



**Istanbul University - Cerrahpaşa  
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**Letter of support for including ticagrelor on the WHO's List of Essential Medicines**

Dear WHO representative,

I would like to declare my strong support for AstraZeneca's application of ticagrelor for inclusion in the 2023 World Heart organization (WHO) List of Essential Medicines (EML) update. The rationales behind my support regarding ticagrelor is below.

Cardiovascular disease and related mortalities have shown a dramatic increase in low-and -middle income countries in recent years. Therefore, three-fourths of global deaths due to cardiovascular diseases occur in the low and middle-income countries. Unfortunately, quality of care for these patients is far from evidence-based recommendations which leads to a rise in mortality and morbidity particularly in a relatively younger patient population contributing to further economic burdens in these countries.

Acute coronary syndrome (ACS) is the leading cause of cardiovascular mortality/morbidity and antiplatelet treatment with P2Y12 inhibitors is the cornerstone of treatment for ACS patients. Clopidogrel, a P2Y12 inhibitor, is on the WHO's EML, however up to 30% of the patients thought to have some degree of resistance to clopidogrel as a result of gene polymorphisms. Clopidogrel also have several other downsides such as slow onset/offset of action and low potency in comparison to ticagrelor.

**Ticagrelor is probably among the most studied drugs in cardiovascular medicine in a variety of settings. Large-scale clinical trials have shown that the ticagrelor is more effective than clopidogrel in inhibiting platelet aggregation and significantly better at reducing the incidence of cardiovascular morbidity and more importantly overall mortality. Furthermore, for patients with ACS, several international and national guidelines strongly recommend ticagrelor as the first-line antiplatelet agent over clopidogrel. Besides, a substantial number of studies documented that ticagrelor is as or more cost-effective than clopidogrel in low-and-middle income countries.**

The reduction in the disease burden requires changes at the policy level. I strongly believe that including ticagrelor on the List of Essential Medicines will have a significant positive impact on patients' health, who unfortunately still do not have sufficient access to this essential drug, as well as healthcare systems in terms of cost-effectiveness.

Sincerely yours,

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Director of the Heart Catheterization Laboratories**