

To
The chairman of the scientific jury,
selected by order of
the Executive Director of
UMBALSM „N.I.Pirogov“ EAD

STATEMENT

from Prof. dr. Tonyo Iliev Shmilev MD,
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Elected on the basis of Art. 60, par. 1 of the Regulations for the development of the academic staff of UMBALSM "N.I. Pirogov" EAD, in accordance with protocol № 35/05 / 5.4.2019 of the meeting of the Scientific Council and order No. ID-26-11739.06.201 of the Executive Director of UMBALSM " N.I. Pirogov" EAD, as an external member of the Scientific Jury, under the procedure for occupation of the academic position "Associate Professor" in the field of higher education 7, health and sports, professional field 7.1 medicine, scientific specialty "pediatrics", to the Department of Pediatrics, UMBALSM N.I. Pirogov EAD. The competition has been announced in the State Gazette no. 25-05 / 05/04/2019.

There is only one candidate taking part in the procedure - Dr. Iren Stoyanova Tzotcheva.

The procedure is duly announced. The review of the materials submitted for the competition is based on the requirements of the Law for the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Rules for its implementation, as well as the Rules for the conditions and procedure for acquiring scientific degrees and borrowing AD and Qualitative criteria for the development of the academic staff of UMBALSM "N.I. Pirogov".

All competition documents are presented according to the requirements of the Rules, well arranged, in excellent aesthetic form and with the necessary supporting material.

Short biography of the applicant:

Dr. Iren Tzotcheva graduates as a medical student at the Medical University of Sofia. She has specialties in "childhood diseases" and "pediatric pulmonology". Since 2018 she holds a Master's Degree in Public Health and Health Management. She has a PhD degree. She has professional experience as a resident, assistant and chief assistant in pediatrics. Since 2014 until 2018 she is Head of Division for Children with Acute Respiratory Diseases, Pediatrics Clinic, University Hospital "Alexandrovska", EAD, and from 2018 is Head of the Department of Pediatrics, University Hospital "N.I. Pirogov" EAD.

She has specializations in France, Croatia, Germany and Spain; courses in bronchoscopy, abdominal and thoracic ultrasound, certification courses in spirometry, courses in various problems of allergic diseases and bronchial asthma, etc. She has been principal investigator and co-researcher in 4

scientific projects. There are 51 publications in Bulgarian and foreign journals, 6 of them with IF. Annually participates in national and international forums with scientific reports and posters. She speaks English and German. She is a member of a number of domestic and international professional and scientific organizations. She has good computer skills.

Educational activity.

Dr. Tzotcheva has over 15 years of experience as a teacher of pediatrics for medical students in Bulgarian and English, dental students, and also participation in student exam committees. For the 2017/2018 academic year, she has provided a comparison showing 360 hours of study load.

I listened to presentations by Dr. Tzotcheva at scientific forums, in which she presents herself as a lecturer who is attentive and able to present a fascinating, clear and precise topic. This gives me reason to appreciate her teaching skills.

My personal opinion of Dr. Tzotcheva is that she is industrious, hardworking, precise, communicative and works well in a team.

Research activity.

Dr. Tzotcheva presents for the procedure 51 real publications (1 issue of Abstract and 3 publications related to its protection; 11 publications in foreign journals, 35 - in Bulgarian journals and 1 publication in a collection of works). In 38 publications dr. Tzotcheva is single or first author.

The candidate also has 39 participation in international congresses and conferences - 14 of them are abroad, 18 in Bulgaria with international participation and 7 are national or regional forums. Dr. Tzotcheva is the sole or first author in 21 of these presentations.

The candidate's quotation report shows 208, of them quoted in Scopus 200. Self-citations are excluded.

Dr. Tzotcheva presents a reference for publications as a co-author in 6 foreign journals with IF and 3 participations in international congresses with abstracts with IF (2 is the first author). Total IF of publications 17,996 (personal - 2,008). IF of magazine messages 18,942 (personal - 3,785).

More data are presented for participation in 4 research projects, with an excellent evaluation of the results obtained in 3 of them that have been completed.

For me all this is a good certificate of the applicant's ability to generate ideas, organize and implement them.

Assessment of the candidate's scientific works contributions to the academic development of the applicant.

