

**"CAROL DAVILA" UNIVERSITY OF MEDICINE
AND PHARMACY, BUCHAREST**



Summary of the Habilitation thesis

Academic and research aspects in the field of public health

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Introduction

The habilitation thesis "*Academic and research aspects in the field of public health*" represents an overview of my academic, professional and research activity, after obtaining the PhD in medicine in 2011. I tried to present relevant elements of my professional development and some objectives for the future.

Academic achievements

My teaching career spans the last 20 years, during which I have climbed the university ranks, from university demonstrator (2005) to associate professor (2013) and head of the Social Medicine dept. (2023), within a community of colleagues and students to whom I feel connected by professional training, shared ideals and values.

After the beginning of my teaching career within the Faculty of Medicine (demonstrator 2005, assistant professor 2008, lecturer 2009), I accepted the challenge of contributing to the structuring of the fourth faculty within the university, the Faculty of Midwifery and Nursing (FMAM), taking the position of associate professor in the Social Medicine dept. of this faculty in 2013. In this capacity, I contributed to the introduction or updating of courses such as: "Social and health legislation", "Legal aspects of the profession", "Medical sociology", "Legal protection of mother and child" etc. I also taught the courses "Organization and operation of health services" and "Human resources management" within the Master's program of *Operational Research and Interventions in the Management of Medico-Social Services and Public Health* organized by the Faculty of Medicine.

Holding the position of vice-dean of FMAM during the mandates 2013-2016, 2020-2024 and during the current mandate 2024-2029, I fulfilled complex duties - responsible, in turn, for research and development activities, for international cooperation, for university education. In the field of international cooperation, I initiated under the Erasmus program the mobility for academic staff towards and from universities in the European Union, followed by the participation of our students in abroad university internships.

In the field of quality assurance, I passed the exams to become an expert-evaluator of the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education and I was part of external evaluation teams in various universities within the country. Within the FMAM, I was Chair of the Commission for quality assurance (2016-2020) and responsible for the

accreditation of the undergraduate programs of General Nursing, Midwifery, Dental Technique, Physiotherapy and for the establishment of the new programs of Radiology and Imaging (in Bucharest), General Nursing (in Ploiești) and Physiotherapy (in Ploiești). I had the privilege of contributing to the opening of the first branch outside Bucharest in the history of the "Carol Davila" University of Medicine and Pharmacy.

Thus, the Faculty of Midwifery and Medical Assistance, which in 2013 enrolled a number of 215 students in 4 undergraduate study programs, currently reached an enrolment of 610 students per year, in 5 undergraduate programs in Bucharest and 2 programs in the Ploiești branch.

Another priority was the expansion of the faculty's clinical base and of the teaching staff, always following the principle of supporting the graduates of our programs to complete master's and PhD programs with the aim of starting a teaching career.

Scientific achievements

After completing my PhD (supervised by Prof. Ioan Bradu Iamandescu), I tackled with colleagues from the Faculty of Midwifery and Nursing several public health research topics.

Acceptance of COVID-19 vaccination among healthcare workers in Romania

The study, carried out in the first part of 2021, evaluated the opinions, attitudes and knowledge of Romanian professionals regarding vaccines and COVID-19 vaccination, taking into account the factors that can influence the success of the vaccination campaign. The reluctance of a percentage of medical staff to get immunized against COVID-19 was highlighted, which should have been a warning signal for the authorities through the predictable negative influence on the general population.

The hesitancy regarding vaccination of children against COVID-19 in Romania

Conducted at the end of 2021, the study tracked the degree of parental acceptance of children's vaccination against COVID-19. The results demonstrated a high level of perceived barriers and a low perception of the benefits of administering COVID-19 vaccines in Romanian children, including vaccinated parents who refused to give consent for the vaccination of children between 12 and 18 years of age. The causes were mainly the novelty of the COVID-19 vaccines, fears of adverse reactions but also the general anti-vaccinationism.

Teenage pregnancy in Romania

We tackled this topic of reproductive health through two studies, conducted in 2017-2018 and 2019-2020. The results confirmed the high rate of pregnancies among Romanian teenagers (12-17 years old) compared to the EU average and the train of complications following, as most of these pregnancies are not investigated before birth. The main cause identified for these situations, including unassisted home deliveries, is low education levels, perpetuating cycles of poverty and low quality of life.

Pregnant women's options for cesarean delivery

Carried out nationally in 2023, the study shows the transformation of cesarean delivery from a medical gesture that can prevent maternal and neonatal mortality in correctly chosen conditions, into a consumer product intended for women with high economic status. The state, through secondary legislation and the way hospitals are funded, encourages this behavior.

The results of research have been published in high-impact journals and presented at scientific conferences.

Professional achievements

In parallel with the academic activity, I pursued a career in health services management in the National School of Public Health and Health Management (consultant, then Director of the Training Center 2007-2009), the Ministry of Health (senior advisor to the minister, responsible for national health programs 2010-2012, 2014-2017, 2019-2020), Government (Prime minister's Office, 2017-2019). I was a member of the Public Health Commission of the Ministry of Health (2017-2021) and secretary of the Multidisciplinary Commission for the coordination of measures to prevent and control SARS-CoV-2 infection (2020).

Perspectives on academic career development

Thinking about the future, first of all I take on the mandate (2024-2029) of vice-dean responsible for teaching and for the development of the IT infrastructure. I will devote my efforts to the professional training of students, creating social and professional opportunities for them. I wish to strengthen international collaborations, through a more

efficient recognition of students' international exchange programs, update of the curricula with some academic disciplines developed during these collaborations etc.

I will continue to update the academic courses and to edit digital and printed textbooks for the use of our students. The increasing number of students require the enlargement of the teaching staff by recruiting new colleagues and external collaborators.

In the field of scientific research, I will use my academic, research and managerial experience to strengthen multidisciplinary research teams in the field of public health, involving younger colleagues, graduates and students. A topic I would like to approach in the near future is medical sociology, a complex field of research where our students can also be successfully involved.