

Wednesday 2 April, 2025

World Health Organization
20 Avenue Appia
1211 Geneva
Switzerland

Dear Members of the Expert Committee,

We write in support of the addition of the medication baclofen to the World Health Organization's (WHO) Model Essential Medicines List (EML) and Model Essential Medicines List for Children (EMLc). There is significant evidence on the profound positive impact that baclofen can have on improving quality of life and functional outcomes for patients living with spasticity due to neuromuscular disorders, stroke, spinal cord injuries, traumatic brain injuries, and cerebral palsy.


Spasticity is a common and debilitating symptom characterized by muscle stiffness, pain, and impaired movement, making basic activities of daily living challenging. Baclofen reduces spasticity, helping individuals move more easily, and experience less pain. These benefits not only improve quality of life, improve sleep, but also enhance the efficacy of rehabilitation therapies, contributing to long-term improvements in patient outcomes.

In Australia, Baclofen is an approved and licensed medicine assessed by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) for quality, safety and efficacy and registered on the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods (ARTG). It is widely available as a prescription drug, subsidised through the Federal Government's Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS).

There are currently over 50 million people living with cerebral palsy across the globe. In many low and middle-income countries, access to medications like baclofen is limited, leaving millions of individuals with disabling conditions untreated or undertreated. By adding baclofen to the EML and EMLc, WHO can ensure greater accessibility to a cost-effective, essential therapy that significantly improves function and independence for those living with spasticity and related disorders. Furthermore, the addition of baclofen to the EML and EMLc aligns with WHO's mission of achieving universal health coverage, reducing health inequities, and improving the health and well-being of vulnerable populations.

We strongly support the addition of baclofen to the EML and EMLc. This is a meaningful step in reducing health disparities and improving access to this life changing medication.

Sincerely,



Kate MacRae
Chair of the Board - Cerebral Palsy