

## ACADEMIC STATEMENT

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**CONCERNING:** the materials for the competition for the academic position of **Associate Professor** in the field of higher education 7. Health and Sport, professional field 7.4. Public Health (Occupational Therapy), in the scientific speciality "Social Medicine and Organization of Health Care and Pharmacy", announced for the needs of the Faculty of Public Health and Health Care at the University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" - Burgas 45 of 17.06.2022.

### 1. General presentation of the procedure and the materials received

I partake in the scientific jury of the present competition by Order № RD - 259 / 15.09.2022 of the Rector of the University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov". All documents and materials for the competition of the only candidate Chief Assistant **Sonia Kostadinova Nencheva**, PhD I received electronic and paper media, according to the Regulations for the development of academic staff of the University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" - Burgas.

The applicant has submitted a list of scientific publications with a total of 18 titles; an author's reference for contributions to scientific works; a reference for citations; a reference for academic load; a list of participation in scientific research and educational projects, etc. 13 full-text publications and one monograph were submitted for review, all published after the candidate obtained the PhD degree.

### 2. Brief biographical details of the applicant

Chief Assistant Professor **Sonia Nencheva**, PhD was born on 28.12.1971. She graduated in Rehabilitation at the PMI - Plovdiv in 1992. In 2003 she acquired her Bachelor's degree, specialty "Health Care", professional qualification "Head of Health

Care and teacher in medical college". In 2007 she obtained a Master's degree in Health Management at the Faculty of Health Care at MU-Sofia, and in 2022 he obtained a Master's degree in Health Care Management at the Faculty of Health Care at MU-Sofia. In 2022 she graduated "Occupational Therapy In The Community" from the Faculty of Public Health and Health Care at the University of Ruse "Angel Kanchev".

From 2009 to 2013 she was a full-time PhD student at the Department of Social Medicine and Public Health at the Faculty of Medicine, Medical University of Plovdiv. After successful defense of his dissertation on "*Problems related to health care and care in nursing homes in some regions of southern Bulgaria*" in 2014 she received a PhD in the scientific specialty of "Social Medicine, Organization of Health Care and Pharmacy".

The work activity of Chief Assistant Professor Sonia Nencheva, PhD started in 2004 as a Medical Representative in the Pharmaceutical Industry. Currently, she holds the position of Key Account Manager.

In 2016 she was initially appointed as a lecturer at the Department of Physiotherapy, Rehabilitation and Resortology at the Faculty of Public Health and Health Care, Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov University - Burgas, and since December 2016 as a full-time Assistant Professor. From June 2019 until now she has been a Senior Assistant at the Department of Rehabilitation and Marine Medicine, Faculty of Public Health and Health Care and ¼ of the Department of Internal Medicine, Pharmacology, Pediatrics, Social Medicine, Disaster Medicine, Computer Technology and Latin at the Faculty of Medicine.

**3. Fulfillment of the necessary conditions for holding the academic position "Associate Professor", in accordance with the Law on Academic Degrees and Academic Positions at the University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov"-Burgas.**

From the comparative table below it can be seen that the materials presented by Chief Assistant Professor Sonia Nencheva, PhD fully meets the minimum national requirements and the requirements of the Regulations on the conditions and



procedure for the acquisition of scientific degrees and the occupation of academic positions at "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" University- Burgas.

**Table 1. Comparative data on the number of points required and available for the candidate by groups of indicators for the academic position of Associate Professor**

<i>Group of indicators</i>	<i>Contents</i>	<b>Minimum national requirements (number of points)</b>	<b>Requirements according to University regulations "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" - gr. Burgas (number of points)</b>	<b>Chief Assistant Professor Sonia Nencheva, PhD (number of points)</b>
A	Indicator 1	50	50	50
Б	Indicator 2	-	-	-
B	Indicator 3 or 4	100	100	100
Г	Sum of indicators 5 to 9	200	220	250
Д	Sum of indicators 10 and 12	50	60	120
Е	Sum of indicators from 13 to the end	-	20	50
<b>Total points</b>			450	570

#### 4. General description of the applicant's activities

##### *Teaching and pedagogical activity*

Chief Assistant Professor Sonia Nencheva, PhD has an active teaching activity. As Assistant professor and Chief Assistant Professor she teaches lecture courses and seminars in a number of compulsory subjects - *Ergotherapy and Ergonomics; Functional Assessment Methods; Massage; Medical Statistics; "Medical Ethics and Deontology"* for students of *"Balneo, SPA and Wellness Management"* (Master's degree); *"Medical Rehabilitation and Ergotherapy"* (Bachelor's degree); *"Rehabilitator"* (Professional Bachelor's degree); *"Health Management"* (Bachelor's degree).

Chief Assistant Professor Sonia Nencheva, PhD leads the teaching practice and pre-diploma internship of interns from the specialty *"Medical Rehabilitation*

*and Occupational Therapy*". She provides scientific and methodological assistance to students participating in scientific forums.

