

Letter of Support for the Inclusion of Rapid-Acting Insulin Analogues in the WHO Essential Medicines List

Dear WHO Essential Medicines List Committee,

My name is Betsy Rodríguez. I am a public health advisor, President of APRADE, and Director of Education for the IDF SACA Region. I have dedicated over three decades to diabetes advocacy and education throughout Latin America. I am the mother of a woman who has lived with type 1 diabetes for more than 25 years, and I also live with diabetes myself. My professional and personal life are deeply rooted in this cause.

I write this letter on behalf of the many children and adolescents across Latin America who continue to face heartbreaking choices due to lack of access to the insulin therapies they need — and deserve — to survive.

I have seen what it means for a child to live in constant fear of severe hypoglycemia. It is not just a number on a chart — it is a student fainting in the classroom, a child excluded from a school trip, a mother staying awake through the night to monitor her child's breathing. I have heard families share the anguish of having to choose between food and insulin, and I've witnessed young people lose their lives simply because they did not have the right type of insulin at the right time.

Rapid-acting insulin analogues are not a privilege. They are a tool for safety, dignity, and equity. These insulins allow children and youth to have a more flexible and realistic routine, especially when their meals depend on what is available — not what is planned. In communities where blood glucose monitoring is inconsistent or unavailable, the reduced risk of severe hypoglycemia that analogues provide can mean the difference between life and death.

We would never expect a child in Geneva or Toronto to manage type 1 diabetes without the best available treatment. We should not accept anything less for a child in Quito, Tegucigalpa, or Caracas.

On behalf of every child who deserves a future, every parent who shoulders the invisible weight of chronic disease, and every educator trying to build bridges between science and access, I urge the WHO to include rapid-acting insulin analogues in the Essential Medicines List. It is a step toward fairness. It is a step toward saving lives.

Sincerely,

Betsy Rodríguez

President, APRADE

Director of Education, IDF SACA Region

Diabetes Educator, Advocate, Mother — and Person Living with Diabetes