

OPINION

by Assoc. Prof. Margarita Nikolova Cheshmedzhieva, Ph.D.

Public Law Department of the Faculty of Law and History, at South-West University "Neofit Rilski"

on a dissertation for the award of the educational and scientific degree "**Doctor**
in the field of higher education 3. Social, Economic and Legal Studies
professional field 3.6 Law
doctoral program "*Administrative law and administrative process*"

Author : *Emiliya Yordanova Angelova-Khovagimyan*

Topic : "*Public Law Aspects of Patient Safety*"

Supervisor: *Assoc. Prof. Konstantin Vasilev Pehlivanov Ph.D - University of Plovdiv "Paisii Hilendarski"*

1. General presentation of the procedure and the doctoral student

Pursuant to Order No R33- 903 / 11.03.2021 of the Rector of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" I was appointed as a member of a jury to provide a procedure for defence of the dissertation entitled "Public Law Aspects of Patient Safety" for acquisition of the educational and scientific degree "**Doctor**" in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional field, 3.6 Law, doctoral program "Administrative Law and Administrative Process".

Author of the thesis is Emilia Angelova Yordanova-Hovagimyan – part-time PhD student at the Public Law Department, with supervisor Assoc. Prof. Konstantin Vasilev Pehlivanov Ph.D. of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski".

Presented by Emilia Yordanova Angelova-Hovagimyan set of materials on paper complies with Art. 36 (1) of the Rules of Promotion of the Academic Staff of the Plovdiv University and includes the following documents:

- request to the Rector of the University of Plovdiv for opening the procedure for defence of the dissertation;
- CV in European format;

- protocols from the department council, related to reporting on the readiness for opening the procedure and to preliminary discussion of the dissertation;
- dissertation work;
- abstract;
- list of scientific publications on the topic of the dissertation, containing 3 publications ;
- copies of scientific publications;
- declaration of originality and authenticity of the documents attached.

2. Relevance of the topic

The relevance of the dissertation is determined by the importance of the main problem - patient safety. The undisputed relevance of the topic of the dissertation stems from the fact that patient safety is a serious global public health problem that is being addressed by many governments and the WHO. The primary task of patient safety is to develop policies and strategies that minimize adverse medical events that injure patients worldwide. Patients should always be at the centre of healthcare. Patient safety is essential for the provision of quality health service , and quality health services around the world should be effective, safe and people-oriented. As the doctoral student states, the patient safety globally, would not only improve the quality of medical services, but also would save costs associated with adverse medical events, and further - will return the confidence of patients in the healthcare system, which is very important for the development of healthcare.

3. Knowledge of the problem

From the presented dissertation work the conclusion for detailed knowledge of the researched problems can be made. With its development, Emilia Hovagimyan demonstrates her ability to process scientific literature, analyse normative texts, as well as to formulate her own proposals for optimizing the legislation. The main theoretical research papers related to the topic of the dissertation are also analysed. Undoubtedly, the doctoral student is well acquainted with the problem and has properly approached to its development in depth and with scientific integrity.

4. Research methodology

In the dissertation work the doctoral student has skilfully combined different methods of scientific research, which undoubtedly is his dignity. The comparative, historical, normative, systematic etc. methods were used. So selected and applied methodology allowed achieving the goals of the study and giving adequate response to the problems they solved in the dissertation work.

5. Characteristics and evaluation of the dissertation and contributions

The dissertation presented by Emilia Hovagimyan is the first comparative legal study of its kind, dedicated to the problems of patient safety. The topic formulated in this way clearly indicates the author's goal, to study the matter related to public law aspects of patient safety, which I believe has been achieved successfully.

The dissertation has a clear and logical structure. This shows the ability of the author for a comprehensive theoretical study of a particular legal problem in accordance with the achievements of modern science and practice.

The practical value of the study may be illustrated by the made by PhD student proposals de lege ferenda.

Presented dissertation is structured in introduction, three chapters, a conclusion and comprehensive list of abbreviations and bibliography. The paper has volume of 310 pages and contains 320 footnotes.

In first chapter a historical overview of patient safety and comparative analysis with other countries are made, which definitely deserves attention and admiration for PhD student. International acts for the protection of patients' rights are also analysed here.

The second chapter focuses on patient safety in Bulgaria, the adopted programs for improving the health of the nation, the health control bodies and the legal ways to protect the rights of the patient. Attention in this part deserves the conducted survey to establish the level of awareness of citizens about patient safety and the results obtained.

Chapter three deals with the problem of quality and culture in healthcare, the issue of errors and adverse medical events and the responsibility of the doctor under Bulgarian law.

As significant scientific contributions to the presented dissertation, I believe that the following could be mentioned:

- The study of the historical review of patient safety is of a contributory nature, as a result of which the doctoral student gives formulations for the definition of patient safety.
- Admiration deserves comparative analysis of healthcare systems of twelve countries and actions of each of each of them to improve healthcare, aimed at reducing adverse medical events.
- The doctoral student, based on the analysis of the normative regulation of patients' rights, proposes her own draft of a Patient Safety Act.
- Of interest is the part dealing with health control bodies, and as a result of the analysis a number of proposals have been made to improve the work of the Medical Supervision Executive Agency, as well as to establish a Patient Safety Agency and a Register for Reporting of Adverse Medical Events.
- A number of de lege ferenda proposals have been made, which are convincingly substantiated.

With the aim of helping a PhD student for improvement of the prepared dissertation, I would recommend in the introduction to be identified the object and the substance of study, research goals and objectives and the methods used.

The contributions of the dissertation research undoubtedly have not only theoretical but also practical significance. The findings contained in the dissertation can be used both in teaching and research in universities, but also by state institutions and the legislature, which undoubtedly increases their value.

6. Assessment of the publications and personal contribution of the doctoral student

The doctoral student presented a list of three publications on the topic of the dissertation. They are the result of research made by the author and reflect some key moments of dissertation development. Publications of doctoral student Hovagimyan show that the results they from its research activities have become publicly knowledgeable not only by science but also in specialized environments.

7. Abstract

The presented abstract has a volume of 33 pages and compiles to the requirements. The abstract correctly reflects the content of the dissertation. The main moments of the research, the theses of the author, as well as the achieved results of the research are presented. Contributions are reflected correctly.

8. Recommendations for future use of dissertation contributions and results

Given the theoretical and practical significance of the present study, I recommend that the work should be published, so that the achieved results to be presented to a wider range of readers - theorists, practitioners, citizens and public authorities.

CONCLUSION

The dissertation contains scientific, scientific-applied and applied results, thus representing an original contribution to science meeting the requirements of the Law for Promotion of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ZRASRB), the Regulation for application of ZRASRB and the respective Regulation of Plovdiv University. The presented materials and dissertation results fully comply with the specific requirements of the Faculty of Law, adopted in connection with the Regulations of the University of Plovdiv.

PhD thesis shows that Emilia Yordanova Angelova-Hovagimyan has profound theoretical knowledge and professional skills in doctoral program "Administrative Law and Administrative Process", demonstrating qualities and skills to independently conduct scientific research.

Due to the foregoing, I confidently give my *positive assessment* of the study submitted by refereed above dissertation, abstract, results and contributions and I offer to the respected

scientific jury to award educational and scientific degree "doctor" of Emilia Yordanova Angelova-Hovagimyan in field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional field, 3.6 Law, doctoral program "Administrative Law and Administrative Process".

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Assoc. Prof. Margarita Cheshmedzhieva Ph.D.

29.04.2021