

# **OPINION**

**from**

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New Bulgarian University, 7.4 Public Health**

**on the scientific works for participation in a competition for the academic  
position of associate professor, in professional field 7.5 Health care,  
announced by the New Bulgarian University in SN no. 50/09/06/2023,  
with a candidate**

**Maria Dragomirova Stoyanova, PhD**

## **I. Assessment of compliance with the minimum national requirements and the requirements of the New Bulgarian University**

Maria Dragomirova Stoyanova, PhD graduated nursing in 1988 and in 2001 acquired a bachelor's degree from the Medical University in Sofia - health care management and a teacher in a medical college. In 2003, she obtained a master's degree in health management at the Medical University in Sofia, and in 2009 a master's degree in health care management.

In 2017, Dr. Maria Dragomirova Stoyanova received PhD degree in the field of higher education 7. Health care and sports, professional field 7.4. Public Health at the Medical University in Sofia.

With the submitted materials for participation in the competition, Dr. Maria Dragomirova Stoyanova meets the minimum national requirements for scientific and teaching activities for Higher Education Field 7. Health and Sports, Professional Field: 7.5. Health care, defined by the Regulations for the implementation of the Law on the development of the academic staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, Appendix 2. Minimum national requirements and requirements of the NBU, which must be met by applicants for the academic position "associate professor".

## **II. Research activity and results**

### **1. Evaluation of the monographic work, or other publications corresponding in volume and completeness to a monographic work, including an evaluation of the scientific and scientific-applied contributions of the author.**

The monographic work of Dr. Maria Dragomirova is entitled "The COVID-19 pandemic and the psycho-emotional state of nurses". This is an in-depth analysis of the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on the psychological state of nurses, which emphasizes the dynamics of measures related to medical activities aimed at limiting the spread of infection, diagnosis and follow-up of patients, treatment and health care. together with the role of nurses in these activities and the effect on their mental well-being.

Interviews revealed increased workload at work due to staff shortages, lack of social support, inability to practice favorite activities and social isolation, fatigue, as well as deepening feelings of anxiety, depression, loneliness and alienation.

The monograph contains recommendations for restoring the emotional state of nurses.

It is necessary to note not only the research contribution of the monograph, but also its practical applicability, as appropriate reading for managers of medical teams and leaders of nursing teams in hospitals and clinical units. The analysis as well as the recommendations would be applicable not only in the conditions of a pandemic.

## **2. Evaluation of the contributions in the other publications.**

Dr. Maria Dragomirova Stoyanova presents publications in peer-reviewed journals in the areas of stress coping strategies, organizational behavior, as well as research on patient informed consent and health care system practices. In the field of health care organization, the candidate presents publications in the area of conflict management and autonomy in decision-making.

In general, the publications are mainly oriented towards the effective management of teams and the organization of health care, personnel selection, motivation and training. These publications highlight Dr. Dragomirova's work, and present her as a professional with extensive organizational experience, but also provide valuable material to assist healthcare managers.

Dr. Maria Dragomirova's focus on the quality of life of specialists and the working microclimate makes a special impression. In the busy daily life of the health care professional, very little attention is given to mental functioning, workplace well-being, job satisfaction and emotional state. The research material that Dr. Maria Dragomirova Stoyanova presents also shows her serious concern for health care professionals as people with their experience, emotional states, mental, not only physical workload and stress in the workplace.

## **3. Citation from other authors.**

A sufficient number of citations from other authors are included in the submitted materials for the competition.

## **4. Evaluation of the results of participation in research projects and application of the obtained results in practice.**

Dr. Maria Dragomirova Stoyanova's dissertation and work for obtaining the educational PhD degree is related to workplace stress (Management of workplace stress among health care professionals at the Medical Institute of the Ministry of Internal Affairs). This further confirms the fact that the candidate has a serious research interest focused on the mental and emotional state of health care professionals.

The candidate's research projects are oriented towards the preparation and implementation of activities to improve the microclimate in the organization and improve the mental well-being of health care professionals.



### **III. Teaching activities**

#### **1. Teaching courses, work in the electronic training module "MOODLE - NBU", provision of student practices and internships, work with students and doctoral students.**

In her practice as a lecturer, Dr. Maria Dragomirova shows great desire, high motivation and very good organization as a teacher.

### **IV. Administrative and public activity**

#### **1. Public activity.**

Dr. Maria Dragomirova actively participates in the social life of the Bulgarian Association of Health Care Professionals, and in the period 2008-2011 she was the Chairman of the Chief Nurses council.

She has been honored with the following awards:

- 2002. Award from the Director of the Medical Institute "Awards" of the Medical Institute - Ministry of Internal Affairs for a significant contribution to health care in the Ministry of Internal Affairs.
- 2007 Award from Deputy. The Minister of Internal Affairs "Announcement of gratitude for achieved high results and contribution in the performance of official duties".
- 2008 Awarded in the "Nurse of the Year" competition held by BAHCP - 1st place - national level for contribution to the profession and improving the quality of health care.
- 2014 Award from the Director of the Medical Institute of the Ministry of Internal Affairs - Plaque for demonstrated initiative and achieved high results in the performance of official duties.
- 2022 Award from the Director of the Medical Institute of the Ministry of Internal Affairs for – Plaque of proven professionalism.
- 2023 Award from the Minister of Internal Affairs - "Honour III degree"

### **V. Personal impressions of the candidate**

My personal impressions of Dr. Maria Dragomirova Stoyanova are that she is an exceptional professional, very organized and motivated in her work. She possesses the qualities of a leader who not only manages the team, but treats it with great attention and care. Dr. Maria Dragomirova openly gives her knowledge and skills to those who would like to receive them. She is loyal, direct and honest. Along with the great management experience she has, her willingness to train those who come after her. Her patient care, which she applies everywhere in her work, and her great potential to put the person at the center of everything, should be emphasized.

### **VI. Opinions, recommendations and notes on the activity and achievements of the candidate**

As a recommendation, I would note the possibility of developing more research directions aimed at including patients, with the participation of students and doctoral students, which would

fit successfully into the long-term practice of Dr. Maria Dragomirova Stoyanova in the health care system.

**Conclusion**

My evaluation of the academic activity of Dr. Maria Dragomirova Stoyanova is positive. I fully recommend that the Academic Council of NBU choose Dr. Maria Dragomirova Stoyanova as an associate professor in professional field 7.5. Health care.

Date 16.10.2023

Signature assoc. prof. Margarita Stankova, MD, PhD

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