

12 December 2022

The Secretary
WHO Expert Committee on Selection and Use of Essential Medicines
Essential Medicines Team
Department of Health Products Policy and Standards
World Health Organization, Geneva

Submission for the 2023 Meeting of the WHO Expert Committee on Selection and Use of Essential Medicines: Inclusion of Hypromellose as a Representative of a Pharmacological Class in the Core List of the World Health Organization Model List of Essential Medicines and the Essential Medicines List for Children for the Treatment of Dry Eye Disease

Dear WHO Expert Committee Members,

We are writing to advocate for the inclusion of a representative of the pharmacological class of artificial tears, in the core list of the Essential Medicines List (EML) and the Essential Medicines List for Children (EMLc) for the treatment of dry eye disease or keratoconjunctivitis sicca.

Dry eye disease (DED) is a common cause of visual disability that is often severe, and among the most common reason for seeking eye care globally with a prevalence ranging from 5% to 50% in each of the World Health Organization (WHO) regions, affecting both adults and children.

Patients suffering from dry eyes have typical symptoms of chronic pain, burning and irritation. Untreated, corneal damage due to infection and inflammation can lead to serious vision loss and the need for surgical interventions.

First-line treatment for dry eyes is the use of a lubricant for the ocular surface with strong evidence that it alleviates symptoms due to its ability to improve tear stability. The most common agent used is Hypromellose, the use of which is without side effect.

The International Council of Ophthalmology (ICO) is the largest international association of ophthalmologists representing and serving over 180 national, regional and subspecialty

ophthalmology societies throughout the world. The ICO is in official relations with the World Health Organization.

The roots of the ICO date back to 1857. Its mission is to work with the world's ophthalmology societies and other eye care stakeholders to improve access to the highest quality people-centred eye care, and to preserve and restore vision. Representing the international eye care community, we respectfully submit this application for the inclusion of the first treatment for dry eyes in the Core List of the World Health Organization Model List of Essential Medicines and the Essential Medicines List for Children.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yours sincerely,



Prof. Neeru Gupta, MD, PhD, MBA, FRCSC, Diplomate ABO
President
International Council of Ophthalmology
www.icoph.org | ngupta@icoph.org



Ivo Kocur, MD, MA, MSc, MBA
Chief Executive Officer
International Council of Ophthalmology
www.icoph.org | ikocur@icoph.org