Following dr. Tzotcheva's scientific output, I find that she is a powerful and seeking researcher who combines the qualities of a good clinician and scientist using modern diagnostic and therapeutic methods. The desire to improve the diagnostic and therapeutic process is always emphasized. I commend dr. Tzotcheva's ability to carry out scientific work related to clinical pediatrics and to use the results of the chapel at the bedside of a sick child, and not to limit herself to a larger number of publications and messages.

Dr. Tzotcheva's scientific and applied contributions are grouped in the following areas of pediatric respiratory pathology:

1. Viral Respiratory Infections in early childhood (13 publications). Using modern molecular genetic diagnostic methods, the author team, which includes dr. Tzotcheva, characterizes the severity and annual cyclicity of infections caused by 15 respiratory viruses in 4 successive autumn-winter seasons. The most commonly reported are RSV, RV and hMPV, adenoviruses, bocaviruses, influenza and parainfluenza viruses, and often co-infections. The characterization of the clinical picture in various respiratory infections is important for preventive and therapeutic strategies in modern respiratory pathology.

2. Community-acquired pneumonia (CAP) in children.

2.1. In 4 publications (with lead author dr. Tzotcheva) the role of newer biochemical markers of inflammation (CRP, PCT, sTREM-1) in assessing the severity of pneumonia, the risk of complications applicable in the daily practice of the doctor in the Children's ward. Rather, CRP is used to determine the severity and PCT has a predictive value.

2.2. In 4 publications with lead author dr. Tzotcheva, a detailed characterization of mycoplasma pneumonia (by clinical, radiological and laboratory criteria) has been made and guidance markers applicable in clinical practice have been derived.

2.3. Two publications have analyzed the etiological spectrum of CAP, with particular attention to immunization status, and identifies the still leading role of pneumococcus.

2.4. A practical role for pediatricians and GPs is to study the disparity available in the interpretation of outpatient radiographs of children hospitalized for pneumonia and to reduce the use of antibiotics in viral respiratory infections.

2.5. Treatment of CAP in childhood (3 publications) - a contemporary overview of the issue, which also draws attention to the possible causes of non-influence and thus helps the pediatrician in his daily work.

3. Rare lung diseases - Dr. Tzotcheva and her team share their experience with the case of a late-diagnosed diaphragmatic hernia, with recurrent pulmonary infections in the absence of changes to the first X-ray; case of SLE debut with diffuse pulmonary hemorrhage, controlled upon complete recovery after aggressive treatment; cases of Bruton's disease with leading pulmonary infections and bronchiectasis, well responded to by modern substitution therapy; a rare case of late diagnosed CCAM; a rare case of fatal pulmonary nocardiosis in a 16-year-old boy.

4. Immunology, genetics and diagnosis of childhood asthma. Dr. Tzotcheva's contributions to this field of pediatric pulmonology are pioneering our conditions and are undeniable, especially given her doctorate in this field.

5. General pediatrics. I have found that 5 of Dr. Tzotcheva's publications are from areas other than pulmonology in the field of pediatric pathology, which I, as a general pediatrician, appreciate very much, as this speaks to broader interests and thinking than those characteristic of a narrow specialist. I consider this particularly important for a physician working in a pediatric ward and above all in an emergency. It enables him to make quick and correct decisions in the various cases he encounters in his daily practice.

Conclusion:

I have known Dr. Iren Tzotcheva for years, having been able to track her development through contacts on various occasions. In my personal experience and according to the submitted documentation for participation in the procedure for associate professor, she is an erudite doctor, scientist and teacher. In her long enough practice, she has acquired the necessary practical and organizational experience that allows her to cope with the tasks, often complex enough, that she sets daily.

Dr. Tzotcheva's scientific output is created by her own. The results are authentic, especially those in the field of immunology, genetics and diagnostics of childhood asthma, as well as those of examining the etiology of acute viral respiratory infections in childhood. They are the result of in-depth searches using modern, highly informative methods. The contributions are indisputable. Some of them provide us with new knowledge on many issues related to pulmonary pathology. They need to be confirmed, with more material and evidence accumulating.

I wish success to dr. Tzotcheva and her team.

This gives me reason to believe that the applicant fulfills all the criteria and scientifically-metric indicators set out in the Rules for the conditions and procedure for acquiring scientific degrees and occupation of academic post at UMBALSM "N.I. Pirogov". That is why I recommend the honorable members of the Scientific Jury to be positive in the voting and to award the academic position of Assistant Professor in Pediatrics to Dr. Iren Stoyanova Tzotcheva.

1.08.2019 r.
City of Plovdiv

Sign:.....
/Prof. T. Shmilev/