



International Alliance of Dermatology Patient Organizations

GLOBALSKIN.ORG

April 3, 2025

WHO Expert Committee on Selection and Use of Essential Medicines
World Health Organization
Geneva, Switzerland

Re: A.31 Support for the Inclusion of ustekinumab in the WHO Essential Medicines List

Dear Members of the WHO Expert Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the International Alliance of Dermatology Patient Organizations (GlobalSkin) to express our strong support for the inclusion of ustekinumab in the WHO Essential Medicines List (EML) for the treatment of psoriasis (application A.31). As an organization dedicated to improving the lives of individuals affected by skin diseases, including psoriasis, we believe that expanding access to effective and safe treatments is a global health priority. Our organization is an alliance of more than 300 patient organizations across 74 countries representing the full spectrum of skin diseases.

Psoriasis is a chronic, immune-mediated disease that significantly impacts patients' quality of life. Ustekinumab, a targeted biologic therapy, has demonstrated robust efficacy, long-term disease control, and an excellent safety profile across diverse patient populations. Unlike TNF inhibitors, ustekinumab does not require extensive tuberculosis screening, making it particularly valuable in regions where latent tuberculosis is prevalent. This unique advantage ensures that patients in high-burden areas can receive safe, effective treatment without the additional risk associated with TNF inhibitors. Biosimilars for ustekinumab are available, making this option economically viable for the first time.

The inclusion of ustekinumab in the WHO EML would be a critical step toward improving equitable access to psoriasis treatment. Many patients, particularly in low-resource settings, have limited treatment options beyond topical therapies and methotrexate, which may be inadequate for severe disease. By listing ustekinumab, WHO would be recognizing its importance as a clinically validated, cost-effective, and safer alternative for managing moderate-to-severe psoriasis, particularly in areas endemic for tuberculosis.

We strongly urge the Expert Committee to support this application and prioritize the needs of patients worldwide who suffer from the debilitating effects of psoriasis. We appreciate your consideration and remain available for any further information or discussion.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Austin
Chief Executive Officer