

Міністэрства аховы здароўя
Рэспублікі Беларусь

**ДЗЯРЖАЎНАЯ УСТАНОВА
«РЭСПУБЛІКАНСКІ НАВУКОВА-
ПРАКТЫЧНЫ ЦЭНТР
ПУЛЬМАНАЛОГІ
І ФТЫЗІЯТРЫ»**

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БІК АКВВВУ2Х
УНН 600052478, АКПА 02017708



Міністэрства здравоохранення
Рэспублікі Беларусь

**ГОСУДАРСТВЕННОЕ УЧРЕЖДЕНИЕ
«РЕСПУБЛИКАНСКИЙ НАУЧНО-
ПРАКТИЧЕСКИЙ ЦЕНТР
ПУЛЬМОНОЛОГИИ
И ФТИЗИАТРИИ»**

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БИК АКВВВУ2Х
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25.03.2024 № 10-11/1207
На № _____ ад _____

Ministry of Health
Of the Republic of Belarus
STATE INSTITUTION
“THE REPUBLICAN SCIENTIFIC AND PRACTICAL CENTRE FOR PULMONOLOGY AND
TUBERCULOSIS”
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TO: Mr. Rainer M. Blair
President and Chief Executive Officer of Danaher
2200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Suite 800W
Washington, DC 20037

Copy:
Mr. Vitor Rocha
President of Cepheid
904 Caribbean Drive
Sunnyvale, CA 94089

25.03.2024
No. 10-11/1207

Dear Mr. Blair,

I am addressing you on behalf of the National Tuberculosis Programme of the Republic of Belarus, the country that has been included by the WHO in the list of countries with a high MDR/RR (multidrug-resistant/rifampicin-resistant) TB burden.

Our country is fighting against this high burden, with our Programme detecting over 1500 new TB cases every year, over 700 of which are drug-resistant TB. We have installed 59 GeneXpert systems throughout the country, including eight 10-colour systems that are compatible with Xpert XDR cartridges from Cepheid.

We would like to express our appreciation for your decision dated 19 September 2023, which allowed the price of Xpert Ultra cartridges for MDR/RR-TB to be decreased from \$9.98 to \$7.97. This decision was long-awaited as the price had not changed for over 10 years. It will greatly improve our program's TB detection rate.

However, we also need access to Xpert XDR cartridges, which are currently unaffordable at \$14.90, twice the price of Xpert Ultra cartridges. Our TB institutions often send samples to remote

central laboratories for drug sensitivity testing based on culture or advanced molecular methods. Unfortunately, this process typically takes over three months. The Xpert XDR cartridges enable local susceptibility testing for at least Isoniazid and Fluoroquinolones on the same day. Local detection of MDR/RR TB is crucial for healthcare workers as it facilitates prompt identification of the optimal treatment regimen.

Considering these crucial factors, we are asking that the price of Xpert XDR cartridges be reduced to \$7.97 to match that of Xpert Ultra cartridges. We do not accept that we have to pay double the price for a test that helps detect drug-resistant TB, the most serious and deadly form of TB. Furthermore, the Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) association has stated that there is no difference in production cost between the two cartridges. In fact, in many cases, the cost is fixed regardless of the cartridge type.

We hope to see a decrease in the price of Xpert XDR cartridges, which would allow our Programme to improve local MDR/RR TB testing and enable health workers to provide timely treatment to patients with MDR/RR-TB.

Sincerely,
Aleksandr Babchenok
Head of the National TB Programme of the Republic of Belarus

