents from outpatient care facilities where assessment and care for pregnant women, parturients and newborn children is provided from the cities of Varna, Veliko Tarnovo and Shumen. The participants in the in-depth interview included 10 experts, proven professionals in the field of obstetric care and researchers in the field of modern nursing from the cities of Sofia, Varna, Pleven, Ruse and Veliko Tarnovo.

The interviews were conducted from March 2023 to August 2023.

The quantitative methods included conducting a questionnaire survey, among academic lecturers from Medical University "Prof. Dr. Paraskev Stoyanov - Varna, Medical Universities in Pleven and Plovdiv, Ruse University "Angel Kanchev" - Ruse and Thracian University - Stara Zagora - 20 respondents in total.

Study methods:

Sociological methods - Documentary method; In-depth interview; Standardized interview; SWOT analysis method; Relational model.

Statistical methods - Statistical grouping of data; Descriptive (descriptive) methods; Frequency analysis of qualitative variables; Correlation analysis; Comparative analysis; Multiple response technique.

Evaluation of results and contributions

The results are presented and discussed according to the study sites. As a general characteristic of the presentation of the results, it should be noted the precision in the application of the methods, the skillful search for causal relationships, the continuity between literature data / best practices, the set research goals and objectives and the proof or rejection of the research hypotheses. Results are presented in well-designed figures and tables, and logical scientific thought is evident in the discussion.

The majority of the subjects expressed a positive attitude towards the introduction of an electronic obstetric record. This categorical nature of the responses indicates a clear need for a system of electronic entry and collection of obstetric information. A leading proportion of respondents felt that students knew the diagnoses and could only plan 'from parts'. Regarding students' skills in using medical software, the data show that more than half of the respondents in this group considered that the theoretical training received in university education was sufficient for midwifery graduates to be confident in their knowledge and skills. Concerning the presence of the electronic midwifery record in the regulations - the majority of midwives felt that this was necessary. The proportion of PGNs who could not judge was significant at 29%, with the remaining 15% opposed. The digitisation of midwifery care will enable midwives to reach their full potential, previously limited by the lack of practice-specific documentation.

The formulated conclusions are presented synthetically, based on the analysed data and results. A necessity for contemporary midwifery practice, in the context of the development of digitalization, is the implementation of new approaches in recording, reporting and implementing activities and care.

The abstract presented reflects the essential elements of the study and meets the technical requirements.

Four full-text articles on the topic of the dissertation are presented, with lead author - Inna Stoyanova Nenova.

Conclusion:

The dissertation of Inna Stoyanova Nenova is up-to-date, thorough and represents a scientific product of high value, innovative in conception and character, executed according to modern rules, providing rich new information, with significant theoretical and applied contributions. It fully complies with the requirements of the Law on the Development of

Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for its Application, as well as the Regulations for the Development of Academic Staff at the Medical University - Varna. The doctoral student's personal participation is undeniable, which proves her preparation and ability to carry out quality research work. The results of the dissertation are multilayered and contain potential and ideas for future research and multifunctional applications.

In conclusion, I give a positive evaluation of the presented dissertation, and convincingly recommend the members of the Scientific Jury to award the degree of Doctor of Education and Science to Inna Stoyanova Nenova in the field of higher education 7. Health and Sport, professional field 7.4. Public Health.

02.01.2024

Drafted the opinion:

Заличено на основание чл. 5,
§1, б. „В“ от Регламент (ЕС)
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/Prof. Prof. Diana Ivanova, PhD/