Dear Sir, Madam,

**Subject: Application for the addition of Whole Blood and Red Blood Cells to the WHO Essential Medicines list**

I am writing you regarding your on-going consultation on the application for the addition of Whole Blood and Red Blood Cells to the WHO Essential Medicines list.

While reviewing expert opinions as well as the comments already posted on your site, it becomes clear that this application has brought up potential concerns and benefits with significant consequences.

I therefore would like to ask you to allow for more time for reflection before submitting our comments.

The Commission plans to discuss this point with the National Competent Authorities on Blood and Blood Components, during our next meeting in April, on which we will report back to you.

I also take the occasion to point out that, within the European Union, whole blood and red blood cells are subject to a dedicated legal framework on safety and quality, based on Directive 2002/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, setting standards of quality and safety for the collection, testing, processing, storage and distribution of human blood and blood components.
This legal framework is different from the legal framework applicable to medicines, based on Directive 2001/83/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Community code relating to medicinal products for human use.

Yours sincerely,

Dominik Schnichels
Head of Unit