



## Opinion

**by competition for the academic position "Associate Professor"**

**at the National Center for Infectious and Parasitic Diseases**

**by ass. professor Tonka Ivanova Varleva, MD, PhD**

**candidate for the position - Dr. Maria Angelova Pishmisheva-Peleva, MD, PhD**

This opinion was prepared pursuant to the Order of the Director of the National Center for Disease Control and Prevention No. 524 of December 19, 2022 for the appointment of a scientific jury to hold a competition for the academic position of "Associate Professor" in the Department of Epidemiology of the National Center for Disease Control and Prevention, and is in accordance with the decisions from the first meeting of this scientific jury.

One candidate participated in the competition - Dr. Maria Angelova Pishmisheva-Peleva, Head of the Infectious Diseases Department at Pazardzhik Medical Center.

### **General data about the applicant**

Dr. Pishmisheva-Peleva graduated in medicine in 1989 at the Medical University of Plovdiv and the same year began working as a ward therapist in the Pazardzhik polyclinic. Since 1992, he has been in the Infectious Disease Department of Pazardzhik Medical Center, where he held the positions of resident and senior resident, and since 2013, he has been the head of the department. Since 1997, there has been a recognized medical specialty "Infectious Diseases". In 2019, she defended her dissertation on "Clinical-epidemiological aspects of acute hepatitis E infection".

### **General description of the submitted materials for the competition**

From the set of materials on paper and electronic media provided to me for my opinion, it is clear that the documentation is complete, clearly arranged, and that all the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for the

Implementation of this Law, and also the adopted rules for occupying academic positions in the National Center for Infectious and Parasitic Diseases.

Dr. Maria Angelova Pishmisheva-Peleva submitted for the competition a list including a total of 41 publications, distributed as follows: 11 titles of articles published in international scientific journals and journals with an impact factor and impact rank, 3 monographs (one is an independent author, and in the other two he is a co-author) and 27 articles in Bulgarian scientific publications. There are also 14 participations in scientific forums.

### **Analysis of research activity**

1. The main efforts of Dr. Pishmisheva-Peleva are aimed at clarifying the epidemiology, clinic and diagnostics of viral hepatitis E in Bulgaria.

1.1. Studies have been conducted on the spread of viral hepatitis E in the Pazardzhik region, and various groups of the population have been examined and tracked - carriers, persons with a pronounced clique of the disease, contact persons and persons from closed population groups.

1.2. The prevalence of hepatitis E virus in pigs has been studied. For this purpose, pigs of different age groups (1-6 months) from four different pig farms in the region were examined. Seropositive animals ranged from 16.6% to 66.6%. The researches are the first in our country and are important for the relationship between epidemiology and veterinary medicine.

1.3. The established specific antibodies of the IgM class against the hepatitis E virus for a long period (24 months) in patients are an indicator of the persistence of acute hepatitis E and the potential infectious and epidemic risks for others for a longer time than the appearance of the disease.

1.4. The established comorbidity in patients with acute viral hepatitis E (81.3 %) draws attention to the high probability of combining this infection with accompanying chronic diseases (for

example, with diabetes, 23 %), with other liver diseases or with harmful habits such as alcohol use (32.4 %).

1.5. An algorithm for the diagnosis of acute viral hepatitis E is presented, which is important for the accurate registration of the disease.

2. Other infectious diseases:

2.1. RNA of the causative agent of Hemorrhagic fever with renal syndrome was isolated.

2.2. The anti-vaccine movements that developed during the corona virus immunization campaign are discussed.

2.3. Studies on the viral load, specific antibodies and others of the infection caused by SARS-CoV-2 are presented, in which dependences on the clinical severity of the disease are sought.

2.4. The history of healthcare in the Pazardzhik region is reviewed and the development of the healthcare system in this region of the country is presented.

## **Conclusion**

After comparing the submitted materials for this competition with the minimum national requirements for the purpose, it can be concluded that they meet the established criteria.

The presented scientific products are sufficient in terms of volume and content and meet the requirements of the national regulatory documents for the procedure for acquiring scientific degrees and holding academic positions, in this case - for awarding the academic position "Associate Professor".

On these grounds, I give my positive vote for Dr. Maria Angelova Pishmisheva-Peleva, MD, to occupy the academic position of "Associate Professor" at the NCZPB.

**04 April 2023**

**Prepared the opinion**

**Ass. Professor Tonka Varleva, MD, PhD**