

20 May 2021

The Secretary of the 23rd WHO Expert Committee on the Selection and Use of Essential Medicines - 2021

Department of Essential Medicines and Health Products (EMP)

World Health Organization (WHO)

20 Avenue Appia

CH-1211 Geneva 27 Switzerland

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing as a physician, researcher and a member of National and Regional associations of oncology to support the addition of Pertuzumab to the WHO Model List of Essential Medicines (EML). This addition will help expand access to pertuzumab in low- and middle-income countries (LMIC).

During my work from 2013 to 2019 at the Center of Excellence in Breast and Gynecologist Cancer in Morocco, I treated thousands of breast cancer patients. Her2+ cancer patients represent approximately 15 to 17% of patients. Adding Pertuzumab and Trastuzumab to chemotherapy change the history of the disease of our patients. I had used Pertuzumab first in the “Peruse Trial” in 2014. Some patients had the opportunity to participate to this trial which had a great impact on the prognosis of their disease. One of our patient had a severe dyspnea due to the lung metastasis. After one cycle of the treatment, the clinical response was impressive and after 6 cycles she had complete response. The patient was under the protocol during 5 years with an excellent quality of life. She was present for her children and could attend their wedding before dying which was her big hope.

At the end of the inclusions, we faced a big dilemma. We had a group of patients receiving the standard of care “Pertuzumab-Trastuzumab and chemotherapy” and the others with no access to this innovative drug.

As a physician and a woman from LMIC, I take very seriously the responsibility entrusted to us by patients and families to ensure access to the most efficient and safe drug. I hope that all of her2+ metastatic breast cancer patients around the world will have an equal chance to fight cancer.

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