She is a member of the University Quality Committee and of faculty committees for the preparation of teaching documentation.

The academic workload of the Chief Assistant Professor Sonia Nencheva, PhD exceeds the statutory, as for the last four academic years it varies from 816 to 276 hours.

The candidate continuously improves her professional qualifications. This is evidenced by the 7 certificates attached to the documents from 1996 to 2022. Fluency in written and spoken English at B1 level. She is a member of prestigious professional organizations - Bulgarian Scientific Society of Public Health and Association of Bulgarian Occupational Therapists.

At the attestation held by the Chief Assistant Professor Sonia Nencheva, PhD received the highest evaluation.

#### *Participation in research projects*

From the submitted reference for the scientific and educational projects it is evident that Chief Assistant Professor Sonia Nencheva, PhD has participated in a total of 4 research projects, one of which is international. I would like to distinguish her participation as an expert in the scientific team of the international project "Development of digital skills for online rehabilitation therapies/ e- KINE" under Erasmus+ program.

She is the head of the internal university project, which is of equal importance and related to the study of medical and social problems of patients with cancer and their inclusion in a program of medical rehabilitation, occupational therapy and psychosocial support.

#### *Scientometric data*



Chief Assistant professor Sonia Nencheva, PhD has submitted 14 scientific publications for participation in the competition. One of them is an independent monograph and 13 full-text publications - 6 independent and 7 co-authored. It is noteworthy that she is the first author of 8 of them and the second author of the remaining 5.

From the submitted reference for citations and evidence it is clear that the works of the Chief Assistant Sonia Nencheva, PhD have been cited 14 times, which is a proof of the scientific value of the published results.

### *General description of the candidate's scientific activity*

The scientific researches of Chief Assistant Professor Sonia Nencheva, PhD cover scientific issues aimed at current and significant problems of public health. In her solo monographic work, *Ethical Issues in Palliative Care*, she considers palliative care as part of an intergrated, patient-centered health service, and the alleviation of suffering as a global ethical responsibility. A literature-based comparative analysis of the organisation and delivery of palliative care (organisational forms, teams, aspects and principles) with the UK and other European countries is also undertaken. In addition, the author discusses the specific behaviours involved in delivering palliative health care in childhood. A sociological study of ethical issues related to the medical team-patient relationship is conducted. A panel of questions regarding palliative care accessibility and patient satisfaction is also included. The importance of the multidisciplinary team and the role of the occupational therapist in improving the quality of health care and managing the patient's style and lifestyle is highlighted. The sources of ethical problems in palliative care are highlighted: the specificity of the environment, personal characteristics and professional training of staff. An attempt is made to provide recommendations for dealing effectively with ethical problems in the provision of palliative care.

Another topical and significant direction in which Chief Assistant professor Sonia Nencheva works is related to the application of *occupational therapy and art*

*therapy in helping cancer patients.* The publications presented on the topic emphasize the usefulness of art therapy and occupational therapy in maintaining the mental health and quality of life of cancer patients. It also demonstrates the need for management decisions to include occupational therapy as a health service reimbursed by the Health Insurance Fund, as well as a comprehensive approach to patients' overall recovery.

The scientific interests of the candidate are diverse and a number of the papers deal with issues related to :

- Health awareness and education of patients and their relatives as part of the occupational therapy process;
- Integrated medico-social care and ethical aspects of healthcare for people with chronic diseases ;
- Risk assessment and prevention of traumatic fall injuries in older adults;
- Role of telerehabilitation in chronic disease management;
- Monitoring and quality assessment of medical education and professional training of health care professionals;
- Health management and health care management .

The contributions in the presented publications are of a distinctly scientific and applied nature.

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

I know Chief Assistant Professor Sonia Nencheva, PhD since 2009 when she was enrolled as a full-time PhD student in the Department of Social Medicine and Organization of Health Care at MU-Plovdiv. I have been repeatedly impressed by her personal qualities - honesty, readiness for mutual assistance, perseverance and responsibility. I am convinced that these qualities have a high value for the team work that the Chief Assistant Professor Sonia Nencheva, PhD will continue to develop successfully in professional terms.

## CONCLUSION

The presented by Chief Assistant Professor Sonia Kostadinova Nencheva, PhD. materials for the competition fully meet the requirements of the Law on Research and Development, the Law on Research and Development and the Regulations for the conditions and procedure for the acquisition of scientific degrees and the occupation of academic positions at the University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" - Burgas for the acquisition of the academic position of "Associate Professor". On the basis of the current analysis, I confidently give my positive assessment and recommend to the jury to propose to the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Public Health and Health Care at the University "Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov" - Burgas to elect Chief Assistant Sonia Nencheva, PhD to the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the scientific specialty "Social Medicine and Organization of Health Care and Pharmacy" in the field of higher education 7. "Health and Sport", professional field 7.4. "Public Health".

5.11.2022 r.

Plovdiv

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(Prof. Nonka Mateva, PhD)